

NATIONAL
CONVENTION
SOCIALIST
LABOR
PARTY
1924

SIXTEENTH NATIONAL
CONVENTION

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

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SIXTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

May 10-13, 1924

Minutes, Reports, Resolutions, Platform, Etc.



Published 1924
National Executive Committee
Socialist Labor Party
45 Rose Street
New York

Presidential Candidates S. L. P., 1924



FRANK T. JOHNS
of Oregon
Candidate for President



VERNE L. REYNOLDS
of Maryland
Candidate for Vice President

Vote of Socialist Labor Party, National Campaign of 1924

Below will be found the complete official compilation, as furnished by the Secretaries of the various states where the Socialist Labor Party had presidential electors in the field. The vote of 1920 was 31,175, making a total gain of 2,726 votes.

Kentucky	1499
Maine	406
Maryland	786
Massachusetts	1667
Michigan	5179
Minnesota	1855
Missouri	888
New Jersey	819
New York	9928
Ohio	3025
Oregon	808
Illinois	2334
Iowa	445
Colorado	313
Connecticut	1876

(Continued on page three of cover.)

Pennsylvania	654
Rhode Island	268
Virginia	189
Washington	1004
Wisconsin	458
Total	33,901

The complete state vote of the S. L. P. candidates in the twelve states where the Party had partial state tickets in the fields follows:

Massachusetts:—Governor, 4854; Lieutenant Governor, 8727; Secretary, 10266; Treasurer, 13601; Auditor, 10373; Attorney General, 8016.
Michigan:—U. S. Senator, 3080; U. S. Senator (short term), 3360; Governor, 4079; Lieutenant Governor, 4572; Secretary of State, 4410; Treasurer, 4507; Auditor General, 6526; Attorney General, 5015.
Minnesota:—Governor, 3876.
Missouri:—Governor, 678; Lieutenant Governor, 885; Secretary of State, 591; State Auditor, 595; State Treasurer, 624; Attorney General, 848.
New Jersey:—U. S. Senator, 1000; Congressman (7th Dis.), 188.

New York:—Governor, 4024; Lieutenant Governor, 8377; Secretary of State, 7930; Treasurer, 8747; Attorney General, 8111; State Engineer and Surveyor, 7934.
Ohio:—Governor, 8468; Lieutenant Governor, 8826; Secretary of State, 8858; Auditor, 9449; Treasurer, 8617; Attorney General, 9225.
Oregon:—U. S. Senator, 4412; Congressman (1st Dist.), 3061; Congressman (3rd Dist.), 2447; Secretary of State, 10892.
Pennsylvania:—Superior Court, 3306; Treasurer, 1390; Auditor General, 1343.
Rhode Island:—U. S. Senator, 297; Governor, 321; Lieutenant Governor, 312; Secretary of State, 324; Attorney General, 304; General Treasurer, 304.
Washington:—Governor, 770.
Wisconsin:—Governor, 1452; Lieutenant Governor, 2025; Secretary of State, 10100; State Treasurer, 10535; Attorney General, 10642.

—From the WEEKLY PEOPLE, January 24, 1925.

Lessons of the Campaign

The vote of the Socialist Labor Party, as completely as we may expect it, is now at hand. The vote for President and Vice President in the twenty states where the Party had electors in the field registers 33,901, a gain of 2,726 over the vote of four years ago.

With the general confusion that existed in the last campaign and with all the flamboyant promises of reforms by politicians who paraded under titles of "Progressives," "Liberals," "Labor-parties" and what

not, it is perhaps remarkable that the S. L. P. should have been able to hold its own and add nearly three thousand votes. It shows beyond a shadow of a doubt that in these twenty states there are about 34,000 S. L. P. men and women upon whom no flim-flam has the slightest effect, that no reformistic piffle can shake their firm revolutionary purpose, and who are not afraid to proclaim the truth even as an insignificant minority. The shock troop, the flying squadron, of 34,000 determined So-

cialist agitators and clear-thinking Marxists is a pledge that the Party is sound and not to be wrecked by any wave that comes along. With that assurance we can afford to bide our time in the certainty that social evolution is working its way toward revolution and the Socialist Industrial Republic.

But there is another story told by the vote of last November—a large sympathetic vote, such as the S.L.P. has never had before. If we add up from each state the largest figure presented by the vote for any of the candidates of the S. L. P. ticket, we get 77,745 votes, a discrepancy of 43,844 between the solid and the largest vote, which discrepancy is larger than the solid vote. It becomes still more emphatic when we take into consideration that the S. L. P. had state tickets in only twelve of the twenty states that were on the presidential ballot, so that these 43,000 sympathetic votes are really given by some eight or ten states only.

As a vote the sympathetic vote is meaningless, even foolish. A person cannot be a revolutionist and an anti-revolutionist, a Socialist sympathizer and a capitalist promoter at one and the same time. But human behavior is peculiar. The worker's lot is not a happy one. Dissatisfaction is rife. The worker has started to think about his present condition and the future. He hears various opinions. He is promised capitalist reform, "socialistic" reform, and now and again he hears the voice of the Socialist Revolution. The Socialist Labor Party's logic appeals to him, but man is naturally conservative; "rather bear those ills we have" than upset society in order to get rid of them. So the worker listens to the

reformer, has listened to him year after year, and has got nothing but troubles and worse conditions for his pains.

But S. L. P. logic continues to ring in his ears. He is compelled to listen — revolution, a complete change in the system, that is the thing, the only remedy, but — but — of course these things can't be done now, at once, this election, in our lifetime, in a hundred years! Still he thinks it ought to be encouraged. Why not? In the meantime perhaps La Follette can give us something, can punish grafters, stop strike injunctions or curb the powers of the Supreme Court. He might as well try once more—in the meantime a vote for Governor or Secretary of State will express sympathy with, and give encouragement to, those irrepressible revolutionists.

Of course, such reasoning is utterly false, but it is, *and* accordingly it must be taken cognizance of. This vote expresses what it is intended to express, sympathy with the S. L. P., part awakening to the necessity of a Socialist revolution. What it shows, therefore, is that there are many thousands in the land that are sympathetic toward the S. L. P., but who need education to become sound revolutionists that can think, act and vote logically. To this end education is needed, much and constant and systematic work, during the next four years. There are more than forty thousand sympathizers in twelve states that can be brought from their present state of wobbliness and uncertainty to become real Socialists—and there are tremendous new fields to plow.

—Editorial in WEEKLY PEOPLE, January 24, 1925.

SIXTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

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45 Rose Street
New York

The Sixteenth National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party

May 1924.

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Convention.

Morning Session, Saturday, May 10

Tolerance corrodes the noblest hearts; it eats away their pride, destroys the active principle of great exploits and makes of mental cowardice a sacred thing. By exacting this pliability of conscience from everybody, certain people seek to obtain absolution for their own treachery and backsliding.—BALZAC.

Intolerance is bad; but rascalliness must not be allowed to sneak in under cover of fighting "intolerance."—DE LEON.

Convention called to order at 11 a. m. by National Secretary Peter-

son who called for the election of a temporary chairman. Kuhn and

Corregan nominated, the latter declining, whereupon Kuhn was unani-

mously elected temporary chairman. The chairman called for nominations

for a vice chairman. De Lee and Grammatcoff nominated, the latter declining and De Lee being unanimously elected vice chairman. Nomina-

tions were called for temporary secretary. J. Brandon, being the only nominee, was unanimously elected.

Motion passed to elect a Credentials Committee of three. Corregan, Strebig and Lang elected.

Motion passed to elect a Committee on Rules of three. Grammatcoff, Kontzin and Johns elected.

Motion passed that a recess of thirty minutes be declared to allow these committees to report. Recess at 11:30 a. m.

Convention reconvened at 11:50 a. m. to hear reports of committees. Committee on Credentials reported that the following delegates who are present should be seated:

A. Burkhardt, Indiana; F. Lang, Maryland; P. O'Rourke, Mass.; G. Speredon, Michigan; H. Peckham, New Jersey (Chas. Schraft, alternate); P. E. De Lee, New York; H. Kuhn, New York; C. Corregan, New York; J. Brandon, New York (M. Anl, alternate); T. Johns, Oregon, H. B. Strebig, Ohio; W. Kruczyzna, Pa.; J. Matthews, Rhode Island; G. Burich, M. Starnich, L. Petrovich, N. Mijator and S. Kontzin, representing the South Slavonian Federation; J. Hokanson, A. Person, Swan Johnson and Alfred Johnson, representing the Scandinavian Federation; F. Zermann and A. Kudlik, representing the Hungarian Federation; S. S. Saraljeff, T. Baeff, G. R. Guenoff, D. Starnicheff, T. Gramaticoff, D. Mincheff and D. D. Dobreff, representing the Bulgarian Federation.

Motion passed that all the delegates reported on be seated.

Upon motion J. Spalji, alternate delegate from Missouri, and I. Harris, alternate delegate from Massachusetts, were seated.

The Committee on Rules reported that it concurs in the recommenda-

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tions of the N. E. C. and submitted the following rules:

Temporary Organization.

1. Election of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary.
2. Election of Committee on Credentials.
3. Election of Committee on Rules.
4. Recess of 30 Minutes.
5. Report of Committee on Credentials; Seating of Delegates.
6. Report of Committee on Rules.

Permanent Organization.

1. Organization
 - a. Election of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary.
 - b. Election of a Permanent Sergeant-at-Arms and a Messenger.
2. Election of Committee on Mileage.
3. Report of the National Executive Committee.
4. Report of the Editor of the WEEKLY PEOPLE.
5. Election of Committee on Constitution and Resolutions Pertaining Thereto.
6. Election of Committee on Platform and Resolutions Pertaining Thereto.

order of business be used for each day after the first day:

1. Election of Chairman.
2. Roll Call of Delegates.
3. Reading of Minutes.
4. Communications.
5. Reports of Committees and Action Thereon.
6. Unfinished Business.
7. New Business.
8. The last half hour of each afternoon session to be devoted to the receiving of resolutions to be read and referred to the appropriate committees.
9. Morning Sessions from 10 a. m. to 12 m. Afternoon Sessions from 2 p. m. to 6 p. m. Evening Sessions If Necessary.

Nomination of candidates for United States President and Vice President to take place the second day of the convention. Election of National Secretary of the Party and Editor of the WEEKLY PEOPLE to take place on the second day of the convention.

Motion passed that report of Committee on Rules be received and recommendations be concurred in.

Henry Kuhn was elected chairman for the day's sessions. P. E. De Lee was elected vice chairman for the day's sessions. J. Brandon was elected permanent secretary. A. Gillhaus was elected sergeant-at-arms. A. Silver was elected messenger. S. Brandon was elected assistant to the secretary.

Motion passed that a Committee on Mileage be elected composed of three delegates. Matthews, De Lee and Zermann elected. Motion passed to distribute badges to the delegates. Motion passed to adjourn until 2 p. m. Adjournment 12:10 p. m.

Session, Saturday afternoon, May 10

Meeting called to order at 2:05 p. m. Minutes of morning session adopted as read. Report of National Executive Committee read by the National Secretary. Telegram containing greetings from Group Zorol, Detroit, Michigan, was received. The convention took a recess during the reading of the report of the N. E. C. at 4:15 p. m.

Convention reconvened at 4:30 p. m. The Committee on Credentials reported the arrival of delegate John Flack of Hungarian S. L. F. and a motion was passed that he be seated. (Continuation of reading of report of N. E. C.) At 5:35 p. m. a motion was made to suspend rules and take up the election of committees.

The Committee on Constitution (5 members): Kuhn, De Lee, Baeff, Petrovich and Corrigan.

The Committee on Platform (3 members): Lang, Johns and Gramathoff.

The Auditing Committee (2 members): Kudlik and Strebzig.

Comrade Richard Koepfel, delegate from Wisconsin, was seated at this point.

Committee on Economic Organization (9 members): De Lee, Koepfel and Zermann.

The Committee on Party Press and Literature (3 members): Kudlik, Kontrin and Pechman.

Committee on International Socialist Movement (3 members): Baeff, Johns, Petrovich.

Committee on National Campaign (5 members): Person, Strebzig, Harsh, Burkhardt and Koepfel.

Roll call of delegates for resolutions.

Motion passed that the report of the N. E. C. be received and referred to the proper committees.

Motion passed that unveiling of bust of De Leon be made a special order of business Sunday, 2 p. m. Motion passed that Comrade Corrigan be asked to make a suitable oration.

Adjournment 6:40 p. m.

Morning Session, Sunday, May 11

Convention opened at 10:30 a. m. by Comrade Kuhn who called for the nomination of a chairman for the day's sessions. P. E. De Lee and H. B. Strebzig were elected chairman and vice chairman respectively.

Comrade Joseph Mackay of the Hungarian S. L. F. was seated as a delegate. Roll call of delegates showed 34 present, 1 (J. Flack) absent. Minutes of Saturday afternoon session were adopted.

Report of editor was read by Comrade O. M. Johnson. Adjournment 12:15 p. m.

Afternoon Session, Sunday, May 11

Meeting called to order by Chairman De Lee at 2 p. m. Roll call showed the same delegates present as at the morning session. Reading of minutes dispensed with.

Unveiling of De Leon's Bust.

1. Chairman's Remarks.
2. Unveiling of Bust by Miss Esther Orange.
3. International, Sung by Comrade Mincheff, Accompanied on the Piano by Mrs. Orange.
4. Oration by Charles E. Corrigan.

Comrade Paul Herzel, the sculptor of the bust, was introduced and a rising vote of thanks given him.

At 2:25 p. m. the convention reconvened as Comrade Johnson resumed the reading of her report as editor of the WEEKLY PEOPLE.

being read paragraph by paragraph, a motion was passed unanimously that the platform be adopted as a whole.

Committee on Resolutions reported the following resolution on Nicolai Lenin and a motion was passed unanimously that it be adopted by a rising vote:

Whereas, On January 21, 1924, at 5:30 p. m., Nicolai Lenin, the Premier of the Russian Soviet Republic, died near Moscow; and

Whereas, Lenin's devotion to principle, his fearlessness, his ability in scolding fakers and traitors in the organization of labor; his utter ruthlessness in attacking such; his clearness and thorough understanding of Marxian principles and the economic foundation of society, and the political and social currents that flow therefrom made him a staunch champion of the workers, loved by them and dreaded and hated by their plunderers; and

Whereas, His death at this important moment in the reconstruction of society in Russia on Socialist lines, and at this critical moment of the world's revolutionary proletariat when capitalist society is crumbling, is an irreparable loss to the world's Revolutionary Movement; and

Whereas, Lenin's creation — the Soviet idea — and De Leon's creation — the Revolutionary Industrial Union idea — each in the respective country serving as scaffolding of the Socialist Republic, establish an affinity between Lenin and our own De Leon, the Russian Revolution and the Socialist Labor Party of America; therefore, be it

Resolved, At the 16th National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party that to our Russian revolution-

ary comrades and to the world's oppressed, we express our heartfelt grief at the loss of this great proletarian revolutionist; and be it further

Resolved, That the National Secretary be directed to forward a copy of these resolutions to the Russian Soviet Government; that a copy be spread on the minutes and that the resolution be published in the WEEKLY PEOPLE and other Party organs.

Motion passed that we receive report of the committee on "Economic Organization." Committee reported favorably on resolution 3 and a motion was passed unanimously to adopt same.

The Committee on Constitution recommended the following changes which were all concurred in: Section 3, Article 2 — to insert an item 2, "roll call and standing of members."

Section 11, Article 2 — the word "branch" be inserted after federation; the word "it" changed to "either" and after the word "state" insert the words "Language federations."

Section 13, Article 2 — that after the words "their cards" be inserted "by means of exemption stamps."

Section 18, Article 2 — to insert after the word "committee" "or of N. E. C. where none such exist."

Section 6, Article 5 — the words "one-third" changed to "a majority."

Article 5, Section 7 — the words "one-third" changed to "a majority."

Article 5, Section 8 — strike out the words "be held" and substitute "convene."

Article 5, Section 10 — strike out last sentence.

Article 5, Section 11, Paragraph

THE LIBRARY
OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF TEXAS
State Conventions the Federation delegates be seated with voice and vote.
Adjournment 6 p. m.
Morning Session, Tuesday, May 13.
Johns was elected chairman and Koepfel vice chairman. Roll call showed 30 delegates present and 5

ERRATA AND OMISSIONS.

Due to an oversight the following acts of the 16th National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party were not recorded in the printed proceedings of the convention:

I.

Proposed by the N. E. C., new section to be known as Section 22, Article 11:

Sec. 22. When a member transfers his membership to another Section, the organizer of the receiving Section shall notify the organizer of the transferring Section of such transfer. The transfer shall not be considered complete until officially confirmed by the receiving Section or other subdivision of the Party and such member shall be under the jurisdiction of the Section, Language Branch, S. E. C. or N. E. C., as the case may be, pending the transfer pending its completion."

II.

Amend Section 1, Article XII, as follows: Change per capita from 6 cents to 8 cents, the amended section to read as follows:

"Section 1. Each Federation shall pay a per capita tax of eight cents per member per month into the national treasury."

Both propositions unanimously adopted by the convention. (See also page 169 of this publication, items 6 and 22.)

Page 4, 1st column, 16th line from top:—"Charman"; read "Chairman."
Page 16, 1st column, 9th line from bottom:—Figure 44,271 should be 31,175.

Pages 159 and 160:
Proposition 6: Grand total (recapitulation) should be 1079 instead of 1078.
Proposition 8: Grand total (recapitulation) should be 1062 instead of 1061.
Proposition 9: Federation total should be 696 instead of 796; grand total (recapitulation) therefore corrected to read: 1075 instead of 1175.
Proposition 12: Grand total (recapitulation) should be 1060 instead of 1064.
Proposition 18d: Section total should be 347 instead of 346; hence grand total should be 1038 instead of 1037.

being read paragraph by paragraph, a motion was passed unanimously that the platform be adopted as a whole.

