

**Constitution
of the
Socialist
Workers
Party**

CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

(As Ratified by the Twenty-fourth Convention,
August, 1970)

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of the organization shall be the Socialist Workers Party (hereafter referred to as "the Party").

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Party shall be to educate and organize the working class for the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of a Workers Government to achieve socialism.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Every person who accepts the program of the Party and agrees to submit to its discipline and engage actively in its work shall be eligible to membership.

Section 2. Every member must belong to a duly constituted branch of the Party in the territory where that member resides, or at that member's

place of work, if such branch exists. In territories where no branch exists, applicants shall apply to the Political Committee for member-at-large status.

Section 3. Action by the Party branch on applications for membership takes place in the absence of the applicant.

Section 4. A member desiring to leave one locality for another must apply to that member's branch for permission. A letter of transfer must be sent to the branch of the locality to which the member moves. If no branch exists in the new locality, the member shall become a member-at-large.

Section 5. The National Committee is empowered to accept groups or organizations of individuals, eligible under Section 1 of this Article, as members en bloc, and to assign them to the proper branches.

ARTICLE IV. UNITS OF ORGANIZATION

Section 1. The basic unit of the Party shall be the branch formed on a territorial or occupational basis. A branch shall consist of not less than 5 nor more than 50 members. When a branch

achieves a membership of 50, it shall be subdivided into two branches. Exceptions can be made only by permission of the National Committee.

Section 2. Wherever two branches exist in the same locality, a Local Executive Committee shall be formed by elections at a joint membership meeting. Where three or more branches exist in the same locality, a Local Executive Committee shall be elected at a City Convention.

Section 3. In such cases as may be decided by the National Committee, State or District Executive Committees, elected by State or District membership meetings or by State or District Conventions shall be formed.

ARTICLE V. ADMINISTRATION

Section 1. The highest governing body of the Party is the National Convention. Its decisions shall be binding upon the entire membership.

Section 2. Between National Conventions, the authority of the Convention, subject to the decisions of the Convention itself, is vested in the National Committee elected by the Convention.

Section 3. The National Committee shall be comprised as follows:

Paragraph 1. There shall be 28 members, elected by the National Convention.

Paragraph 2. The National Convention shall also elect 22 alternates to fill vacancies in the National Committee in the order decided upon by the Convention.

Paragraph 3. Regular members who have served on the National Committee for an extended period and are no longer able to be fully active may be designated as advisory members of the National Committee with all rights except vote.

Paragraph 4. Election of members and alternates to the National Committee and to the Control Commission shall take place by secret ballot.

Paragraph 5. Members of the National Committee may be dropped from the Committee and/or from the Party only by vote of the National Convention. Members of the National Commit-

tee may, however, for cause be suspended from membership and barred from all rights as members, pending final decision of the Party Convention, by vote of two-thirds of the membership of the National Committee.

Section 4. The National Committee directs all the work of the Party, decides all questions of policy in accord with the decisions of the Convention, appoints subordinate officers and subcommittees, including the Political Committee, and in general, constitutes between Conventions the functioning authority of the Party.

Section 5. The local governing body of the Party shall be the Local Executive Committee, or where only one branch exists, the Branch Executive Committee.

Section 6. The Local Executive Committee shall be elected by a City Convention and shall be subordinate to the City Convention. The Local organizer and all other Local officers shall be designated by the Local Executive Committee and shall be subordinate to the Local Executive Committee. It shall be the duty of the Local Executive Committee to direct the activities of the Local, and to act

with full power for the Local between City Conventions subject to the decisions of the Convention itself. City Conventions shall be held at least once a year. Special conventions may be called by the Local Executive Committee or on the demand of the branches representing one-third of the Local membership.

Section 7. The Branch Executive Committee shall be elected by the membership of the branch, and shall be subordinate to the branch membership. The branch organizer and all other branch officers shall be designated by the Branch Executive Committee, subject to approval of the branch, and shall be subordinate to the Branch Executive Committee. It shall be the duty of the Branch Executive Committee to direct the activities of the branch and to act with full powers for the branch between branch meetings.

Section 8. State or District Executive Committees may be constituted in a manner to be determined by the National Committee. The relations of such State or District Executive Committees to the Locals and branches within the state or district shall be determined by special by-laws to be approved by

the membership of the state or district, subject to final approval by the National Committee.

ARTICLE VI. CONTROL COMMISSION

Section 1. A Control Commission of five members shall be elected as follows: the Convention shall elect four members and the fifth member, who shall be a member of the National Committee, shall be designated by the National Committee. The Control Commission shall have full authority to investigate any individual or circumstance which it may deem necessary, and shall have power to delegate any of its authority to representatives.