Committee on Resolutions reported the following resolution on Nicolai Lenin and a motion was passed unanimously that it be adopted by a rising vote:

any comrades and to the world's oppressed, we express our heartfelt grief at the loss of this great proletarian revolutionist; and be it further Resolved, That the National Secretary be directed to forward a copy of these resolutions to the Russian Soviet Government; that a copy be

to change from "5 per cent" to "10 per cent."

Article 7, Section 3—eliminate the words "in January" and "of convention year" and substitute to "five months prior to the date of the convention."

Article 7, Section 4—the words "this provision" to "these provisions."

Article 11, Section 4—to strike out entire section and renumber the succeeding sections.

Article 11, Section 7—to strike out the words from "nor" to "party" and insert the word "only" before "with," and at the end of the sentence add the words, "and in the absence of such by the N. E. C."

Article 7, Section 5—to strike out entire section and insert the following: "The expenses of the delegates shall be borne by the States and Federations sending them, excepting, however, their railroad fare coming and going, which latter shall be defrayed from a special mileage fund to be collected by the National Executive Committee by means of a special annual assessment of twenty-five (25) cents per member and for which a stamp shall be issued. The National Executive Committee shall bank the funds so collected in a savings bank, the same to be drawn against only immediately prior to the holding of the National Convention."

In regard to resolution on non-resident members the committee recommended non-concurrence. Motion passed that this matter be recommended.

On roll call for resolution the following was handed in by delegates Kudlik, Zermann and Mackey of the Hungarian Federation: "That in

State Conventions the Federation delegates be seated with voice and vote."

Adjournment 6 p. m.

Morning Session, Tuesday, May 13.
Johns was elected chairman and Koepfel vice chairman. Roll call showed 30 delegates present and 5 absent. Minutes of Monday afternoon session adopted.

Committee on Constitution reported on resolution submitted re Federation Branches having representation in State Conventions and recommended the adoption of the following. To amend Art. XII, Section 4, as follows:

"Branches of the Federations shall be represented in the State Conventions and State Executive Committees of the Party with vote and voice upon all matters pertaining to the conduct of political campaigns, but they shall not participate in decisions pertaining to internal Party matters, as to do so would mean the exercise of dual membership functions." Motion passed to adopt the recommendation of the committee.

To amend Art. II, Section 18, the following was recommended: "Residents in unorganized localities may join any convenient Section located in their respective state or become members-at-large and as such be subject to the supervision of the State Executive Committee, or the National Executive Committee where none such exists, in the same manner as a member of a Section." Motion passed that this be adopted.

The Committee on Economic Organization reported the following and recommended its adoption: "Whereas, It has been demon-

strated that the organization heretofore known as the W. I. U., largely composed of members of the S. L. P., proved a serious hindrance and obstacle to the further growth of the S. L. P.; and

"Whereas, The N. E. C. of the S. L. P., at its regular session in May, 1928, recognized the fact that the best interests of the S. L. P. were impaired by the continued existence of such an encumbrance; therefore be it

"Resolved, That this the 16th National Convention of the S. L. P. endorse the resolution adopted by the N. E. C. of the S. L. P. in regular annual session, May, 1928, the said resolution being known as the 'Resolution on Concentration of Energy.'"

Motion made to concur in the recommendation of the committee with the exception of the preamble. Amendment made to strike out of the motion the words "with the exception of the preamble." The chair ruled that the amendment was out of order and upon appeal his decision was sustained. Substitute motion made that the report of the committee be adopted and this was carried.

The Auditing Committee reported that the books of the National Office were found to have been properly audited and in good order, and that the Mileage Committee's accounts were audited and were found to be O. K. Motion passed to accept the report of the committee.

The Committee on Party Press and Literature reported on resolutions submitted by Section St. Paul re Press Security League and raising of dues, and recommending unfavorably. A motion was passed to concur in the report of the committee.

The committee reported the following resolution on the WEEKLY PEOPLE and it was adopted:

"The Party press, its official organ, the WEEKLY PEOPLE, is the most potent agency in spreading the educational and organization work of the S. L. P. To the extent the WEEKLY PEOPLE is being read by the vast masses of the working class, to that extent the ideas of the S. L. P. are getting hold of the masses. If the circulation of the WEEKLY PEOPLE is large, the influence of the S. L. P. teaching will be large; if the circulation of the WEEKLY PEOPLE is small, the influence of the S. L. P. must be small. The goal of the S. L. P. is the Socialist Revolution. To accomplish this, the mental revolution must first take place in every or most every participant in that great act. To accomplish this, the circulation of the WEEKLY PEOPLE must be in millions of copies. Due to various causes, the circulation of the WEEKLY PEOPLE is in a most deplorable condition. To remedy this state of affairs, the 16th National Convention of the S. L. P. most seriously resolves:

"1. The minimum number of subscriptions of the WEEKLY PEOPLE per week should not be less than 250. This can be accomplished with not much difficulty if every member of the Party would do his share.

"2. In such localities where the WEEKLY PEOPLE is not being sold on the regular newsstands, the Sections and the members-at-large should make every endeavor to place the WEEKLY PEOPLE on the stands for sale.

"3. Several campaign issues of the

WEEKLY PEOPLE shall be published and State Executive Committees should take every necessary action that as many as possible are placed in the hands of voters.

"4. Every Section and Federation Branch should arrange a suitable entertainment once a year at the call of the N. E. C. and the net proceeds are to be turned over to the WEEKLY PEOPLE.

"5. The N. E. C. should use every legitimate means to enforce this resolution."

Motion passed to take a collection for the WEEKLY PEOPLE and \$56.60 was collected.

Adjournment at 12.15 p. m.

Afternoon Session, Tuesday, May 13

Roll call showed 30 delegates present, 5 absent. Zernann excused. Telegram from "Radnicka Bomba Printing Wage Slaves," containing greetings, received.

Committee on Party Press and Literature reported two resolutions and after some discussion they were adopted as follows:

Resolution on Party Literature:

"Whereas, The Party for the last few years employed Comrade Henry Kuhn for the purpose of going over the files of the DAILY and WEEKLY PEOPLE, while our late Comrade, Daniel De Leon, edited them, to pick out such editorials that have educational, instructive and historical value to our movement, to assort them according to their respective subjects, and later to be published in pamphlet form; and

"Whereas, As a result of that work the Party now has a few of those subjects ready to be published in pamphlet form, but for the lack of

funds only two have been thus far published; be it

"Resolved, That the 16th National Convention instructs the N. E. C. of the Party to issue a special financial appeal to various labor and fraternal organizations to contribute financially toward this fund"; and be it further

"Resolved, To request the headquarters of those Language Federations that own their own printing plants to take upon themselves the task to publish at their own expense at least one pamphlet each year."

[The committee was under a misapprehension in regard to this matter. The chairman of the committee stated that had they known that it was not a question of pamphlets, but of books, averaging 400 to 500 pages, they would have made no such recommendation, it being understood that Federation plants have not the capacity for doing such work.—A. P.]

Resolution on Foreign Literature:

"Whereas, In some sections of the foreign-speaking workers that have not as yet organized sub-divisions of the S. L. P., there is a demand for a closer information as to the teachings of our Party, but for the want of Party's literature in those respective languages, the wanted information cannot be supplied, be it

"Resolved by the 16th National Convention that the N. E. C. be instructed to do all in its power to find competent men to do the translation in such foreign languages that are interested in our Party's teachings and then to publish such translations in leaflet or pamphlet form, and to issue a call to those workers to raise a fund for the purpose of publishing those pamphlets."

Committee on Platform and Resolutions reported on Resolution 1, "Resolution on International Situation," and recommended its adoption. Motion passed to that effect.

Committee reported on Resolution 2, on "Reactionary Forces," and its recommendation that that be adopted was concurred in.

On Resolution 4, on "International Relations," the committee's recommendation that it be approved was also adopted, after a motion to re-commit was lost.

The Campaign Committee submitted the following recommendations which were unanimously adopted:

"The committee endorses the call for the \$50,000 Fund, the issuance of certificates and other various steps already taken by the N. E. C., and also makes the following recommendations to the convention:

"Finances: Every effort should be made by the Sections and Branches to reach the goal of \$50,000 set by the N. E. C. and suggests the following methods:

"1. The National Campaign Manager should, with information supplied by the National Office records, apportion the \$50,000 among the various States, Federations and unattached Sections and urge the various parts to make an effort to raise their share by any method they may choose, any means they see fit to use, among them the following:

"a. Getting names of former members, former readers and sympathizers and solicit them for as much as they will stand for;

"b. Have wives and women friends, as well as the women members of the Party, solicit funds from all sources, including tradesmen whom they trade with;

"c. Have members circulate lists at all meetings or any other places such as a house-to-house canvass or approaching of persons on streets.

"Nominating tickets: Our first and most important duty in this campaign is to place the Party's name on the ballot in every state where we have Party organizations. The National Campaign Manager shall keep in touch with all State Committees and Sections who are nominating tickets to see that the work is being carried on with all possible energy.

"We recommend that this work be directed in states by demonstrators employed by the National Campaign Committee whose work shall be to get the members of Sections, Language Branch members, sympathizers and any others who can be enlisted to help in the procuring of signatures.

"Publicity: We urge the creation of a National Publicity Committee to advertise the Party in every conceivable way through the channels of the various press syndicates such as the Associated Press and the United Press Association."

Moved at 4 p. m. to take a recess for 5 minutes. Convention reconvened at 4:05 p. m.

The following motion was made: "Moved that this convention send its revolutionary greetings to Comrade Chas. E. Manuels, of Columbia, Pa." Amendment to send him \$100 as well. Amendment to the amendment that we take up a collection was passed and upon the collection being taken up the sum of \$53 was raised.

Motion passed to send our greetings to Comrade Felleman. Motion passed to take up a col-

lection for the campaign fund, \$94.70 was donated by the comrades present. A roll call of delegates was made for their reports on conditions in the various parts of the country. Motion passed that the N. E. C., in making up its rules for next con-

vention move up reports of delegates to the second day of the convention. The convention adjourned sine die at 6:45 p. m. after the minutes of this afternoon's session were adopted.

Joseph Brandon,
Recording Secretary.

THE REPORT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO THE CONVENTION.

Introductory Survey.

The Sixteenth National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party assembled at a moment of unparalleled opportunities for revolutionary Socialism. The capitalist system is unmistakably in its death throes. The working class as a whole is quite disillusioned as regards the old political parties—disillusioned to the point of cynicism. This, of course, does not mean that the workers understand their true class position, nor that they are ready for Socialism. They are not. It does mean, however, that they no longer take seriously the sham battles between the two old parties. They seem at least to understand that it is nothing more than a battle between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. That large numbers still vote one or the other of the two old party tickets must be explained on the theory that masses continue to do a thing because they have been in the habit of doing it, and because they, as yet, see nothing else to do. The fact, however, that very large numbers fail to vote at all, or even to register, is a clear indication of the general tendency of

indifference and political cynicism.

The top-capitalists themselves realize that the time has come, or that it is fast approaching, when the heroic poems of the two old parties must cease. Such representative men—representative of top-capitalism—as Frank Munsey and Professor Butler spoke within recent times in no uncertain terms on this very subject, pointing out that there is no difference between the Republican party and the Democratic party, and that all those who believe in the existing order should form one common party, while all others should join the opposition party. In short—and accepting the complete logic of this suggestion—these spokesmen of top-capitalism in effect correctly pointed out that at this day and age there is room for only two parties: the party of capitalism and the party of the social revolution. We can heartily concur in this view and join in the hope that a consummation so devoutly wished for may be speedily brought about.

That the present social system is rapidly going to pieces is becoming manifest even to those who are not

so fortunate as to possess the Marxian key of social and economic interpretation. Europe as a whole is a wreck. Large masses are suffering in misery, being bereft of not only hope, but of a social vision and strength to realize a social vision if they had it. This condition was, of course, the direct result of the war. But the war itself was but an incident—an important one, it is true—an incident growing out of the inherent contradictions of the capitalist system: On the one hand an ever expanding process of production; on the other hand, a narrower and ever more restricted market, resulting in unemployment, bankruptcies, etc., etc. The capitalist system had reached a point where it could no longer expand except at the expense of the system as a whole, and by crushing powerful capitalist units—and then it could do so only for a brief period. The World War was inevitable because capitalist society had exhausted the resources normal to its existence. But the war would not have been inevitable if the workers had been properly organized, as unfortunately they were not.

The end of the war brought to capitalists everywhere a sense of impending disaster. When, for instance, the Italian workers rose in rebellion, the masters of industry, panic-stricken, hastened to turn their plants over to them. Elsewhere there were similar, though less extreme indications of the same panic. It may be recalled that no less an industrial feudalist than Charles M. Schwab (the "iron-master") declared in public print that he had seen the handwriting on the wall, and that he for one was ready to surrender on the terms of the workers. His statement is of interest,

not only because he made it, but because it is thoroughly representative of the feeling prevailing among the top-capitalists (the industrial feudal barons) at the time. In the *New York Tribune*, date of Jan. 25, 1918, under the rather startling headline, "Schwab Predicts Workingmen Will Control the World," he said among other things:

"The time is coming when the men of the working classes, the men without property, will control the destinies of this world of ours. It means that the Bolshevik sentiment must be taken into consideration and in the very near future. We must look to the worker for a solution of the economic conditions now being considered."

And this:

"I am not one to carelessly turn over my belongings to the uplift of the nation, but I am one who has come to a belief that the worker will rule, and the sooner we come to a realization of this the better it will be for our country and the world at large.

"This great change is going to be a social adjustment. I repeat that it will be a great hardship to those who control property, but perhaps in the end it will work estimably to the good of us all. Therefore, it is our duty not to oppose, but to instruct, to meet, and to mingle with the views of others."

To what extent the Schwabs have adhered to the injunction, "It is our duty not to oppose," etc., the persecutions by capitalist governments of dissenters of every shade since 1918 bear ample testimony.

The workers are too apt to think

of the industrial master as a terrible and ferocious being. The examples noted in the foregoing prove conclusively that the bourgeois is at heart a coward. He is a bully so long as he thinks himself secure, but let the giant labor make an untoward turn—let the working class bend its collective little finger and the whole pack of industrial lords (very unlike their feudal progenitors) will howl for mercy. As De Leon so well put it (pointing out that the capitalist is essentially a swindler):

"Now then, the swindler is a coward. Like a coward, he will play the bully, as we see the capitalist class doing, toward the weak, the weak because disgraced, working class. Before the strong the bully crawls. Let the political temperature rise to the point of danger, then . . . your capitalist will quake in his stolen boots; he will not dare to fight; he will flee."

Let the workers assert themselves in their united collective strength, let them organize politically and industrially, and their quondam industrial masters will fall over each other to save their skins in the manner illustrated by the valiant Charles M. Schwab.

However, the workers were not properly prepared for Socialism. The economic groundwork, the industrial framework, so to speak, was indeed there, but the workers themselves were not aware of what to do and how to do it, and the labor faker (the plebs leader) was, of course, doing his share to frustrate the workers' efforts toward emancipation.

The reaction soon set in. The masters recovered from their panic,

and, as was ever the case, reprisals became the order of the day. The reaction is in full bloom in Italy and Hungary. It is no less so in Germany. To Social Democratic Germany, indeed, belongs the infamy of having dealt most ruthlessly with the revolting workers. Elsewhere on the continent, outside of Russia, the reaction rules supreme, though not with the same brutality and undisguised contempt for the old fashioned bourgeois democracy—a contempt that is most pronounced in such countries as Italy and Hungary. Russia alone remains a hope and a promise, though a hope much deferred and a promise of somewhat doubtful value. For if Russia on the one hand has served to awaken the proletarian spirit of revolt everywhere, it has, on the other hand, been responsible for much confusion and demoralization in the working class movements, notably in this country—in fact, everywhere in the English-speaking countries. As Soviet Russia, properly speaking, belongs under the head of International Movement, we shall reserve a consideration of same for later comment.

We shall now proceed to a more or less chronological review of Party activities since 1920.

The National Campaign of 1920.

The National Convention of 1920 nominated W. W. Cox of Missouri and August Gillhaus of New York for the presidency and vice presidency, respectively. An intense campaign was conducted. At one time we had 22 speakers and organizers in the field, and S. I. P. literature was distributed in vast quantities over the entire country. Approximately 1,110,000 leaflets

were distributed free, aside from the sale and distribution of pamphlets and copies of the Party's various organs.

The result in point of votes was by no means what we had a right to expect. One reason for our failure to receive a larger vote is found in the fact of the many legal obstacles which a number of states, particularly the large industrial states, put in the way of minority parties. Thus we failed to get on the ballot in Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Wisconsin and Virginia. In all of these states we had organizations, and under ordinary circumstances we should have gotten on the ballot. In Ohio especially we would have polled a considerable vote, partly because of the number of Sections and Branches in that state, partly because of the very considerable agitation carried on, and also because the Socialist Labor Party was the only party with a ticket in the field claiming to represent the working class. It is idle to speculate, but it seems reasonable to suppose that if we had not failed to get on the ballot in the above mentioned states we should have doubled our vote. As it was, we got on the ballot in the following states:

Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Washington.

The total vote polled was 44,271, as compared with 14,398 in 1916.

The S. L. P. is not a vote-chasing party. We justly disdain a vote which we do not deserve, that is, a vote cast by one in ignorance of the real nature of the Party's principles. On the other hand, we most emphatically want every vote to which we

are entitled. We want such votes for obvious reasons—not, indeed, because we expect to secure power gradually by the aid of these votes, but because at this time the vote cast for a party such as the S. L. P. is the only fairly definite and tangible way of approximating the extent of our influence, though even the vote, at this time and under the present unsettled conditions, is by no means conclusive evidence on that point.

Our experience in the past should impress upon us with the necessity of exerting every legitimate effort to get on the ballot in the various states. We should bend a great deal of energies in this direction, not failing (as indeed we shall not) to carry on simultaneously our educational propaganda, without which all effort by a party claiming to be Socialist may be said to be wasted.

Special efforts should also be made to establish close connection with those who signed the Party's petition lists. Where possible these should be circularized with Party literature, sample copies of the WEEKLY PEOPLE, etc. In some cases it may be a physical impossibility to do this in its entirety, but that is no good reason for not doing it as far as it is possible.

Other Party Activities.

During the early part of 1921 H. M. Lichtenstein was put on the road as organizer. It was believed that he possessed the necessary qualifications, and in certain respects he did, indeed, "fill the bill." Unfortunately, he lacked tact, failed to understand the psychology of the workers, and already then manifested an aloofness resulting from (as it later developed) an exaggerated notion of his own importance as contrasted with

the (to him) inferior status of the highlighted "average" S. L. P. member. Later, when he developed a complete case of what popularly has been described as "enlargement of the cocoon," he was dismissed as organizer. The immediate reason for his dismissal was lack of funds, but in any case he would have been recalled at the time owing to the increasing indications of unfitness for the task entrusted to him.

The agitation in the coal field had been carried on for some time prior to the last convention, and in 1921 it became necessary to discontinue paid organizers. Partly because of the amount of money spent there, and partly as a matter of record, we reproduce herewith the major part of the report submitted at the time by Comrade Fred Koch:

"Springfield, Ill., May 2, 1921.

Mr. Arnold Petersen,
Dear Comrade:

At the close of my work as organizer in the coal fields, I wish to make my final report, as follows:

With the close of the World War, members of the S. L. P. in Illinois arrived at the conclusion that then was an opportune time to rebuild and strengthen the Party organization in the State. The national organization was appealed to for aid, and the latter, after very careful study of the matter, decided to issue a nation-wide appeal for funds for this work. Two, three, and at times as many as four organizers were employed and large and enthusiastic meetings held. New Sections were organized at West Frankfort, Orient, Caseyville and Sesser. But these

Sections soon lapsed, due mainly to the unsettled conditions in the new mining camps and the consequent large labor turnover, amounting in some places to as much as 80 per cent per annum of the total force of workmen employed. Only to the extent that members of such Sections have been developed and are able to spread the S. L. P. message in their new places of employment is the work of organizing in such places NOT a total waste of energy and substance. Another drawback to the agitation conducted in the English language is the large percentage of workers unable to understand that language. In the important mining camp of Zeigler this is 90 out of every 100 men employed. However, the Party has benefited by our agitation in these places inasmuch as our foreign language branches have been greatly encouraged and strengthened and a number of new ones organized.

Up to the time of the outbreak of the wild-cat strike of the Illinois miners, in the summer of 1919, no appreciable reaction had been produced by our activity. With the commencement of that strike, which had been denounced by the S. L. P. as being bound to lead to disaster and certain defeat, conditions changed. The S. L. P. intensified its work of education, while the leaders of the strike, mostly graduates from the S. P. school of counter-revolutionaries, strove with might and main to obtain positions at the pie-counter. When they failed in this, when Farrington and his crew prevailed, and hundreds of men were victimized, this gang tried to put the

blame for their criminal folly on the S. L. P. And since the Farrington machine had by this time fully realized the danger to its own rule contained in the agitation carried on by the S. L. P. the hitherto warring brethren found common ground for a most vicious attack on the Party and its men. A veritable reign of terror commenced and often were our lives and limbs in jeopardy. However, our very aggressiveness, and the inherent sense of the workers for fair play, was our best protection. Still, fakedom was strong enough to prevent the election of S.L.P. delegates to the national convention of the miners in Cleveland in the fall of 1919, as likewise to the state convention of the Illinois miners in Peoria in the spring of 1920. But Big Bull Farrington was so thoroughly scared of the S. L. P. by this time that he found it necessary to test the temper of the delegates at the latter convention for five whole days before he attempted to throw the S. L. P. visitors from the convention hall.

From then on our course ran fairly smooth. Farrington and his pooodles had given the S. L. P. more voluntary advertising than could have been, in my opinion, purchased with our whole Agitation Fund. And much more might have been accomplished had it not been for the machinations of that little bunch of self-seekers in former Section Du Quoin, and certain elements in Section Car-

ton.
When the strike of the switchmen came along, in the spring of 1920, we were again, of course, in

a position to predict the outcome. These men, at first, had a positive dread of the S. L. P., but some of them had seen us in action against the miners' fakers, and in the measure as we proved to them that we did not want anything for ourselves, and as our predictions proved correct, did we gain their confidence, were admitted to their meetings and later even made honorary members of their new organization. Big meetings of railroaders were addressed by our speakers and much literature was sold. A paper, at first called *The Yardman*, later on *United Railroad Employes' News*, was called into existence in St. Louis and its columns opened to the S. L. P. agitators. The paper soon died because of lack of support, but some of the men joined the S. L. P. and these men are carrying on the struggle of keeping their organization and the agitation for Industrial Unionism alive and clean. Whether they will succeed is a question. They have not been strong enough to prevent the organization getting into the hands of a new set of fakers, nationally speaking, and since many of their best members realize that they will never get a job back under the present regime and have found employment in other industries, they are drifting away and losing their interest in the fight.

When the present panic first struck in this part of the country, last fall and winter, and thousands of workers were laid off from the packing-house and steel industries, large meetings were held by us in the East St. Louis-

Granite City district. For the first time workers engaged in the mining, food, steel, and transportation industries were brought together and shown that their interests and their fights were common to all members of the working class. These meetings must be continued as far as our resources will permit.

It is to be regretted that we have not been able to produce the kind of results which would induce the membership of the S.L.P. to continue the support of the agitation at this time, but I am convinced, with the rest of the members in this state, that the money spent has not been wasted, and that the fight must be kept up, at any cost. The opposition to our propaganda has been driven to cover and can now function only in an underhanded way. The power of the faker is on the wane, he can no longer prevent us from reaching the rank and file. Following the example of Sub-District 7 of the U. M. W. of A., Sub-District 4 has lately instructed its local unions to open their meetings to the advocates of true Industrial Unionism. The best, and mentally most alert, members of our class are coming our way, while the great mass observes what might be termed an attitude of friendly neutrality. The next move forced upon this mass will demonstrate the extent to which S. L. P. teaching has taken root.

Yours fraternally,
Fred Koeh."

At its 1921 session the N. E. C. decided to send two representatives to the 3rd Congress of the 3rd Inter-

national which was to convene that year at Moscow. We are all familiar with the outcome of this undertaking. It need only be stated that the two representatives, Comrades Goerke and Smilansky, acquitted themselves of their difficult mission fact and with credit to the S. L. P. To the extent that further references may be needed in this connection these will be made when we come to consider the International Movement.

During 1922, comrades were engaged, off and on, to secure subs and sell Party literature in certain industrial centers, notably Chicago and St. Paul. Party activities otherwise were rather at a low ebb, and in order to revive activities the N. E. C. decided to put Comrade Goerke in the field. The idea was to tour Comrade Goerke east and west, but owing to lack of support the tour was abandoned after a good part of the east had been covered. As the conditions and obstacles of that period are still largely with us, and as Comrade Goerke's experiences and impressions are of value and general interest, his report on his tour is reproduced here:

"Garrettsville, O.
December 31, 1922.

Mr. Arnold Petersen,
45 Rose St.,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Comrade:

Having completed my tour of the eastern states, I desire to state my opinion of how I found the field and what results the efforts may have brought forth. I began the work with the impression that there was a general demand on the part of the Sections throughout the country for agitational work

of this kind. It must be stated, however, that practically everywhere a spirit prevailed which indicated to me that it was thrust upon the membership. While under such circumstances no great enthusiasm was manifested it must not be thought that the Sections failed to do the necessary preliminary work for the meetings. But this necessary work was done with a spirit that lacked optimism and it is to be feared that only a part of the membership did its duty.

Practically every Section was of the opinion that its particular field of activity was the least promising of any in the country; and all expected to be cheered up with the report that everywhere else things were moving much better. Everywhere, however, I received the assurance that Party work and the organization as a whole would not be neglected; that knowledge of the correctness of the Party's principles and its program of action would carry us safely through this trying period of apparent working class indifference to its inevitable fate.

It is harder now than ever to get workmen to attend hall meetings. They seem to be afraid to be seen at meetings that suggest anything 'red.' There is plenty of growing and discontent on their part and they look into the future with a great deal of dread and apprehension, but will not make any move in their own behalf. In fact, it would seem that they are trying to forget rather than to hear the matter discussed. They seek peace of mind by avoiding the issue. Each and all seem to be guarding their jobs

or the chance for one and deliberately sidestep anything that, to them, would jeopardize their precarious living and dread to be seen at meetings where revolution is preached. This state of mind seems to be general and is expressed by Party members everywhere as being the cause of non-attendance of advertised meetings.

Having observed all this, I cannot rid myself of a growing conviction that the Third International, by 'putting' in on the Socialist movement in America with its advocacy of 'armed uprisings' with all of its implications, a bloody revolution for instance, has done great harm to Socialist propaganda which will be very hard to overcome. The capitalist press has not been slow in making good use of it. By giving this idea sufficient publicity, great numbers of workers have been imbued with a dread of what is to come. But all of them hope that it will not come in their time. What is more, they seem to know that times and indications are bad enough, but not bad enough to cause these dreaded upheavals, for which they are 'truly thankful' and look with disfavor upon any one that comes along to disturb them in this delicately balanced sense of security. The S. P. is out of the way but an equally confusing element has placed itself in the way of S. L. P. agitation and organization.

It is self-evident that our work must continue in spite of all obstacles. I, however, hold that a contemplated continuation of my tour covering the western part of the country should be abandoned

unless there is a general urge on the part of the Sections for such work. It would bring no results at the present time considering the expense involved.

I have observed another thing on my tour that ought to be taken into consideration. There is one thing the Party needs at the present time above all things, at least to my mind, and that is *publicity*. The S. L. P. is not *dead* but only *few* workmen know that it is *alive*. The capitalist press does not discuss the S. L. P. for reasons quite obvious, and consequently the workers do not learn of its existence through that medium. We will have to do our own advertising. The name, Socialist Labor Party, must be flashed before the eyes of the working class. Not until it becomes more generally known will the workers evince any desire to know what it has to say. In such localities where the Sections have local speaking talent and such speakers are willing to speak for the Party, at least on occasion, and these occasions must be regular, the Party name and the organization's existence are more familiar and more generally known. As a result the Section functions and does active propaganda work. But in such Sections that have no speakers, things look hopeless for the time being. Its existence is practically unknown to the workers of the town, and when a visiting speaker comes and a meeting is half-heartedly advertised it arouses no interest. Several thousand throwaways were distributed along the route which I toured. This might have done some good, even though not many workers were attracted to

meetings, if the Party name had been boldly flashed and made the main feature of the printed matter. It would have at least advertised the Party, but this way it did no good at all. It is true that space was provided for advertising the local Section, and generally it was done but to no good effect. In the first place it was too obscure and in most cases it was done in an abbreviated form that could be understood only by Party members. On two occasions this space was not filled in at all. When I objected, the members came back with the astounding opinion that they thought better results could be expected if Socialism and the Socialist Labor Party were not mentioned at all!

I would like to make the following suggestion, and hope the Sub-Committee will give it consideration: First, when in the future handbills are printed for distribution advertising public meetings, etc., not only by the National Office, but anywhere in the country, the Sections should be advised to feature with all the prominence possible the Party name. Second, I think the Sections throughout the country should be put to work advertising the Party by the distribution of leaflets from house to house at regular intervals. No impossible task should be suggested, but I hold that if the idea is properly explained and the advantages pointed out to the members one thousand leaflets a month could be distributed by the weakest Sections in the country. Third, the form of our leaflets should be changed; at present it is always the argument that is emphasized.

The Socialist Labor Party that advocates the principles advanced in these arguments is as a rule mentioned in a more or less incidental way; at least the mechanical make-up of our leaflets has that form. I therefore propose that in the future the leaflets to be distributed should be printed in such a manner that if the recipient of such a leaflet reads nothing else we must not allow him to escape without having him read the name 'Socialist Labor Party' at the very *head*, not the *tail* of the leaflet.

The distribution of leaflets in such a form, systematically and generally conducted all over the country, will in the first place put the members to work, thereby doing the only effective propaganda possible at the present time by the majority of Sections; and after having the purpose properly explained to them they will work cheerfully, knowing that if even they do not make S. L. P. men by their efforts right off the reel, they will realize that their efforts are not all in vain, they are at least advertising the Party. Let the watchword be, 'Publicity.'

After that when visiting speakers come to localities there is that foundation to work upon. At the risk of overemphasizing the point I insist that the name of that foundation is 'Publicity.'

Yours fraternally,
(Signed) John D. Goerke."

Some of the suggestions made by Comrade Goerke have been carried out. At its session in 1923 the N. E. C. impressed upon the membership the vital necessity of distributing leaflets in a systematic manner.

Many Sections have taken hold of this in a creditable manner, but there is still much room for improvement.

The National Convention of 1920 instructed your N. E. C. to consider the matter of placing together under one roof the various Federation headquarters and plants together with the national headquarters of the Party. For a number of reasons, which were dealt with in the report to the N. E. C. of 1922, this plan was found impracticable, and the Party membership by referendum vote concurred in this view. A new lease of the present headquarters was obtained on terms which, everything considered, were favorable, the new lease expiring May, 1928.

During the latter part of 1923 and early part of 1924, Comrade Sam J. French was placed in the field to rearouse the spirit of the membership in middle western states, and to rehabilitate Sections where they had ceased to function properly or reorganize such Sections as had temporarily collapsed. To a considerable extent Comrade French was successful. Section Canton, Ill., was reorganized. In Indiana a new Section was reorganized in Evansville, with members from the old Section of some years ago rejoining. Besides, a State Committee was organized in Indiana and the prospects in Indiana look bright. The tour of Comrade French has been temporarily discontinued, but as soon as possible after the convention he will undoubtedly be put in the field again.

The Los Angeles Case.

During the summer of 1922 we received the rather startling news that practically every member of Section Los Angeles had been arrested.

Technically, they were arrested as members of the W. I. I. U., the charge being that they had violated the State Criminal Syndicalist Act. The National Office took immediate steps to prepare adequate defense for the comrades, as well as to collect the needed funds. Eventually the case against them was quashed for lack of evidence.

As has been pointed out elsewhere, there is no doubt that the authorities were aiming at the S. L. P. in arresting these S. L. P. members. To quote from the report of the National Secretary to the N. E. C. in session 1923:

"It is one thing to persecute a 'labor union'; it is quite another to persecute a political party. The traitors attached to the 'rights' of a 'labor union' are not nearly as strong and deep rooted as are those that attach to a political party—above all a political party such as the S. L. P. which, while thoroughly revolutionary, nevertheless plants itself upon such a ground that it cannot be successfully attacked without such an attack reaching seriously upon the attackers—in this case the capitalist class in California."

Though the case against these members of the S. L. P. terminated to our satisfaction, it was nevertheless attended by several disagreeable features. One was the desertion of two of the defendants, H. S. Carroll and his wife. For the time being the treachery of these two individuals caused a great deal of anxiety and every possible effort was made to bring them back, without success. We are informed, however, that after the case was settled in our favor

both of these individuals returned to Los Angeles. Needless to say, they were expelled by Section Los Angeles as were those other members who aided and abetted them in their cowardly treachery.

Another disagreeable feature was the friction that arose between what is cursorily referred to as the W. I. I. U. headquarters at Troy and the National Office of the S. L. P. This matter, however, properly belongs under the head of "W.I.I.U.," and will be dealt with more fully when we come to that.

We had, of course, other obstacles to contend with in this connection. As a matter of course we made a general appeal to all who pretended to stand for constitutional rights, particularly to those who claim to represent the progressive or "revolutionary" movements. That the Los Angeles case would be ignored by the out and out capitalist press was, of course, to be expected. The so-called radical and liberal press did not fall behind its out and out capitalist cousins in the conspiracy of silence directed against the Party in connection with the assault upon constitutional rights in Los Angeles. Only a few of these papers made mention of the matter and then in the briefest possible manner. The American Civil Liberties Union (which had promised support but which failed to do much beyond rendering lip service) congratulated the Party upon the successful outcome of the case, regretting that their efforts "produced so few results," adding "the case did not seem to take hold with the radical or liberal press." The National Secretary replied as follows:

"October 19, 1922.

Mr. Roger Baldwin,
Director, American Civil Liberties Union,
138 W. 13th St.,
New York City.

My dear Mr. Baldwin:

Thank you for your letter of Oct. 18. I can thoroughly agree with you that the ('Los Angeles) case did not seem to take hold with the radical and liberal press, though I am unable to accept your suggestion as a reason for this phenomenon.

If the 'radical and liberal press' ignored the case because 'they figured it was a ridiculous attack without substance in fact,' then the conclusion is inescapable that the said radical and liberal press (including the S. P., the I. W. W., the 'Communist,' the honest-to-goodness-liberal, and presumably the A. F. of L. or 'labor' papers) is extremely naive. It would be merely another way of saying that the reaction is patiently waiting for cases with a 'substance in fact.'

The S. L. P. is not deluded nor carried away by this victory—for a real victory it is, not merely over the reaction in California, but over every 'Communist,' I. W. W., and other physical force advocate as well. The victory in Los Angeles will not insure the S. L. P. against similar attacks in the future. The real significance of this victory lies in this: The reaction recognizes that it cannot proceed successfully against the S. L. P. without at the same time overthrowing, definitely and absolutely, the Constitution. This the gentlemen in Los Angeles either

feared to do now, or they do not consider the time propitious.