Section 2. The Control Commission, on completion of its investigation in each case, shall present its findings and recommendations to the Political Committee for action. Action shall be taken by the Political Committee, or by the National Committee, in those cases referred to it by the Political Committee.

Section 3. In those cases where the Control Commission finds it necessary to intervene, its authority shall supersede any local investigation or trial.

Section 4. It shall be obligatory on every member of the Party to furnish the Control Commission or its authorized representatives with any information they may require.

ARTICLE VII. INITIATION FEES AND DUES

Section 1. Each applicant for membership shall pay an initiation fee of One Dollar (\$1.00). The entire initiation fee shall be paid to the National Office.

Section 2. Each member shall pay monthly dues of Two Dollars (\$2.00). In addition, all members are expected to make regular voluntary contributions according to their means.

Section 3. Where branches are joined in Local, State, or District Committees, 75 cents from each dues dollar shall go to the National Office. Where Local, State, or District Committees do not exist, dues shall go in full to the National Office. Dues of members-at-large shall go in full to the National Office.

Section 4. Members who are three months in arrears in payment of dues shall cease to be mem-

bers in good standing, and shall be so notified by the Branch Executive Committee. Members six months in arrears shall be stricken from the rolls of the Party.

ARTICLE VIII. DISCIPLINE

Section 1. All decisions of the governing bodies of the Party are binding upon the members and subordinate bodies of the Party.

Section 2. Any member or organ violating the decisions of a higher organ of the Party shall be subject to disciplinary actions up to expulsion by the body having jurisdiction.

Section 3. Charges against any member shall be made in writing and the accused member shall be furnished with a copy in advance of the trial. Charges shall be filed and heard in the branch to which the member belongs, or in a higher body which may decide to act directly in the case. Charges filed before the branch shall be considered by the Branch Executive Committee (or a subcommittee elected by it) at a meeting to which the accused member is summoned. The Branch Executive Committee shall submit a recommen-

dation to be acted upon by the membership of the branch. Charges considered by higher bodies of the Party shall, however, be acted upon by said bodies.

Section 4. Action by any unit or organ in disciplinary cases deemed improper by a higher unit, may be changed by direct intervention of a higher body.

Section 5. Any member subjected to disciplinary action has the right to appeal to the next higher body, up to and including the National Convention. Pending action on appeal, the decision of the Party body having jurisdiction remains in full force and effect.

Section 6. Persons who have been expelled from the Party or who have resigned from it may not be readmitted to the Party without the approval of the National Committee.

Section 7. Questions decided by the Party Convention may be subjects of new discussions only when such discussion is formally authorized by the National Committee, or in the established preconvention discussion period.

Section 8. Political collaboration with non-members of the Party must be formally authorized by the Party committee having jurisdiction.

ARTICLE IX. QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELECTION

Section 1. Except in the case of newly organized branches members of Local and Branch Executive Committees must have been members of the Party for at least three months, and members of the District Committee must have been members of the Party for at least six months.

Section 2. Members of the National Committee must be members of the Party for at least one year.

ARTICLE X. NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

Section 1. National Conventions of the Party shall be held at least every two years. Special conventions may be called by the National Committee or on the demand of branches representing one-third of the membership.

Section 2. The Call for the Convention, together with an agenda and the proposals of the Nation-

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al Committee, shall be issued at least ninety (90) days before the date of the Convention for discussion in the local organizations and the official publications. An internal bulletin shall be issued during the Convention discussion period. The Political Committee may set a deadline for acceptance of preconvention discussion articles for the bulletin.

Section 3. Representation at the Convention shall be proportionally based upon the branch membership in good standing as specified in the Convention Call. The National Committee shall levy a compulsory assessment to finance the National Convention, from which totally unemployed members may be exempted. Branches organized after the Convention Call shall have fraternal representation.

Section 4. Members and alternates of the National Committee, if not regular delegates, shall be fraternal delegates to the Convention.

Section 5. The National Committee shall appoint an auditing committee to make periodical audits of the financial accounts of the National Office and national Party departments and institutions,

and report on same to the National Committee. Branch, Local and District Committees shall appoint auditing committees to make periodic audits of the financial accounts of the corresponding Party units and of Party departments and institutions responsible to said unit.

ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS

Amendments shall be made to this Constitution by majority vote of the National Convention.

ARTICLE XII. PRESS

All organs of the Party are subject to and under the direction of the Party and National Committee.