The principle involved in the Socialist Labor Party Los Angeles case was: Is it a crime to advocate a social revolution with a complete and fundamental change, substituting for the present state or political machinery an industrial administration that will know neither congress, senate nor supreme court as at present constituted? If this program could be declared illegal, the Constitution, ipso facto, would cease to exist, both in fact and in theory. The S. L. P. case in Los Angeles involved something far more fundamental than local rights of free speech, etc. That, I think, is clear to thinking people.

The reaction will make renewed attempts, though they will proceed less clumsily next time. Gradually our constitutional rights will vanish. The I. W. W., the 'Communists' and kindred groups are cooperating faithfully with the Plutocracy to accelerate this process. The Socialist Labor Party, on the contrary, proposes to fight the Plutocracy every inch, and we propose to do this without entertaining the slightest illusion concerning the absolute infallibility of constitutional procedure. We propose to do this, in the first place, because it is the logical thing to do; in the second place, because it tends to prolong the period in which it may be possible to organize, on the industrial field, the force necessary to insure success to the social revolution and the new social order; and, finally, because there is no other method known through which, with reasonable certainty, the will

of the majority (i. e., the wage workers) can be ascertained.

Reverting to what may have been the reason for the attitude of the 'liberal and radical' press, I venture the opinion that it is almost entirely due to that senseless hatred which all the above named groups (and their press) entertain toward the Socialist Labor Party. To discuss here the reasons for that hatred would lead me too far afield. But that hatred is, in its essence, the unwilling tribute which error always pays to truth.

Sincerely and fraternally yours,
(Signed) Arnold Petersen,
National Secretary.

A reply was received in which it was conceded that the attitude toward the S. L. P. on the part of "other radical groups" undoubtedly was what the National Secretary had described it to be. The Civil Liberties Union closed this letter by stating, "Any organization like yours, which has been so clear-cut in its advocacy in its constitutional means, carries its case in its own show window." While in a case such as the Los Angeles affair it is annoying to be the victim of a conspiracy of silence on the part of the capitalist and bourgeois press, it nevertheless is a compliment conferred upon the S. L. P. It amounts to saying that the dividing line is between the S. L. P. and all other groups in capitalist society. We may as well recognize this state of affairs and realize that we will have to reckon with it in the future in any case of importance involving the existence and welfare of the S. L. P., i. e., the custodian of the truly proletarian, revolutionary principles in this country.

Internal Disturbances.

As perhaps was to be expected, we have been navigating through troubled waters since the last convention. Not the least of our troubles proceed from the uncertainty and, to some extent, the stubbornness and wrong-headedness on the part of individuals in the organization who, finding themselves in a minority on certain questions, refuse to abide by the decisions of the organization, and before quitting or being expelled proceed to create a rumpus and a general all-around disturbance. The first of these disturbances since the last convention was the one proceeding from the Scandinavian Federation. As will be recalled, the 1920 convention decided contrary to the individuals of the Scandinavian Federation who had taken up the cudgels in behalf of the former editor of the WEEKLY PEOPLE, E. Seidel. Chief among these was the editor of *Arbetaren*, the late A. H. Lyzell, who, because of his anti-Party stand, failed to receive the approval of the N. E. C. as editor of *Arbetaren*. You are familiar with the details and besides, the Scandinavian Federation will touch upon this point in its report to this convention. We might merely state here that the disgruntled faction in the Scandinavian Federation met in a so-called special convention in Boston, in July, 1920, on which occasion an anti-S. L. P. stand was taken. The Party's N. E. C. expelled and reorganized the Federation, which has been functioning in line with the Party ever since. The Swedish Party organ, *Arbetaren*, is now under the able guidance of its present editor, Comrade Thor Borg.

The difficulties with the Scandinavian Federation demonstrated once again, as De Leon pointed out many years ago, that the S. L. P. has no viler enemy than an S. L. P. renegade. The expelled faction of the Scandinavian Federation resorted to every conceivable method to disrupt the Party, or at least the Scandinavian S. L. P. Federation. It seems to be the law of disruption that when an S. L. P. member goes wrong he goes to the uttermost extreme limit in reviling the Party and its officials, outbidding the enemies of the Party in their attempts at breaking up the organization which theretofore he had professed such undying faith in. Of course, it may be said that such individuals, acting as they did, were not fit material for the Party. In a sense that is true and to the extent that it is true there is no loss involved. Far otherwise and to the contrary. Unfortunately, however, these individuals succeed in swaying otherwise honest though sentimental members, and through these may realize later that they were in the wrong, they seem to lack the manhood and courage to acknowledge their error, preferring to sulk in their respective corners. Others who might be considered honest prove their lack of understanding of the Party's principles by joining the camp of the enemy, that is, either the S. P. or the now so-called Workers party or Farmer-Labor party, as a good many have done.

Later in the summer of 1920 trouble developed in Section Du Quoin, Ill. Prompted by John M. Francis, who had been discharged from Party work for failure to comply with instructions of the N. E. C. Sub-Committee, the Section violated

Party rules and decency right and left, openly flouting the N. E. C. Sub-Committee and being finally expelled by the N. E. C. The Section only had five or six members, so that the loss in membership amounted to nothing. Temporarily, however, it interfered with the important work which the Party was carrying on in the Illinois coal fields, since Francis and his few associates lost no time in falsely and maliciously misrepresenting the Party and its members, creating prejudice and doubt among honest workers. It is perhaps of slight interest in this connection to observe that Mr. Francis has been running true to form. In 1920 he assailed and vilified Comrade Koch and others for associating with certain supposedly progressive miners (notably Freeman Thompson), accusing the said Freeman Thompson and his associates of being fakery, etc. There was nothing at the time pointing conclusively to the fact that these men were fakery, and Comrade Koch and other S. L. P. comrades in the field simply proceeded on the assumption that these men were honest and were so to be considered until they were proved otherwise. Subsequent to the expulsion of Francis, and when this man Thompson and his associates, instead of developing toward the S. L. P., developed in the opposite direction and turned out to be, if not fakery, at least persons not to be depended upon in the battle for the workers' emancipation, Francis had no difficulty in reconciling himself with these individuals whom he had previously denounced as fakery, etc. Thus, the logic of events, or "the law of disruption," compelled the expelled disrupter Francis to embrace the object of his assault while a member of the Party. The

incident is dealt with here chiefly as a matter of record and chiefly for the lesson it conveys. The individual Francis and his few associates are, of course, not of the slightest importance to the working class movement, and their vilifications of the Party and its members and officials are of still less importance.

During 1921 and 1922 the Party experienced some trouble with A. S. Carn of Chicago, Ill. Carn, as will be recalled, had been sent to Russia by the W. I. U., representing that organization at the Economic Congress or Convention in the summer of 1921. Upon his return he made certain claims on the Party which, in effect, amounted to an attempt at exploiting the Party financially. The N. E. C. Sub-Committee, upon being informed that Mrs. Carn was in rather dire circumstances and learning that the W. I. U. was unable to pay her any money during Carn's absence, donated to the W. I. U. \$200 to be paid to Mrs. Carn. The Sub-Committee also held out prospects of another \$100 to be paid to the W. I. U. with the understanding that this additional amount was likewise to be paid Carn, not because of any services which he had rendered the Party (far otherwise and to the contrary), but because of the fact that the W. I. U. was under obligations to this individual and unable at the time to discharge these obligations. Upon his return to Chicago he commenced a campaign of vilification against the Party's officials, making public attacks and otherwise carrying on a propaganda designed to undermine the morale of the membership and their confidence in the National Officers and the N. E. C. Sub-Committee. He was first suspended and later ex-

pelled by Section Cook County. Since his expulsion he has been carrying on an insidious campaign against the Party chiefly through his membership in the W. I. U. Evidence has been submitted that he has corresponded with Party members throughout different parts of the country, lying and misrepresenting facts in connection with Party affairs and his expulsion from the Party. He has attempted the same disruptive propaganda through the Scandinavian Federation. In this latter respect, however, he appears to have been anything but successful.

During the same year the Party experienced considerable troubles with Section Boston, Mass. A small group in that Section (chiefly Thomas Maher and H. M. Lichtenstein) suddenly conceived the idea that they had made a tremendous discovery in the field of working class education and, more particularly, S. L. P. membership education. That great alleged discovery was the dialectical method of reasoning. It is perhaps not quite fair to say that they actually claimed credit for the discovery, but they certainly spoke as if they did. At any rate, they were quite outspoken in their contention that their particular method would revolutionize working class education, and that henceforth anything which fell short of the standard set by the Boston "best minds" was foredoomed to failure and utter perdition. The case of the Boston "best minds" presents a curious example of naive egotism combined. In discussing dialectics they behaved very much like the fabled Indian who found a watch. Their delight knew no bounds, and they rolled the newly discovered phrases on their tongues with much gusto, and it was not pos-

sible for them to prepare even a formal advertisement or announcement without cluttering it up with phrases such as "concatenation of events," "dialectic monism," "triads," "initial dichotomy," "logical priority," "triadic stages," "ideological triad," "cosmic concatenation," "posteriori," "epistemological differences," etc., etc.

A course in dialectics is, indeed, quite in place if adapted to present conditions and circumstances and if kept within proper limits—that is to say, if it is subordinated to the real agitational and educational work of the Party. And above all those who set themselves up as teachers should at least know what they are talking about. That the Boston "best minds" did not themselves understand what they were trying to teach others is testified to by themselves in their articles and letters. In fact, they knew and understood about as much about it as the aforesaid Indian realized and understood the nature and purpose of the newly found watch. A glaring example is found in their criticism of the WEEKLY PEOPLE editor for publishing an article on Darwinism and Marxism. In this criticism we were treated to the startling assertion that the materialist conception of history was applicable to a period where there was no history—where man had barely emerged from the brute stage, and when it was debatable whether or not he had a mind capable of reacting consciously on his environment. Their insistence that Dietzgen had made *vital* and *original* discoveries in the fields of philosophy and dialectics ranking with the original discoveries of Marx and Engels; their assertion that Marx was the discoverer of the law of value—these and

similar contentions showed that their learning was not even skin deep, and that their understanding of historical materialism, dialectics, Socialist philosophy and the history of the movement in general was of the crudest sort. Elsewhere De Leon has been quoted as to the relative importance of Dietzgen, and as the matter appears to be agitating some minds even now, it may be as well to reproduce here, for the sake of completeness also, what De Leon thought of him and his alleged original and vital discoveries. In the PEOPLE of February 12, 1913, De Leon said:

"Joseph Dietzgen is rated in the German Social Democracy as a remarkable instance of a proletarian's intellectual powers. Without the advantage of college training he tackled philosophy quite creditably to himself. But that is all that can be said of him. His works have that, but no other merit. As to his and Haeckel's monistic philosophy we do not consider ourselves sufficiently versed in that abstruse sphere to decide what the exact difference is between the two—nor have we the time or taste to delve into that."

The trouble in Section Boston was brought to a head when the editor of the WEEKLY PEOPLE refused to publish a literary tapeworm typical of the Boston "best minds." This interminable document was to be considered merely as an introduction to a half dozen or more of a similar caliber—at least that was the promise, or threat if you like. The document was replete with references and phrases of the kind quoted above, and without it served to bring out fully the naive and insufferable

conceit of the "best mind," without contributing one iota of information, or suggesting one new thought. Occasionally we hear references to the "revolutionary phrase," and if there is such a thing as killing a revolution by phrases, then, indeed, the literary products of the Boston "best minds" may be said to be the best method yet designed to kill an educational program—killing education by phrases, pedantically meaningless.

The document in question was written by a young man by name of Farber. Farber himself was an amiable boy, scarcely twenty, but bright and by nature endowed with a philosophical mind. Left to himself he might have developed along rational lines, in time becoming an asset and credit to the S. L. P. It was his misfortune that he should fall in with the Boston "best minds." Being so very young, and therefore naturally prone to flattery, it was not difficult to convince him that he was the greatest genius born since Marx—or at the very least since De Leon. Had Farber been placed in, let us say, Troy, N. Y., where no such conceptions are nourished, or in any other Section where emphasis is laid upon *performance* rather than upon *philosophizing*, he might have been saved for the Party. In the circumstances it was inevitable that he should become lost and remain a mere flitting and unfulfilled promise.

As stated the refusal of the Party's editor to publish the "philosophical" document in the WEEKLY PEOPLE brought matters to a head in Boston. A saturnalia of vilification, abuse and general disruption commenced. Attempts to reason with the "best minds" were in vain. Even the sending of Com-

rade Goerke to Boston to endeavor to settle the difficulties without a definite break produced no results other than additional abuse, this time, of course, in part directed against Comrade Goerke. The N. E. C. finally had to expel and reorganize the Section, and it is now functioning normally, carrying on S. L. P. propaganda on the usual lines.

The "best minds," however, appear still to be actively contending against the Party. An echo of the Boston trouble was noted in Lynn recently. One of the oldest members (one who certainly ought to have known better) continued to support the undertakings of the disrupters, not realizing, it would seem, that to do so was to endorse them and repudiate the Party. When such an individual is encountered all one can do is throw up one's hands. The member in question was told to choose between the Party and its enemies. Protesting his faith in the S. L. P. and its principles, he chose the Party's enemies.

Such incidents affect adversely, of course, the Party's propaganda efforts in Massachusetts, and no doubt we shall find it somewhat harder to keep the work going for a while, but ultimately the disrupters will be buried deep under their own stupidity or treachery, forgotten and forgotten, while the S. L. P. will still be "marching on."

Reference has been made repeatedly to the unbridled egotism of these "best minds," and it may be as well to preserve for the record the following examples. Speaking of their wonderful "discovery" one of the "best minds" (Tom Maher) said:

"We tried to give to the movement something as useful in its

way, as the plan of Industrial Unionism contributed by De Leon, and the analysis of the capitalist system given by Marx."

Modesty is not exactly the badge of the Boston "best minds."

Again the same individual displays his ego, and incidentally his contempt for the membership of the S. L. P. by giving utterance to the following:

"There is not an atom of doubt in my mind that the membership (and readers of our literature generally) have read great quantities of Socialist literature which has helped them to keep alive their 'faith,' but has not achieved the task of setting their mental-houses in order. They are neither metaphysicians nor dialecticians; they are hybrids."

And this:

"The Party must assume a pedagogic attitude toward the membership." . . .

Finally, Lichtenstein delivers himself of the following in which he apostrophizes himself as the be-all and end-all of the social revolution:

"I hope that if I ever become ill, or shuffle off this mortal coil, that the social revolution will go on in the same uninterrupted and unconcerned manner in which the class struggle is certain to proceed." !!

Against egomaniacs such as these even the gods must contend in vain! As an accompaniment to the difficulties with the W. I. I. U., the Scandinavian Federation experienced some troubles with its Boston branch, the specific offender being Ingvær Paulsen, who, in approved style, went on a disruptive rampage be-

cause of the N. E. C. resolution on concentration of effort, etc. The branch was reorganized and, as we understand it, is functioning all the better for the purging.

The "W. I. I. U."

The question of the W. I. I. U. has given us a good deal of trouble during recent years. Not that we were not troubled over that question before. We were. In fact, ever since 1908 it has been a source of troubles and difficulties. If in very recent times we have experienced unusual difficulties in that connection it has been because certain things have happened that served to bring out in bold relief hitherto vaguely perceived facts; and also, no doubt, because the W. I. I. U. has become more and more of a shadow; more and more of a fiction or pretension.

That which served to bring out fully the fact that the W. I. I. U., as now constituted, was not only a farce or, if one prefers, an unreality, but also a positive nuisance, if not a menace, to the S. L. P., was the Los Angeles affair dealt with earlier in this report. Though the facts are fairly well known and authenticated by this time, it is well, we believe, to give a resume of the incidents that took place in the summer of 1922, and which at last compelled recognition of an ugly and menacing state of affairs.

As already related, a number of S. L. P. members were arrested for merely exercising their constitutional rights. The Party, as a matter of course, is in duty bound at all times to exert every effort possible to rescue members who have become victims of capitalist persecutions, and the National Office of the S. L. P. naturally set to work at once making

the necessary preparations. It so happened that these members were also members of the W. I. I. U.—an organization supposedly S. L. P. in every important sense of the word except that, theoretically, it was supposed to function on the economic field. The members of the W. I. I. U. were and are mostly members of the S. L. P.; the then (and present) officers were members of Section Rensselaer Co. (Troy), N. Y. No one had hitherto been naive enough to pretend that the W. I. I. U. was anything more than a very ardent desire; no one had hitherto made the claim that the W. I. I. U. was more than a propaganda league for Industrial Unionism; and at that most every one understood that even as such it was scarcely more than an empty gesture, the supposition being that the workers sooner or later would join it and make of it a real industrial organization.

Nevertheless, as a matter of form, or politeness if you will, the National Office communicated with the W. I. I. U. office at Troy, in order to avoid working at cross purposes, and so that unity of action might be attained. The idea was, of course, to get suggestions from and the views of the W. I. I. U. office, such suggestions to be accepted or rejected in accordance with the realities of the situation, never forgetting for a moment that this was a case involving the liberties of S. L. P. members. We expected to receive a reply something like this:

Since the comrades in Los Angeles are all members of the S. L. P.; since, accordingly, it is at least as much an S. L. P. as a W. I. I. U. affair; since the S. L. P. has the larger membership, the

better connections, the very much superior facilities, and to some extent the greater experience—in view of all these admitted facts, we suggest that your office take complete charge of the affair. We shall cooperate with you, gather what funds we can through the I. U. News and send such money as we collect to your office. . . .

This is the kind of reply we in New York expected. It is not the reply we received. The reply we received for the moment almost took our breath away. S. L. P. members—members of the Section in Troy—told the N. E. C. Sub-Committee that they were going to direct the affair, practically instructing the N. E. C. Sub-Committee to carry out their orders with the inference, presumably, that these few members in Troy would assume full responsibility in a matter involving, as stated, the constitutional rights and possibly the liberties of these S. L. P. members. Any executive committee which in ordinary circumstances had abdicated its office at the behest of a totally irresponsible group of S. L. P. members, would have deserved to be recalled from office without ceremony. Such a committee would have proved its unfitness to serve in the capacity to which it had been elected. But these were not even ordinary circumstances. When practically a whole Section of the Party was threatened with prison on charges that were clearly aimed, not only at the Party but also against the fundamental constitutional rights of the working class, then a situation arises which demands of the Party and, for the moment, particularly of its executive committee—the fullest exercise of all its functions and capacities,

and failing in which such an executive committee would not merely prove its unfitness to serve in the capacity to which it was elected, but it would be committing a crime against these members and in general against the principle of working class solidarity.

The answer of the N. E. C. Subcommittee, therefore, was to the effect of asserting the Committee's responsibility as well as its fitness to direct the defense of these members, and, further, of pointing out to the W. I. I. U. committee that it lacked the capacity as well as the proper jurisdiction in the matter. The W. I. I. U. committee was told in no uncertain terms that the N. E. C. Subcommittee would tolerate no interference on the part of any group—be that a Section or, as in this case, a minor fraction of a Section—inside or outside the Party. It became necessary to send Comrade Kuhn to Troy, charging him with the task of applying the proper Party discipline to these members in the Troy Section. Fortunately reason prevailed, though the minority group in the Troy Section preferred to let it be known that it had yielded to *force majeure* only. However, for the time being unity of action was restored, and no one has since successfully challenged the authority of the N. E. C. to act in matters pertaining to the welfare of Party members and the Party organizations.

The trouble experienced with the W. I. I. U. office (and later with Section Los Angeles) definitely established the following facts:

1. That the W. I. I. U. is not even a propaganda league for Industrial Unionism. That it is a farce where it is not a tragedy, not merely because it is so very small, but above

all because these members, or most of them, are already members of the S. I. P. and, accordingly, not even supplemental to the Party as would naturally be the assumption of the uninitiated.

2. That in the present circumstances the existence of the W. I. I. U. *at best* is a useless and superfluous duplication of the S. I. P., serving no special function, adding nothing to the movement, either in membership or activity, serving instead as a drain on the financial resources of the Party membership and sympathizers.

3. That the W. I. I. U. has in the past been a source of friction and disturbances in the Party, having done much damage to the Party. And that it today is a positive menace to the Party, not merely because of the financial drain, but above all because the existence of the W. I. I. U. makes inevitable a division of loyalty (dual and potentially conflicting discipline) that would threaten the existence of an organization many times stronger than the S. I. P. It was with these facts in mind that the National Secretary formally brought the matter of the W. I. I. U. before the N. E. C. in session May, 1923. The events outlined in the foregoing were dealt with fully and in much detail. The question, being a serious one, was discussed at great length by the N. E. C. and at its conclusion the following resolution was adopted:

"Considering the conditions of affairs in the Socialist Labor Party, as presented to us by the National Secretary in his report:—the low state and steady decline of finances, membership, activity, etc., there appears to be great danger, if not of the actual ex-

inction of the Party, at least of a great decline in its usefulness at a moment when activity is most urgently needed, and when we may be close to our goal, and since it is practically the S. I. P. membership that has since 1908 carried the burden of the W. I. I. U., resulting in the exhaustion of energies, a division of activity to little or no purpose, and the draining of financial resources, since the inevitable conclusion from this follows that it is imperative to concentrate all forces and all energies for the purpose of more effective work; therefore be it

Resolved, That the N. E. C. recommends to the Party membership of the S. I. P. that it concentrate all efforts, to the exclusion of everything else and all other activities, upon the Party for the purpose of building a strong and effective educational and propaganda organization, until such a time as the working class of this country has become sufficiently revolutionary and has absorbed the idea of Industrial Unionism sufficiently to precipitate a real Industrial Union.

It is unthinkable that for any reasons or any considerations—sentimental or otherwise—we should allow the S. I. P. to be threatened with danger of extinction. A calamity to the working class movement of this country and the world worse than the extinction of the S. I. P. is scarcely imaginable.

S. I. P. members, rise to the occasion; concentrate your efforts; build up the Socialist Labor Party."

Everything considered, this resolution was what might be called moderate. In view of the existing situation, in view of the known facts, the N. E. C. might with entire propriety have made the resolution even stronger and more direct. As it was adopted it undoubtedly expressed the majority view of those present at that N. E. C. session, and, as we know now, the view of the overwhelming majority in the Party today. The resolution was, accordingly, well received with but few exceptions, notable among these being Section Los Angeles, Calif. Here and there a few individuals seemed to lose such reason as hitherto had been credited to them, and among these may be noted I. Paulsen of Boston, who commenced a campaign of vilification, misrepresentation of facts and disruption in general. Where he did not lie outright he resorted to tricks of oratory—eloquent stunts—designed to impress the—well impressionable.

During the summer a resolution was submitted by Section Los Angeles, the purpose of the said resolution being to repudiate, with the concurrence of the membership in referendum, the N. E. C. resolution. The fact that such a resolution could be adopted by a Section of the S. I. P. shows to what an extent the unrealities and pretensions of the W. I. I. U. had demoralized an otherwise loyal, earnest and clear-thinking group of S. I. P. men. A correspondence developed with the Section, part of which was printed in a leaflet for the information of the membership. Because of the points brought out, and because of the importance of the entire matter, and also for the sake of completing the record it has been thought advisable to reproduce the

already published parts of that correspondence, which constitute the resolution of Section Los Angeles, and replies and statement of the N. E. C. Sub-Committee dated Aug. 23. Several letters, calling for as many replies, were received from Section Los Angeles, all of which are herewith reproduced:

'SECTION LOS ANGELES' 'RESOLUTION'

Whereas, The S. I. P. in 1895 found it necessary to organize the S. T. & L. A. to emphasize its trade union position; and

Whereas, As the result of its allegiance to the S. T. & L. A., in opposition to the A. F. of L., the S. I. P. forces split in 1899; and

Whereas, after the S. T. & L. A. had merged in the I. W. W. in 1905, the S. I. P. through the S. T. & L. A. delegates achieved a triumph in having said organization adopt a structure that makes possible the organizing of the Industrial Cooperative Commonwealth and tactics that make a successful revolution inevitable;

and
Whereas, Since the split in the I. W. W. in 1908 it is the W. I. I. U. that carries on the work formulated in 1905; and

Whereas, The history of the S. I. P. shows that it has never shirked to demand of its members the activity necessary to keep on foot the political and industrial organization, thus giving life and force to its theoretical conceptions; and

Whereas, The N. E. C. of the S. I. P. at its session in May 5-7, 1923, in the resolution on Concentration of Effort (N. E. C. report, page 2, col. 1), made the reaction-

ary recommendation to the Party membership of the S. I. P. that it concentrate all efforts, 'to the exclusion else and all other activities upon the Party' after stating that 'Since it is practically the S. I. P. membership that has since 1908 carried the burden of the W. I. I. U. resulting in the exhaustion of energies, a division of activity to little or no purpose and the draining of financial resources, since the inevitable conclusion from this follows that it is imperative to concentrate all forces and all energies for the purpose of more effective work,' which statement implies a recommendation to S. I. P. members to withdraw their activity from the W. I. I. U., a step not in line with the history and the purpose of the S. I. P.; therefore be it

Resolved, That we repudiate the resolution above referred to and recommend to the membership of the S. I. P. to join and work for the success of the W. I. I. U., thus living up to their duties as revolutionists, having a clear conception of revolutionary tactics and the consequent present need of industrial organization to accomplish the Industrial Cooperative Commonwealth."

— August 23, 1923.

Mr. James P. Erskine,
Section Los Angeles,
P. O. Box 204, Station C,
Los Angeles, Calif.

Comrades:

I am in receipt of your letter of August 6th with statement enclosed, entitled 'Resolution.' Your letter and the 'resolution' were read at the regular meeting of the

N. E. C. Sub-Committee held August 23rd, 1923, and I was directed to answer as follows:

The 'resolution' which you enclose is supposed to express the Section's view on the N. E. C. resolution. In the letter accompanying that resolution the Section asks that its resolution be submitted to the membership for a referendum vote. You are hereby informed that the N. E. C. resolution on concentration of energy and effort is not a proper subject for a referendum, and your request is therefore denied.

In a previous letter to you (dated July 5, 1923) it was made sufficiently clear that the N. E. C. resolution referred to is not a proper subject for a referendum. This was done in connection with an incidental exposure of Comrade E. Parrott's disruptive activity, scurrilous attacks on, and living references to the national officers of the S. I. P. (see Parrott's letter to E. Pfister, dated June 7, 1923). The particular paragraph in mind begins with the following:

'Is Section Los Angeles going to move for a referendum on the question (N. E. C. resolution)—'

Evidently the Section took the cue of Comrade E. Parrott, who in turn took the cue (by his own admission) from an expelled disrupter, the unspeakable A. S. Carn of Chicago, Ill. We thus have here a concrete proof of the oft-proven contention that disrupters expelled from the S. I. P. are using the W. I. I. U. (by virtue of their membership) to attack the Socialist Labor Party and obstruct its activities.

However, since the Section has seen fit to 'resolve' on the N. E. C. resolution (notwithstanding your knowledge of its being not subject to a referendum) it may be as well to take up a few of the points made in the Section's 'resolution.' The comment on these points will, at the same time, serve to explain more fully the reasons for not submitting the 'resolution' to a referendum vote:

To say that the S. I. P. in 1895 found it necessary to 'organize the S. T. & L. A. to emphasize its trade union position' is to put the matter in a rather loose and somewhat flippant manner. The S. T. & L. A. was formed, not merely 'to emphasize its [the Party's] trade union position,' but because conditions then rendered inevitable that a new departure be made in the Party's trade union policy. The launching of the S. T. & L. A. meant the establishment of a new principle in the American labor movement—the S. T. & L. A. is a landmark in the Party's history. Moreover, the S. T. & L. A. was as nearly a functioning trade union as such a one, with revolutionary principles, could be at that time. It had, to quote from an S. I. P. publication, 'a membership of about 15,000, mostly of local unions in New York and vicinity.... The textile workers in Rhode Island joined the S. T. & L. A. in large numbers; the shoe workers of Brooklyn had locals numbering 800 to 900 members. Locals were organized in many industrial centers.'

Obviously, there can be no comparison between the S. T. & L. A.

and the W. I. U.' of today with its 300 to 400 members, most of whom are recruited from the S. L. P. Finally, the W. I. U. is a propaganda league for Industrial Unionism—that and nothing more. The function now reserved for the industrial union was not for a moment thought of in connection with the S. T. & L. A. That fact alone renders all comparison between it and the W. I. U. out of the question, and rules out, as irrelevant reference, the implications of the first 'resolution.' The S. T. & L. A. had a mission to perform, the chief and important part of which was to establish the necessity of breaking completely with the scab-herding A. F. of L., and to proclaim the duty of the revolutionary movement, to wit, the need of organizing the workers in a class union.

Having fulfilled its mission, the S. T. & L. A. merged with the I. W. W. in 1905—that organization becoming its logical successor. It might be observed in passing that there were not wanting members then who declaimed against abandoning the S. T. & L. A. Many felt bitter against De Leon for 'killing the S. T. & L. A.,' to use a present day, though somewhat misapplied, phrase.

The I. W. W. promised to become that new organization which the Party now considered necessary for the performance of the ultimate revolutionary act. Practically every resource of the S. L. P. was thrown into the I. W. W., De Leon then feeling confident of organizing — as a result of a strong I. W. W.—a considerably

stronger (numerically speaking) S. L. P., or whatever the name of the political party might be, that being of secondary importance. De Leon was due to become disappointed and disillusioned. After an existence of three short years the I. W. W. went on the rocks. When De Leon broke with the I. W. W. in 1908 there were again members of the Party who declaimed against his abandoning the I. W. W.—members who had no sympathy with the bunmerry element. It was contended by such that the S. L. P. should have given the I. W. W. a chance to recover; that it was a fatal mistake to denounce it as the 'bunmerry,' and as being on the rocks, etc.; this, these critics contended, was to play into the hands of the physical foraisits, etc., etc.

De Leon knew better. He knew that while the highly developed capitalist system rendered imperative an early industrial organization on S. L. P. lines, that nevertheless (remembering also the backwardness of the American working class) experience had shown that not enough *industrial union educational propaganda had been done*. That the S. L. P. had a tremendous task to perform in conducting this propaganda, and that all efforts should be concentrated on building up the S. L. P. (then nearly extinct), so as to enable it to carry on the propaganda for Industrial Unionism all the more effectively. These views were expressed freely by De Leon in Party circles. His action subsequently gave emphasis to his position in this respect. Included in this action were his refusal to publish Richter's letter

criticizing S. L. P. members for not joining the 'Detroit I. W. W.,' Richter's letter being characterized by De Leon as 'sandbagging' the S. L. P. This characterization fits the action of Section Los Angeles whose position is identical to that of Richter in 1908; included is also his refusal to publish the Higgins letter (reprinted in N. E. C. minutes of 1928) and which letter was similar to the Richter letter, and the position of Section Los Angeles. Finally there is to be noted in this connection De Leon's emphatic refusal to have anything to do with the 'Detroit I. W. W.:' his complete silence in regard to Richter's call for a reorganization of the I. W. W., and his silence subsequently, particularly his deliberate failure to urge support of the Detroit I. W. W. and his deliberate failure to urge S. L. P. members to join the Detroit I. W. W.—something which he might have done as a counter move against the 'I. W. W.,' even though he held to the above mentioned view. But so strongly did De Leon feel on the matter of abandoning all present hope of maintaining a real industrial organization that he even refrained from using this opportunity to direct a counter move against the bunmerry. All of this clearly shows De Leon's position, and De Leon's position emphatically was the position of the S. L. P.; it is today the S. L. P.'s position, and De Leon's position will remain the Party's position in the future.

The fifth 'whereas' declares that the S. L. P. has never 'shrunk to demand of its members the activity necessary to keep on foot

the political and industrial organization.....' This is essentially a misstatement—at best it is a half-truth. The S. L. P. has never formally demanded of its membership that it 'keep on foot' the 'industrial organization' (and though Section Los Angeles carefully refrains from being specific by mentioning the 'Detroit I. W. W.' or 'W. I. U.,' it is clear that this is what the comrades had in mind—to say that, however, would be to utter a too palpable misstatement). On the contrary, De Leon, speaking for the Party, and the N. E. C. endorsing his action, specifically did the very opposite, by refusing to publish the Richter-Higgins 'demands.' Moreover, as late as 1913 De Leon stated (in the *Daily People*):

'The S. L. P. does not "endorse" any economic organization. The S. L. P. stands by ALL class moves of ANY economic organization in the class struggle, and criticizes and opposes ALL moves that are at variance with the class struggle.' Emphasis ours. (*Daily People*, June 29, 1913.)

Section Los Angeles, in the fifth 'whereas, concludes the same by saying:

'thus giving life and force to its theoretical conceptions....'

What the Section means to say is that if every wage worker in the S. L. P. were to go to a certain S. L. P. member (or to himself if need be) and ask him to give him a certain card with the legend 'Workers' International Industrial Union,' etc., printed thereon; pay to that S. L. P.

member certain monthly dues; join with other S. L. P. members in printing certain stationery and documents—if these things are done, says Section Los Angeles, why then the S. L. P. is 'giving life and force to its theoretical conceptions'! Can anything be more farcical than this? Could anything emanating from S. L. P. sources furnish our enemies with a more solid reason to expose us as a bunch of children, of make-believe artists? Cannot Section Los Angeles perceive the sheer mummery, the utter folly of such a contention? If not, then, indeed, has reason fled; then, indeed, has De Leon labored in vain—for those who persist in such self-deception and stage heroics. An argument might conceivably be made in favor of maintaining the W. I. I. U. for purely tactical reasons, that is, for reasons of expediency. But to claim that the 300 to 400 members of the S. L. P. who in the main make up the W. I. I. U., to claim that these, masquerading as an industrial organization, constitute an integral life and force-giving element, to claim that is certainly to tax the credulity of the outside 'lookers-on' and the patience of S. L. P. members who understand their Marxism and their De Leonism.

In the sixth 'whereas' Section Los Angeles briefly refers to the facts which prompted the N. E. C. to adopt the resolution in question. Yet Section Los Angeles does not for a moment attempt to deny these facts, nor to explain them away, nor to reconcile these facts with its contentions. It cannot be done. The Section itself recognizes its weak position by

resorting to the use of epithets. Epithets pure and simple are usually introduced when facts and arguments are wanting. The Section's reference to the N. E. C. resolution as being 'reactionary' is a deliberate slander of the N. E. C.—it is a remark unworthy of any group claiming to believe in S. L. P. principles. The Section is entitled to hold that the resolution was unwise, untimely or anything else that may properly be regarded as debatable. Beyond that the Section has no right to go. The N. E. C. Sub-Committee therefore takes this opportunity of demanding of Section Los Angeles that it offer an apology for the use of such improper language. And the N. E. C. Sub-Committee, mindful of its duty to the Party and the N. E. C., will expect this apology without needless delay.

The 'Resolved' of Section Los Angeles' resolution' is of interest mainly because of its summing up of the Section's erroneous conception of the duties of the members of the Party, and partly because of its attempt to change the Party's policy by indirection. Surreptitious injection of premises is always reprehensible; it is doubly so when those resorting to such methods have had called to their attention that such premises are false. The Section, by calling upon the membership 'to join and work for the success of the W. I. I. U.', is using a backstairs method at changing the Party's attitude in respect to calling upon members to join the W. I. I. U. Obviously intended as a condemnation of the N. E. C. resolution, the Section Los Angeles resolution ac-

tually aims at reversing the several rulings of the N. E. C. on this point; aims at repudiating De Leon's position; and, finally, aims at forcing, by indirection, an attitude upon the Party that the 1920 national convention specifically and emphatically turned down.

In addition to this the 'Resolved' innuendoes that the Party members do not now live up to their duties as revolutionists' from the point of view of principles. While some members, because of inactivity, do not fully live up to their duties as S. L. P. revolutionists, while that is true, it is untrue that in other respects they fail in their duties, and in the sense the statement is made by Section Los Angeles it is an insult to the members of the Party. And inactivity is by no means the only manner in which S. L. P. members may register a failure in performance of duty. Misspelled and misdirected energy, purposeless division of energy such as persisted in and argued for by Section Los Angeles, is at this time a very notable example of failure to live up to the duty of an S. L. P. revolutionist.

For the reasons enumerated in the foregoing, Section Los Angeles' resolution' cannot be submitted to a referendum vote. It cannot be submitted for the special reason, already pointed to, that the resolution of the N. E. C. is not a proper subject for a referendum. As has been pointed out, the N. E. C. resolution is not mandatory. The members, by failing to carry out the letter and spirit of the N. E. C. resolution, are not violating Party discipline nor Party principles, whatever else may be said on the score of the wisdom (or lack of it)

in failing to do that which facts, reason, singlemindedness and a full sense of duty and responsibility to the S. L. P. clearly dictate to every member. The resolution not being mandatory, it is left to each member to do as the above mentioned facts, reason, etc., dictate, and the members of the Party will decide whether or not the fiction of an industrial union (with all the added hardships and dangers which the maintenance of this fiction entails) shall be continued indefinitely, to the detriment (as the N. E. C. and the majority of the members see it) of the great and genuine industrial union cause. With the membership the responsibility lies, and the N. E. C. wisely left it where it manifestly and properly belongs.

But, speaking of referendum, could Section Los Angeles wish for a better expression on the part of the membership than its present attitude toward the W. I. I. U.? Out of, say 3,000 S. L. P. members, from 300 to 400 are members of the W. I. I. U. Do not these figures speak eloquently enough? Is not this a 'referendum' already concluded, and concluded emphatically against the erroneous conception of Section Los Angeles?

But enough of this. To sum up: the 'resolution' of Section Los Angeles cannot be submitted for a referendum because:

- 1.—It contains misstatements, misconceptions, surreptitious injection of false premises;
- 2.—It seeks to change the Party's off-record attitude on the 'W. I. I. U.' by indirect methods;
- 3.—It contains a slanderous reference to the N. E. C., and

4.—Above all, because the N. E. C. resolution itself is not a proper subject for a referendum, it being neither mandatory nor a legislative act, nor does it abandon any principle of the Party, nor change any policy of the Party.

The Party has never shirked its duty to the American proletariat. It cleaves steadfastly to principles, being swayed neither by sentiment nor by attempted intimidation ('sandbagging'). It will continue its agitation for Industrial Unionism as in the past, and, if that were possible, with increased fervor and enthusiasm, and certainly with more energy if the entire membership carry out the intent and meaning of the May N. E. C. resolution. To paraphrase De Leon slightly:

THE S. L. P. WILL NOT EN-
DORSE ANY ECONOMIC OR-
GANIZATION. THE S. L. P.
WILL STAND BY ALL CLASS
MOVES OF ANY ECONOM-
IC ORGANIZATION IN THE
CLASS STRUGGLE, AND WILL
CRITICIZE AND EXPOSE ALL
MOVES THAT ARE AT VARI-
ANCE WITH THE CLASS
STRUGGLE.

By order of the N. E. C.
Sub-Committee,
Socialist Labor Party,
Arnold Petersen,
National Secretary."

"STATEMENT OF N. E. C. SUB-
COMMITTEE TO THE MEM-
BERSHIP OF THE S.L.P.

August 23, 1923.

To the Sections and Members of the
Socialist Labor Party.

Dear Comrades:—

By instruction of the N. E. C. Sub-

Committee I am sending you some documents pertaining to the N. E. C. resolution on increased activity and concentration of effort, etc. The first document is a letter written by order of the N. E. C. Sub-Committee to Section Los Angeles, explaining to that Section in detail why the N. E. C. resolution is not a proper subject for a referendum vote. Appended you will also find the 'resolution' of Section Los Angeles. The matter is submitted to the Sections for the reason that the Sub-Committee feels that the members are entitled to the information so that they may know what efforts are being made (whether with good or bad intentions we are not concerned here) to obstruct the Party's work and increase the difficulties already now besetting us.

Aside from what has been stated in the letter to Section Los Angeles, the following observations are in order:

It has not escaped the attention of the membership that those who disagree so violently with the attitude of the N. E. C. of the Party are desperately attempting to line De Leon up on their side, with what success the members will be best able to judge after they have read the letter to Section Los Angeles and other recent documents issued by the National Office. Now if, as some of the opponents of the N. E. C. resolution insist, De Leon shared their views, why was he silent on the reorganization or, rather, reorganization of the so-called Detroit I. W. W. in 1908? Insinuating statements have been made alleging that De Leon did not publicly express himself against the continuation of the I. W. W. after the 1908 Chicago convention. Whether or not De Leon did express

himself publicly on that question subsequent investigations may disclose, though it is doubtful that he did or would have done so at the time. There is no question, however, about De Leon's position toward the continuation of an industrial organization following the bummary outbreak in Chicago. Mrs. Johnson's quotation on this point is essentially the same that De Leon made to the undersigned and a number of other comrades. However, once Richter had issued the call for a continuation of the I. W. W., and once this call was headed by the enthusiasts in the S. L. P., it would seem to be bad policy and lack of judgment if De Leon had publicly opposed it. If he had done so he would undoubtedly have played into the hands of the bummary element, which would have been only too delighted to have been able to point to friction among the 'De Leonites.' De Leon was too profoundly wise to do any such thing. He was disgusted with Richter for doing what he did do, conceiving clearly that not enough education had been conducted to make possible for some time to come a genuine industrial organization of the working class and, as has been pointed out, for the most part, the Detroit I. W. W. has acted as 'a gravel in the shoe,' and that De Leon so considered it has been amply demonstrated by his various refusals to publish appeals addressed to the S. L. P. members on behalf of the Detroit I. W. W. The attempts made to prove that De Leon was in favor of continuing the I. W. W. cannot stand the test of S. L. P. reasoning.

The fact of De Leon's silence on the reorganization of the I. W. W. in 1908 should be emphasized. Not one word did he write in support of that

ill-advised move; not one suggestion to the members to support or join it; not a word, even for the sake of hitting at the bummary, did he offer publicly. This conforms entirely to his freely, though not publicly, expressed views at that time. Obviously, De Leon's conclusion was to keep editorially silent on a matter which he could not give his support. By keeping silent at that time De Leon was, from the viewpoint of the opponents of the N. E. C. resolution, guilty of not understanding the Party's principles; of not wanting to give life and force to its theoretical conceptions; to quote Section Los Angeles. Did not De Leon understand Industrial Unionism and its requirements? To ask such a question is to ask: Did not De Leon understand De Leon? Let those who share the views of Los Angeles ponder this question seriously, and whether or not they agree with the attitude of the N. E. C. on concentration of effort and energy, it is hoped that they will henceforth refrain from attempting to pervert or misrepresent De Leon's position. The facts, most of which are Party history, speak too eloquently against their contentions.

One point more: Some of the opponents of the N. E. C. resolution are fond of quoting from De Leon's writings to support their contention. That their quotations are beside the point and have nothing to do with the question under consideration does not disturb them, nor need it disturb us at this particular moment, but while on the subject of quoting De Leon, why not remind them of De Leon's contention (quoting approvingly Marx on the subject) that only the economic organization can set on foot a true political party of

the working class? These comrades do not refer to this contention of De Leon for the simple reason that they have completely reversed the procedure. Instead of emphasizing the fact that only the economic organization can set on foot a true political party of labor (speaking of such political party in the sense of Marx and De Leon, i. e., a full-grown, practically all-inclusive party of the working class) they are insisting that the S. L. P., out of its already very limited membership, must set on foot what they would be pleased to call an economic organization, i. e., an industrial union!

That is to say, that the Marxian formula, according to those who oppose the N. E. C. resolution, should read that only the political organization can set on foot a true economic organization of labor!! Sound reasoning and a correct understanding of economics compel the conclusion that the Marx-De Leon position was correct and that efforts at maintaining artificially what is nothing more than a caricature of an industrial organization, maintaining it at the expense of the numerically small S. L. P., is not only utopian, but poor statesmanship and foredoomed to failure.

Let the membership act in accordance with the facts and the requirements of the situation as at present. Let every member rally to the support of the S. L. P., giving that organization unstinted and complete support to the exclusion of everything else that does not pertain to the personal and family needs of the members. If that is done, we shall experience a revival of activity, and having cleared the decks for renewed action we shall record another step forward in building up the Socialist Labor Party, the only effective and sound force for propagating the principles of genuine Industrial Unionism.

By order of the N. E. C. Sub-Committee,
Socialist Labor Party,
Arnold Petersen,
National Secretary."

"118 1/2 South Spring St.,
Los Angeles, Calif.,
Sept. 29, 1923.

Mr. Arnold Petersen,
45 Rose St.,
New York City.

Dear Comrade:
Referring to your letter of August 24, re resolution, this Section herewith emphatically declares that in passing the resolution it did not take the cue from Comrade Earl Parrott nor from anyone else.

The resolution represents the Section's viewpoint. This Section is opposed to 'using the W. I. I. U. to attack the Socialist Labor Party' by expelled members of the S. L. P. As to Parrott and his correspondence with Carn, this Section by motion in the minutes book has refused to listen to Parrott's letters sent by Carn to Parrott unless the original letters be made property of the Section.

Whatever the opinion may be on the action of this Section in passing the resolution, it is not a 'concrete proof of the oft-proven contention that disrupters expelled from the S. L. P. are using the W. I. I. U. (by virtue of their membership) to attack the Socialist Labor Party and obstruct its activities.'

The fact that the Section sent Headquarters Comrade Parrott's letter to E. Pfister, dated June 7, 1923,

shows sufficiently that the action of this Section was not caused by a cue.

As to the Section using the word 'Reactionary' as a deliberate slander of the N. E. C., such is not the case. Having no intention to inject venom into the consideration of any action taken in the S. L. P. we herewith withdraw the word 'Reactionary'.

Our use of the word was caused by comparing the National Platform of 1920 with the N. E. C. resolution on Concentration.

In the Platform of 1920 the S. L. P. says, 'We therefore call upon the wage workers to organize themselves into a revolutionary political organization of the Socialist Labor Party; and to organize themselves likewise upon the industrial field into a Socialist Industrial Union, as now exemplified by the Workers' International Industrial Union, in keeping with their political aims.'

Inasmuch as the N. E. C. resolution and the editorial policy since that resolution was passed is diametrically opposed to the 1920 Platform call, to our minds the N. E. C. resolution calls for action contrary to that of the Platform; we therefore used the word reactionary, for whatever feeling of disrespect by this Section for the N. E. C. the word seems to have carried we apologize.

Nor does this Section insist that the submission of 'its' resolution is paramount. What we do wish is the assurance from the National Office that literature issued by it shall carry the recommendation adopted in the Platform of 1920 in line with the paragraph above referred to and in accordance with the 'Resolution on Economic Organization' (See Constitution), especially its 'Resolved,

That the Socialist Labor Party do all in its power to show the fallacy of craft unionism, and to urge the workers to organize industrially on the principle of the Workers' International Industrial Union', and not such a recommendation as printed in the recent leaflet, 'Some Necessary Advice to Golden State Workers', i. e., 'and on the industrial field the slogan: All power to the industrial unions,' which to the average worker means the I. W. W., the U. M. W. of A., W. F. of M., etc.

Receiving this assurance, the Section is satisfied that the Party policy is not being changed and that the editorial columns will swing in line with the desire of the membership as expressed in the National Platform of 1920 and in the resolution on Economic Organization as provided in the Constitution.

Fraternally yours,
(Signed) James P. Erskine,
Organizer."

"October 18, 1923.

Mr. James P. Erskine,
Section Los Angeles,
P. O. Box 204, Station C,
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Comrade:

Your letter of Sept. 29 received. The N. E. C. Sub-Committee is glad to know that the Section, in adopting the resolutions which the N. E. C. Sub-Committee felt in duty bound to refuse submission, was not prompted by the cue of any disgruntled individual member or expelled disrupter. The Section, however, will agree that the circumstantial evidence at hand strongly pointed to the correctness of the Sub-Committee's conclusion. There was

the letter from Parrott to Pfister in I. U., the Sub-Committee feels that which the question was directly asked, 'Is Section Los Angeles going to move for a referendum on the question (N. E. C. resolution)'; there was the fact of Parrott's other activities, more or less legitimate (against the N. E. C. resolution); and finally, there was the fact of the Section's resolutions themselves. However, in view of the Section's statement the N. E. C. Sub-Committee is satisfied to accept the Section's statement as a correction and agrees to consider that its own conclusion in this respect was erroneous.

The N. E. C. Sub-Committee is also pleased to note that the Section withdraws its offensive designation of the N. E. C. resolution, and agrees to consider this particular incident closed.

As to the Section's explanation of the use of the offensive designation, the N. E. C. Sub-Committee cannot accept the same. The implication is that the N. E. C. and the Party have changed position since 1920, and that in some manner the N. E. C. resolution is a violation of the Party's Platform. The fallaciousness of this contention has been pointed out repeatedly, and there appears to be no need of adding to what has already been stated. The Sub-Committee therefore merely reasserts that the N. E. C. resolution is not a departure from the Party's principles and policies and that neither the editorial department nor the national office have said or done anything which is not directly in line with the Party's principles and policies.

When, however, the Section concludes by criticizing literature published by the Party, presumably because it did not refer to the W. I.

U., the Section is again falling a victim to error previously refuted, to wit, its confusing its particular conception of the duty of the members with the Party's position. There is no mandate from the membership, nor constitutional provision, that the Party's literature must, at all times, in and out of place, carry a reference to the W. I. I. U. On all proper occasions, however, such reference has been made and will be made in the future, at least so long as there is even a skeleton of the W. I. I. U.

It seems pertinent in this connection, however, to call attention to the fact that a too literal application of the reference to the W. I. I. U. in the Party Platform would make the Party appear ridiculous, and such literal adherence would be rendering a distinct disservice to the W. I. I. U. As has previously been pointed out, the W. I. I. U. is not, as a matter of fact, an industrial organization, and as a working organization it cannot be recommended to the workers. Only in the sense of principles is it correct to refer to the W. I. I. U. as an exemplification of the kind of Industrial Unionism which the Party stands for. And it is important to remember that not until 1916 was there any reference whatever made to the W. I. I. U. in the Party's official literature. The change (and a change it was, though purely nominal) was made by inserting a reference to the W. I. I. U. in the Party's resolution on Economic Organization. The change was prompted by the persistent agitation of the Richter-Seidel-Katz crowd at the convention in 1916. This fact is, of course, of little nominal importance, and yet, to the student and to

the one who sincerely wishes to understand the Party's real position on Economic Organization, the fact is of considerable importance that prior to 1916 Party declarations were silent on the W. I. I. U. (or Detroit I. W. W.) It shows, for one thing, that instead of the N. E. C. wanting to change the Party's policy, as has been falsely charged, it is in fact, the 'W. I. I. U. members' in the S. L. P. that have endeavored to change and, to some slight extent, have succeeded in changing the Party's policy—at least to the extent of making reference to the W. I. I. U. in the Party's official declarations.

What is said on this head applies also to the reference in the Platform. The reference in the Platform to the W. I. I. U. was made as an afterthought, and as a result of the activities of the same aggressive minority who then and for the last few years have been endeavoring to change the policy of the Party as laid down originally by Daniel De Leon.

As for referring to the W. I. I. U. as an exemplification of Industrial Unionism (it being understood that principles and not present form and make-up is what is meant) there is no reason whatever why, on proper occasions, the W. I. I. U. cannot or should not be referred to as such. This could be done even if the W. I. I. U. should cease to exist altogether, as for example—

and urge the workers to organize industrially on the principle of the late Workers' International Industrial Union—

for while an organization may die, its principles, if correct and sound, will live on.

Bearing all of this in mind, the Sub-Committee finds the last para-

graph of the Section's letter altogether out of place and misapplied. There is no need of admonishing the editorial department to 'swing in line with the desire of the membership, since the editorial office is decidedly in line with the desires of the membership as expressed through the Party's constitution and resolutions. Prompted by this misdirected admonition, and while expressing its resentment of the Section's assumption of self-righteousness, the Sub-Committee feels impelled to admonish Section Los Angeles to fall in line with the N. E. C. resolution by concentrating all its energies on the Socialist Labor Party, leaving the W. I. I. U. local to shift for itself, even if this local by such action on the part of the Section were to cease existence altogether. The N. E. C. Sub-Committee is as convinced as is the N. E. C. that it is the paramount duty of every S. L. P. member at this most trying and crucial hour to cease activity in all organizations other than the S. L. P., provided that legitimate considerations of making a living do not make that impossible.

Fraternally submitted,

Sub-Committee,

By order of the N. E. C.

(Signed) Arnold Petersen,
National Secretary.

'Los Angeles, Cal., Nov. 4, 1923.

Arnold Petersen,
Nat'l Sec'y S. L. P.,
Box 1076, City Hall Station,
New York City.

Dear Comrade:

Your letter of October 18 received. Section Los Angeles is pleased to note that the N. E. C. Sub-Committee accepts the statement of the Section that the Section's resolution was

not prompted by the cue of any disgruntled individual member or disrupter.

The Section is also pleased to note that upon the Section's withdrawal of its offensive designation of the N. E. C. Resolution the Sub-Committee agrees to consider this particular incident closed.

As to the reassertion of the Sub-Committee, in paragraph three of the Committee's letter that 'The Sub-Committee, therefore, merely reasserts that the N. E. C. Resolution is not a departure from the Party's principles and policies, and that neither the editorial department nor the national office have said or done anything which is not directly in line with the Party's principles and policies.' Section Los Angeles, in reply, holds that the N. E. C. Resolution, *in so far as it repudiates the W. I. I. U.*, is in conflict with the Party's Resolution on Economic Organization, adopted at the 1916 convention and reaffirmed by the convention of 1920; also in conflict with the Party's Platform in the reference to the W. I. I. U.

As to paragraph four of the letter of the Sub-Committee re the Section's criticism of literature published by the Party because it did not refer to the W. I. I. U. The N. E. C. Sub-Committee states 'there is no mandate from the membership, nor constitutional provision that the Party's literature must, at all times, in and out of place, carry a reference to the W. I. I. U. On all proper occasions, however, such reference has been made, and will be made in the future, at least so long as there is even a skeleton of the W. I. I. U.' The Section has in view all literature in which Industrial Unionism is referred to. The Section is pleased to

hear that 'on all proper occasions such reference will be made in the future, at least so long as there is even a skeleton of the W. I. I. U.'

In paragraph five of the letter, referring to the Party's Resolution on Economic Organization, the statement is made: that prior to 1916 the Party declarations were silent on the W. I. I. U. (or Detroit I. W. W.)? And 'that instead of the N. E. C. wanting to change the Party's policy, as has been falsely charged, it is in fact the W. I. I. U. members in the S. L. P. that have endeavored to change, and, to some slight extent, have succeeded in changing the Party's policy—at least to the extent of making reference to the W. I. I. U. in the Party's official declarations.'

The reference in the Platform to the W. I. I. U. was made as an afterthought, and as a result of the 'activities of the same aggressive minority,' etc. Section Los Angeles submits that the reaffirmation of the Resolution on Economic Organization, and the clause in the Platform in reference to the W. I. I. U., were passed by a substantial majority of the delegates of the Party, in convention in 1920, with little or no opposition, and the Section recognized them as decrees of the Party, which can only be set aside or repealed either by a general vote of the membership of the Party or by a convention of the Party.

In the last paragraph of the letter of the N. E. C. Sub-Committee the statement is made: 'the editorial office is decidedly in line with the desires of the membership as expressed through the Party's constitution and resolutions.'

In reply to the above, Section Los Angeles states that the editorials speak for themselves. We quote

briefly from an editorial published in the WEEKLY PEOPLE July 10, 1920, under the title 'The Revolutionary Movement—Economic and Political Organization' (a series of editorial articles): 'It is agitation, therefore, tremendous and continuous agitation which is the supreme demand of the hour upon the revolutionist. . . . How and by what organization—the economic or political—can this work best be done? . . . It should be, it must be done by both the political and economic organization, etc. In the introduction to the editorial from which the above extract is taken, we find the following: 'We wish it distinctly understood that the S. L. P. has no quarrel whatsoever with the W. I. I. U.; that the S. L. P. has every faith in the world in the W. I. I. U., its policies and principles, and has never been afraid to say so—and say so directly by pointing out the W. I. I. U. as the only Socialist Industrial Union in this country, pointing to it as the structural nucleus of the Socialist Industrial Republic.'

In contradistinction to the above extracts, we quote from an editorial in the issue of the WEEKLY PEOPLE of September 22, 1923, the following terse sentence, a direct attack on the W. I. I. U.: 'The workers must be urged at all times to organize industrially for their emancipation. If they ask what organization we have for them to join, tell them frankly we have none.'

In the seventh paragraph of the N. E. C. Sub-Committee's letter: 'there is no reason whatever why, on proper occasions, the W. I. I. U. cannot or should not be referred to as such. This could be done even if the W. I. I. U. should cease to exist

altogether, as for example—'and urge the workers to organize industrially on the principles of the *Late Workers' International Industrial Union*—for while an organization may die, its principles, if correct and sound, will live on.'

Along the same line, the N. E. C. Sub-Committee, in the last paragraph of its letter feels impelled to admonish Section Los Angeles to fall in line with the N. E. C. Resolution by concentrating all its energies on the S. L. P., leaving the W. I. I. U. local to shift for itself, even if the local by such action on the part of the Section were to cease to exist altogether.'

From the above declarations of the N. E. C. Sub-Committee and the editorial department, and other utterances of the N. E. C. and the national office, from time to time, it is plain the N. E. C. is seeking to change the policy of the Party in regard to the W. I. I. U., contrary to the expressed will of the membership. In view of the fact that the N. E. C. considers the W. I. I. U. a detriment to the Party, Section Los Angeles holds that it is to the best interests of the Party that proper legislative action be taken in the matter, and that until that time it is the duty of the national office and the editorial department to continue a constructive policy toward the W. I. I. U. as demanded by the Resolution on Economic Organization in the constitution and the Party's Platform until the membership has expressed itself contrawise. Until such action is taken by the membership we demand the repudiation of the statement as recommended in the editorial in the WEEKLY PEOPLE

of Sept. 22, 1923, i. e., 'if they ask what organization we have for them to join, tell them frankly we have none.' See Article V, Section 14, paragraph 2, of the constitution of the Socialist Labor Party.

Fraternally yours,
Section Los Angeles, S. L. P.,
(Signed) per E. Pfister, Org."

"November 22, 1923.

Mr. Ernest Pfister,
Section Los Angeles,
1181½ S. Spring St.,
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Comrade:

The letter of Section Los Angeles re the N. E. C. resolution dated Nov. 4, has been received. The N. E. C. Sub-Committee instructs me to reply as follows:

When Section Los Angeles says: 'Section Los Angeles, in reply, holds that the N. E. C. resolution, *in so far as it repudiates the W. I. I. U.*, is in conflict with the Party's resolution on Economic Organization....' This statement is a mere begging of the question. It goes without saying that if the N. E. C. resolution repudiated the W. I. I. U., it would indeed violate the Party's resolution on Economic Organization. The N. E. C. resolution, however, does nothing of the kind. The N. E. C. resolution recognizes a state of affairs which demands of the Party's membership absolute and unqualified attention to the S. L. P., lest it suffer complete shipwreck. That implies abandoning all else that does not pertain to the membership. That is as far as the N. E. C. resolution goes, and the N. E. C. has a perfect right to make such a demand of the Party membership. If it has not,

then, as has been stated previously, our idea of organization has been visionary and our much vaunted self-discipline has meant nothing. Needless to say, however, Section Los Angeles is in error and our discipline *does* mean what we have held it to mean, and our idea of organization has been and is sound.

Again, it should be borne in mind that the S. L. P. has never endorsed the W. I. I. U. What the S. L. P. has endorsed is the *principles* of the W. I. I. U., and Section Los Angeles will not be able to prove that the N. E. C. has repudiated the *principles* of the W. I. I. U.

The reference which the Sub-Committee made to the attitude of the Party prior to 1916 was not intended as an argument in favor of changing the Party's attitude on Industrial Unionism, as Section Los Angeles seems to have inferred. The only reason for making that reference was to show that *if* there is a tendency on the part of anybody to change anything, that tendency does not proceed from the N. E. C. or from the national officers of the Party. That tendency, assuming that it exists, proceeds from the small minority within the Party which, in whole or in part, shares the views of Section Los Angeles. Let that point be made clear lest this reference of the N. E. C. Sub-Committee be turned to improper uses in the future.

If Section Los Angeles were less intent upon adhering to its views, and more concerned about really understanding the motives of the N. E. C., the Section would perceive less difference between the editorials quoted from the WEEKLY PEOPLE in 1920 and the editorial quoted from September, 1923. In the first

place, the Section has evidently misread the editorial in the September 22, 1923, issue of the WEEKLY PEOPLE, and as a consequence of having misread it the Section misquotes (not intentionally, we believe). However, we shall deal with this particular point subsequently. Meanwhile, assuming that the Section had properly understood the editorial of September 22, 1923, we would observe here that there is no difference between the two excepting such as were produced by the activities of the two different periods. In 1920 it was not conclusive with the N. E. C. or with the editor of the WEEKLY PEOPLE that the W. I. I. U., as such, was doomed to go down. Assuming in 1920 that the W. I. I. U. had a chance to survive without detriment to the S. L. P., and in fact become an asset to the entire S. L. P. movement, assuming this, the editorial expression was entirely correct and very much to the point. On the other hand, in 1923 when it has become definitely proved that the W. I. I. U. constitutes a menace to the further growth of the S. L. P., not to speak of its very existence at present; when it has been shown that the W. I. I. U. is neither 'industrial' nor an 'organization'—since all of this has been proved, then indeed is the editorial of September 22, 1923, also very much to the point, and both of them entirely in line with the Party's recognition of the correctness of the *principles* of the W. I. I. U. No man in his senses, and who knows whereof he speaks, will assert that the W. I. I. U., composed as it is of a small minority of S. L. P. members, and with nothing more than a name to hold it together, no one, we repeat, will assert that it is an 'industrial

organization.' That being so, and it having been conclusively shown that it has no chance *at the present time* of becoming an industrial organization, it would be nothing more than recognition of the facts, and to tell the truth, if the workers were told, that when it comes to organizations functioning at present, 'we have none.' We have not even a nucleus at this time, all mummery and pretenses to the contrary notwithstanding.

When we say that it has been conclusively proved that the W. I. I. U. has become a menace to the S. L. P., and that it has no possible chance of surviving, we refer primarily to the facts at present. These facts have been enumerated at length in the National Secretary's report to the N. E. C., and elsewhere. Secondly, we refer to the conflict which arose between the National Office and what is generally and courteously referred to as the 'W. I. I. U. headquarters at Troy,' in the summer of 1922. Section Los Angeles is fully familiar with all of these matters, having itself played a part in that particular trouble. The fact was then conclusively established, which had never been fully realized before, that the presence of the W. I. I. U. with its minority of S. L. P. membership constituting practically its entire membership, created a condition where Party discipline, Party authority, Party constitution and practically Party everything else, were thrown to the winds as if they had never existed. The menace inherent in such a state of affairs is at least as serious as the menace which proceeds from the sapping of S. L. P. energies and resources in order to maintain and bolster up a fictitious 'industrial organization,' courteously referred to as the Work-

ers' International Industrial Union.

Reverting again to the Section's references to the WEEKLY PEOPLE editorial of September 22, 1923, and to our observation that the Section misread and therefore misquoted that editorial, we would point out that the particular part which the Section quotes from that editorial was predicated upon an 'if previously stated in that editorial. If the Section will read the first paragraph, and indeed the entire editorial, the Section will find that the editorial dealt with an assumed condition. The question was whether or not a 'model union' is necessary during the propaganda stage of the movement, and the editorial, in part, intended to meet the objection that under all conditions and circumstances, even a skeleton or caricature, as it were, of an industrial union were necessary so that something might be pointed to if the workers ask whether there is such an organization for them to join. In other words, connecting up the beginning of the editorial with the part quoted, the passage should read substantially as follows: 'If the W. I. U. were to go out of existence in its entirety, ceasing to function even as at present, and if the workers then were to ask what organization we have for them to join, tell them frankly we have none.' This is the sense of the editorial, as should be clear to one who reads, not with a mind to criticize and find fault, but to understand and comprehend. In other words, the editorial in the September issue does not say that at this present moment we must tell the workers if they ask us what organization to join that we have none. That is not the attitude either of the N. E. C. or of the editorial de-

partment, despite the obvious justifications that exist for telling the workers that, even at this time. If a group of workers today were to ask us how and where to join an industrial organization, it goes without saying that they would be referred to the W. I. U. That is so obvious as to require no further comment on our part.

Speaking of legislation, legislation cannot do away with a fact. All that legislation can do is to recognize an existing fact. Hence, for example, if financial circumstances made it necessary to suspend the WEEKLY PEOPLE tomorrow, or a week from tomorrow, all the legislation on the part of the S. L. P. membership could not prevent such an action if the financial situation was as intimated. Yet, the N. E. C. or the N. E. C. Sub-Committee, under ordinary circumstances, certainly have not the power nor the right to suspend publication of the WEEKLY PEOPLE. This is used merely to illustrate what we have in mind when we say that legislation can do nothing more than recognize an existing fact, and bearing in mind the Section's propensity for placing a too literal interpretation on statements made (and this is said without intent to be offensive) we hasten to assure the Section that at this time, at least, there is no need to apprehend that the WEEKLY PEOPLE will be suspended 'tomorrow, or a week from tomorrow,' serious and menacing as the financial situation is at present.

Finally, to repeat what has been said so often, Section Los Angeles is once more in error when it says that the Party's resolution on Economic Organization demands a 'constructive policy toward the W. I. U.

U.' The resolution on Economic Organization does nothing of the kind, and Section Los Angeles is merely reading into that resolution its own desires and wishes in the matter. The resolution on Economic Organization does nothing more than recognize that the principles upon which the W. I. U. is based are the correct ones, and if it were conceivable that by urging the workers to join that organization that the workers would do so at this time, it goes without saying that such urging would be done, in and out of season, since that would solve not only our own difficulties but the difficulties confronting mankind at the present time. The Section must know that when it expresses itself in this manner it is merely substituting pious wishes and ardent desires for cold and hard realities, realities that will have to be dealt with in accordance with the facts and the means at hand. We recommend to the Section that it study very carefully the last paragraph of the resolution on Economic Organization. It will fail to find a word or intimation that the Party, when it adopted that resolution, resolved that every eligible member of the Party should join the W. I. U.; that the W. I. U. should be supported even at the risk of placing the Party itself in imminent danger of destruction; or that the Party entertained any visions as regards the physical possibilities at the time the resolution was adopted. To repeat once more, that resolution does nothing more than recognize that the principles of the W. I. U. are the correct principles upon which the working class must eventually organize, working out the form and structure in accordance with the theories underlying the S. L. P. and

the W. I. U. economic and social philosophy.

Once again, the N. E. C. Sub-Committee admonishes Section Los Angeles to fall in line with the N. E. C. resolution, bearing in mind that the Section is a sub-division of the Socialist Labor Party and that its duty as such is to give unstinted and unqualified support to that organization, and since the Section winds up its letter with a reference to the constitution (a reference which we find somewhat inappropriate) we might reciprocate by calling the Section's attention to the Party's constitution, Article I, Section 1, entitled, 'Management.' The Section will find no reference to the implied notion that the affairs of the Party are to be conducted, directly or indirectly, by the W. I. U. or any other agency outside the jurisdiction and control of the Party.

Fraternally yours,
By order of the N. E. C.
Sub-Committee,
Arnold Petersen,
National Secretary."

"Los Angeles, Calif.,
Nov. 16, 1923.

WEEKLY PEOPLE,
New York City.

Comrades:

This letter is in explanation of our telegram of the 11th inst., reducing Section's bundle order to 25 copies weekly.

In a previous letter we informed your office to cut bundle order to 50 copies weekly, as for some months past sales did not warrant a bundle of 150 copies per week, the Section carrying the debt. The recent change in editorial policy toward the W. I. U.

I. U. has not stimulated the desire of the members to sell the WEEKLY PEOPLE, so that it is necessary to bring the bundle nearer to sales limit. Until further notice therefore please send us 25 (twenty-five) copies weekly.

Fraternally yours,
Section Los Angeles County,
per E. Pfister, Org.”
(Signed)

“November 23, 1923.

Mr. E. Pfister,
Section Los Angeles,
118½ So. Spring St.,
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Comrade:

Your letter of November 16 regarding bundle has been referred to me. The bundle will be reduced to twenty-five (25) copies per week.

I was amazed and shocked to read your letter and the reasons you give for reducing the bundle order. While the National Office cannot dictate to a Section how many copies of the WEEKLY PEOPLE it must order and dispose of, the National Office is decidedly and emphatically concerned about reasons given for changing or discontinuing bundle orders. The reason advanced by Section Los Angeles is nothing less than a defy and a challenge to the National Organization. It means nothing less than that the members of Section Los Angeles, apparently with the approval and consent of the Section as such, have determined upon a policy of sabotaging the Party organ because certain matters appearing in the WEEKLY PEOPLE do not meet with the approval of the members of Section Los Angeles. Entirely aside from whether Section Los Angeles or the N. E. C. is correct in regard to the W. I. I. U.

question, such a policy on the part of Section Los Angeles is indefensible and one that cannot and will not be tolerated by the National Organization.

The attitude of Section Los Angeles, however, becomes even more indefensible when it is perfectly clear that the Section has misread and misquoted from WEEKLY PEOPLE editorials, aside from the fact that it has misread and misconstrued the resolution on Economic Organization printed in our constitution. This has been dealt with more fully in the letter which you will find enclosed in this envelope and ordered sent to you by the Sub-Committee.

I shall submit this latest outrage perpetrated against the Party at the next meeting of the N. E. C. Sub-Committee, which meeting will be held on December 13. Meanwhile, if the Section is in a position to justify or perhaps explain more fully the attitude which it has assumed, I trust you will send such justification or explanation in time for the said meeting, i. e., on December 13.

The National Office of the S. I. P. has been exceedingly patient with Section Los Angeles, having endeavored to reason with the Section to the fullest extent. There is a time, however, when patience ceases to be a virtue and when duty to the National Organization demands of the National Office to call a halt to activities on the part of a Section which are clearly directed against the Party's best interests, regardless of whatever the motive may be behind such activities.

Awaiting an early reply, I remain,
Fraternally yours,
Arnold Petersen,
National Secretary.”
(Signed)

“118½ So. Spring St.,
Los Angeles, Calif.,
Nov. 10, 1923.

M. J. Michel,
N. E. C. Member S. I. P., for Calif.,
San Jose, Calif.

Comrade:

At the regular business meeting of Section Los Angeles City, held October 27, 1923, the motion passed, ‘that we ask N. E. C. member Michel whether he protested against the change of policy toward the W. I. I. U. as expressed in the WEEKLY PEOPLE editorials.’

Fraternally,
Section Los Angeles County,
per E. Pfister, Org.”
(Signed)

“San Jose, California,
November 21, 1923.

E. Pfister, Organizer,
Section Los Angeles County, S. I. P.,
Los Angeles, California.
Dear Comrade Pfister:

In re yours of the 10th inst., inquiring whether I, as N. E. C. member for California have protested against the change of policy toward the W. I. I. U. as expressed in the WEEKLY PEOPLE editorials.

I have not made any such protest for two good and sufficient reasons, to wit:

(1) I fail to find in the WEEKLY PEOPLE editorials any change of policy toward the W. I. I. U.

(2) I am in accord with the ideas and sentiments expressed in the WEEKLY PEOPLE editorials on the W. I. I. U. They express the Party's stand.

I believe a careful reading of the editorials will disclose the fact that they express no change of policy toward the W. I. I. U., but rather give a more clear and emphatic expression

of what has been the Party's attitude since after the time of the split in the I. W. W. than we have had heretofore.

I cannot conceive how the WEEKLY PEOPLE editorials can be said to express ‘a change of policy toward the W. I. I. U.’ except by implying an original policy not supported by the facts.

Fraternally yours,
(Signed) M. J. Michel.”

“Los Angeles, Calif.,
Dec. 14, 1923.

A. Petersen, Nat. Sec'y S. I. P.,
New York City.
Comrade:

Answering yours of November 23, re reduction of bundle order of WEEKLY PEOPLE by Section Los Angeles.

For several months past WEEKLY PEOPLE sales were about 50 copies weekly; the Section carrying an excess of 100 copies weekly. Due to attempts to increase sales by stimulating enthusiasm, we were reluctant to reduce bundle. The attack on the W. I. I. U. and the consequent change of editorial policy against the will of the membership as expressed in 1920 referendum and Platform make it difficult for Section to arouse enthusiasm for WEEKLY PEOPLE sales, members in favor of editorials not being active sellers, while those against the editorials are dispirited. We do not think it a question of ‘sabotaging’ but a lack of enthusiasm due to an absence of conviction that the present editorial policy is correct. It is to be noted in this connection, that as long as the N. E. C. resolution did not affect the WEEKLY PEOPLE, the spirit of despon-

deney did not make itself felt to any large extent.

We assure you that this Section will make all efforts to change the present unfortunate condition.

Fraternally,
Section Los Angeles,
per E. Pfister, Org."

December 27, 1923.

Mr. E. Pfister,
Section Los Angeles,
118 1/2 So. Spring St.,
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Comrade:

The N. E. C. Sub-Committee notes with satisfaction Section Los Angeles' disavowal of intentions to sabotage the official Party organ, but fails to find evidence of sufficient good faith to back up its disavowal. The Sub-Committee expects Section Los Angeles to discipline those members who, because of disagreement with certain editorials, refuse to perform their accustomed duties in connection with boosting the WEEKLY PEOPLE. In this case the *motive* counts more than anything else.

In this same letter the Section again advances as facts that which is merely a matter of opinion. We refer to the Section's false assertions re attack on the W. I. I. U. and alleged 'consequent change of editorial policy,' etc. As this point is covered in the letter accompanying the present letter, we repeat the caution stated in the said letter:

'We caution the Section, however, not to forget that while the Section may express its *opinions* freely, it may not surreptitiously inject these opinions in its argument as facts, as, for instance, when it repeatedly refers to the

N. E. C. resolution as it does, or to a change in editorial policy toward the W. I. I. U.—there being no change in policy as the Section by this time ought to be able to understand, its *opinions* re the W. I. I. U. to the contrary notwithstanding.'

Awaiting assurances of action that will lead to the proper and desirable results, we remain

By order of the N. E. C.
Sub-Committee,
Socialist Labor Party,
(Signed) Arnold Petersen,
National Secretary."

Los Angeles, Calif.,
Dec. 14, 1923.

A. Petersen, Nat. Sec'y, S.L.P.,
New York City.
Comrade:

Answering yours of Nov. 22, re N. E. C. resolution (General Subject).

Let it be stated at the outset that this Section realizes that the difference of opinion between it and the National Headquarters, as to whether or not the N. E. C. resolution and the recent editorials re W. I. I. U. constitute a departure in tactics from those approved by the Party membership in the 'Platform of 1920' and the Resolution on Economic Organization,' as too trenchant to be settled by correspondence and that this Section awaits the referendum on the actions of the convention before it can accept the N. E. C. resolution and the editorial policy re W. I. I. U. as a guide for action.

We therefore will only touch briefly on the points of greatest variance in your letter of November 22:

As to paragraph 2 of your letter— We dispute the right of the N.E.C. to recommend concentration of efforts 'when thereby the existence of an organization is harmed of which the membership by referendum in Resolution and Platform has approved. Such concentration can only be recommended by referendum vote or convention, they alone having the right to set aside or approve.

As to paragraph 3— The S. L. P. in Resolution and Platform urges the workers 'by doing all in its power' to line up on the principles of the W. I. I. U. The S. L. P. therefore expects this organization to grow and not to disintegrate, certainly does this not mean that the N. E. C. is expected to recommend to S. L. P. members who happen to be members of the W. I. I. U. to desert it; to the contrary—and it is this which we have called a constructive policy toward the W. I. I. U. (and here we refer to the 2nd last paragraph of your letter.)

From this same paragraph (2nd last) we desire to answer and quote 'that the W. I. I. U. should be supported even at the risk of placing the Party itself in imminent danger of destruction.' We have never yet been able to figure out how support of the W. I. I. U. could or does do so according to the N. E. C. resolution. There are about 2,500 S. L. P. members and about (maximum) 400 members in the W. I. I. U. Assuming that all the latter are in the S. L. P., they are outnumbered 6-1, i. e., for every dollar lost to the S. L. P. and spent for the W. I. I. U. by a member of both organizations, five men—members in the S. L. P. only—have to put up 20 cents. Does

a load carried by 400 threaten to break the back of 2,000? Nor can it be said that the 400 S. L. P. members who choose to be members of the W. I. I. U. do not work as well for the one as for the other, for where there are W. I. I. U. locals, there are S. L. P. Sections; is the reverse equally true? Not that it must be so according to S. L. P. law, but it might be so by coincidence, which would be refreshing and enjoyable for all concerned, for if both arms are necessary in the struggle, lopsidedness is undesirable.

As to your interpretation of the editorial of September 22, we reject it in its entirety. That 'if' in paragraph 1 of the editorial upon which the editorial is supposed to be predicted, is not advanced by the editor but by 'there are those who not only justify the existence of the W. I. I. U. . . . , i. e., that 'if' is part of an argument, used by those in favor of the W. I. I. U., who maintain that . . . it is necessary to have a union that we can tell them to join.' The editorial dealing with that idea in paragraph 3 proceeds to show that 'all but a few workers . . . would simply expose themselves to persecutions . . . if in single file or in small groups they were to follow the advice and join a so-called union that by its own . . . general weakness is incapable of affording them even the slightest amount of protection. . . . ' The editorial then calls such an . . . 'attempt to expose our fellow workers . . . less than common sense. . . . ' And since to attempt to line up the workers in the W. I. I. U. in spite of 'viciousness of the capitalist system and the unscrupulousness of its hirelings' is the task of the W. I. I. U., the editorial gives the advice to tell these (the work-

ers) frankly that we have none, i. e., we have no organization for them to join. As if to prove further that the editorial is not to be summarized as in your letter, it concludes '.... when they (the workers) have embraced it (the principles of industrial organization) they will move en masse....' In the meantime, the political revolutionary organization, the S. I. P., is there to receive the recruits for the revolutionary propagandist army.....; thus writing the W. I. I. U. out of existence.

Again we ask as per our letter of November 4, last paragraph, that the statement in the editorial policy of September 22 above referred to be withdrawn in the columns of the WEEKLY PEOPLE, by recommending that it be read as qualified in your letter of November 22, page 3, paragraph 2 (in quotation marks).

As to admonishing Section Los Angeles to fall in line with the N. E. C. resolution: to quote from your letter of August 23 which was sent in printed form to the membership, page 3, paragraph 2, the membership of this Section is accepting its share of responsibility for whatever befalls the Party—the worst in recent years being the N. E. C. resolution and the present editorial policy toward the W. I. I. U.—with the N. E. C. resolution we cannot fall in line, same being '.... not mandatory,' and most of the membership not wishing to carry out the letter and spirit of the N. E. C. resolution, but rather see it in oblivion.

As to Article I, Sec. 1, entitled Management. No, the affairs of the Party are not to be conducted by the W. I. I. U., we have no such notion; but in harmony with the W. I. I. U.,

as we expect the next referendum to prove.

Fraternally,
Section Los Angeles County,
(Signed) per E. Pfister, Org."

"December 27, 1923.

Mr. Ernest Pfister,
Org. Section Los Angeles,
118 1/2 So. Spring St.,
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Comrade:

Your letters of December 14 received. As to the one which you designate 'general subject' please note:

1. The right of the N. E. C. to recommend to the members of the Socialist Labor Party to concentrate efforts 'to the exclusion of everything else, etc.' is not a matter of opinion. It is a right inherent in the very being of the organization. It is a right not to be challenged by any member or subdivision of the Party. Any one, or any Section, challenging this right, challenges the very heart and soul of the organization. A denial of that right is equivalent to a declaration that there is, in fact, no executive authority in the Party. It brings back to us, again, the question repeatedly stated by us, viz., the question of dual authority in Party affairs—a dual authority resulting from the present farcical claim of there being in existence a de facto industrial union. And we note with interest that at no time (neither in 1922 nor now) does Section Los Angeles attempt to offer any solution for this menace of anarchy-breeding dual authority — and for good reasons, since none exist. Let it sink in, however: *The Party will tolerate no attempt at introducing dual authority in Party*

affairs. Whatever group (be it an outside 'organization called the W. I. I. U., or a Section of the Party) makes such attempts will be speedily cleared out of the way in the attempts.

2. The S. I. P. emphatically expects the workers to line up on the principles of the W. I. I. U. No one denies it. But does Section Los Angeles mean to say that the W. I. I. U. principles live and die only with the W. I. I. U.? The contention, if made, would be ridiculous. 'The W. I. I. U.' principles are, as a matter of undisputed fact, the principles of the S. I. P. If there were no W. I. I. U., there would still be W. I. I. U., i. e., S. I. P. principles for the workers to line up on. (That, incidentally, is also the point of the WEEKLY PEOPLE editorial of September 22.) Accordingly, as matters stand at present there is no question involved of either urging to join, or desert, the W. I. I. U.

The question is one of principles, and principles only. If the Party had desired to urge the Party members (since that is the question concerning us directly) to join the W. I. I. U., the Party would have said so. Indeed, attempts have been made repeatedly to have the Party say so, and on each occasion the attempt has been frustrated. The last of its kind was the resolution introduced at the Party's National Convention in 1920. That resolution was voted down, and as we recall it, overwhelmingly. That notice was served to those who share the views of Section Los Angeles that the Party does not propose to stand for any sandbagging, to quote Comrade De Leon. Incidentally, it answers Section Los Angeles' peculiar argument (if such it may be called) re 'con-

structive policy toward the W. I. I. U.' The action of the Party in the past, and not least the turning down of the 'constructive policy' resolution (as Section Los Angeles might call it), gives emphasis to the fact (fact, not theory) that the resolution says what it means, and means what it says. And it is highly improper, in view of all the facts and evidence at hand, for Section Los Angeles to insist that that resolution either does not say what it means, or that it does not mean what it plainly and in clear English says.

3. It is unfortunate—unfortunate for the Section, and to some extent unfortunate for the Party—that Section Los Angeles is unable to 'figure out how support of the W. I. I. U. could or does do so (place Party in danger of destruction.)' Yet, the matter has been 'figured out' for Section Los Angeles repeatedly. It was done by the National Secretary in his report to the N. E. C., and the Section is referred to that report. Briefly, it 'figures out' as follows:

a—By taking away financial support and energy from the Party and placing it, *largely uselessly*, in the W. I. I. U.

b—By creating anarchy-breeding dual authority in the Party, challenging the Party's right to deal with its own members and its own affairs according to Party constitution and procedure.

The remainder of the Section's argument on this point is quite an unworthy bit of burlesquerie that might well have been spared us. Assuming, however, the sincerity of the Section, let us qualify by saying that the argument is childish, and there-

fore unworthy of grown and serious S. I. P. men. For one thing it is not a question of 2,500 vs. 400. The Section knows that perfectly well. It is a question of 300 to 400 members of the Party massquering as an industrial organization, demanding of the Party, and the Party's numerous sympathizers, that this *masquerade be supported even to the point of endangering the Party's existence*. It is dishonest (we regret the word but it is stating the plain truth), it is dishonest on the part of the Section to ask if a load carried by 400 threatens to break the back of 2,000. Was it the '400' that poured out its money for the I. W. W. before 1908? Was it the '400' that spent, to the point of financial exhaustion, its money freely in Paterson? Was it the '400' that collected and donated thousands and thousands of dollars for the Evansville and Jamestown strikes? Finally, was it the '400' that raised the money needed for the defense of the Los Angeles comrades? NO! It was the entire Socialist Labor Party, its sympathizers and friends, that furnished the cash—and furnished it to such an extent that only the most heroic efforts, and the most strenuous labors, saved the Party from utter physical destruction. And speaking of the '400': Where was the noble '400' (to paraphrase Tennyson) when the Party was stabbed in the back? Where was it when Richter intruded against the Party? Where was it when Carn used the W. I. U. to attempt to disrupt and discredit the Party—especially in Chicago? (And Carn still enjoying membership in the W. I. U.) And, most recently, where was it when the *Industrial Union News* was used to misrepresent and thereby help to

discredit the Party? Not a rebuke was administered to those responsible, Section Los Angeles (or rather its alter ego, the x/400th part of the '400') being particularly conspicuous by its silence.

4. As if to relieve the situation somewhat the Section turns slightly humorous when, in speaking of the '400,' it says that if there were W. I. U. locals where there are S. I. P. Sections (i. e., mummy and hocus poems) it 'would be refreshing and enjoyable for all concerned, for if both arms are necessary in the struggle, lopsidedness is undesirable.' That is to say (according to Section Los Angeles): Amputate, so to speak, a portion out of the S. I. P., and by a process akin to legerdemain that portion suddenly becomes an arm, which with wonderful magic serves to steady the S. I. P. and without which the S. I. P. becomes lopsided!

Now, while this may be humorous, it is also something decidedly worse. Being not essential to a clarification of the issue, we shall not here designate it with its proper term, lest we be considered anxious to cause unnecessary offense—which we emphatically are not. We shall let the picture drawn by the Section speak for itself.

Incidentally and apropos of the Section's reference to an extension of the mummy practised by Los Angeles and a few others (W. I. U. locals where there are S. I. P. Sections) let us exclaim emphatically: 'Ye gods forbid! The '400' are quite enough—more would prove superabundance, in which case we might as well give up all hope of preserving the S. I. P., and maintaining it on a basis of Marxian-De Leonistic rationalism.

5. Re editorial in WEEKLY PEOPLE of September 22: We are simply amazed at the Section's temerity in questioning the statement that the editorial dealt with an assumed condition. Kindly note that this is not a matter of opinion or interpretation.

The editorial plainly speaks for itself. The very quotations used by the Section demonstrate that the editorial dealt with an assumed condition. The Section says, in part quoting: "In the meantime, the political revolutionary organization, the S. I. P., is there to receive the recruits for the revolutionary propagandist army...." thus writing the W. I. U. out of existence. Can it be lack of intelligence that causes the Section to quote, and comment as it does on the part quoted? Or is it, as we believe, an unyielding stubbornness, an almost vicious refusal to understand plain English and palpable facts? If the editorial deals with an assumed condition (as it does) *the assumption, of course, is that there is no W. I. U.* That being the assumption, there is, obviously, no W. I. U. to write 'out of existence.' Moreover, we have the editor's express and emphatic statement that the editorial in question, as a matter of course, dealt with an assumed condition—the entire editorial being predicated on the

there is not even the present caricature of an industrial organization. The facts being as stated there is nothing to repudiate, nothing to correct, except Section Los Angeles' false impression.

But why pursue such arguments further? Their nature, fortunately, is such as to furnish their own refutation. Meanwhile the Section is straining the Party's patience to the breaking point.

There was no need on the part of Section Los Angeles to remind the Sub-Committee that the N. E. C. resolution is not mandatory. If it were there would be no admiring. There would be instructions to be observed at pain of expulsion. We caution the Section, however, not to forget that while the Section may express its *opinions* freely, it may not surreptitiously inject these opinions in its argument as facts, as, for instance, when it repeatedly refers to the N. E. C. resolution as it does, or to a change in editorial policy toward the W. I. U.—there being no change in policy as the Section by this time ought to be able to understand, its *opinions* re the W. I. U. to the contrary notwithstanding.

6. Re last paragraph: The Sub-Committee looks forward to that early date when Section Los Angeles squares its asseverations with its acts, either by voluntary action, or as a result of the proper Party pressure to be applied.

By order of the N. E. C.
Socialist Labor Party,
(Signed) Arnold Petersen,
National Secretary."