
Constitution of the Socialist Party of America:

Adopted in National Convention at Indianapolis, Ind., August 1, 1901 — as revised.

As published in *The Socialist* [Seattle] whole no. 194 (April 24, 1904), pg. 4.
Material added subsequently to the original August 1901 version appears here in *italics*.
Material subsequently deleted from the Aug. 1901 version appears here ~~struck through~~.

Article I. Name.

The name of this organization shall be the Socialist Party of America, except in states where a different name has or may become a legal requirement.

Article II. National Committee.

Section 1. There shall be a National Committee, composed of 1 member from each organized state or territory, and a Quorum of 5 to be elected from the membership of the locality of the seat of the committee.

Section 2. The members of this committee shall be elected by and from the membership of the states or territories which they respectively represent by referendum vote. Their term of office shall not be more than 2 years, and they shall take their seats in the month of January.

Section 3. This committee shall meet in regular session not oftener than once a year. Special meetings shall be called at the request of a majority of members of such committee.

Section 4. Expenses of the National Committeemen in attending meetings shall be paid

from the national treasury.†

~~¶2.] The National Committee shall prepare a semi-annual report of all the financial and other business of the party and issue the same to all state and territorial organizations.‡~~

Article III. Duties and Powers.

Section 1. The duties of this committee shall be to supervise and direct the work of the National Secretary; to represent the party in all national and international affairs; to organize unorganized states and territories; to call national nominating conventions and special conventions called by referendum of the party, and to submit questions to referendum; to receive semi-annual reports from the state committees and to make reports to national conventions.

Section 2. Any member of the National Committee, not a member of the Local Quorum, may require the Secretary to submit to a vote of the whole National Committee questions as to the removal of the Local Committee or the Secretary; also for its consideration any part of the work of the Secretary or of the Local Committee, or any business belonging to the National Committee.

Section 3. The National Committee shall also

†- This provision was originally paragraph 7 of "Duties and Powers" in the Aug. 1901 Constitution.

‡- This provision was originally paragraph 2 of "Reports" in the Aug. 1901 Constitution.

arrange a system of financial secretaries' and treasurers' books for locals, the same to be furnished at cost to locals upon application.

Section 4. The National Committee ~~This committee~~ shall neither publish nor designate any official organ.

Article IV. Local Quorum.

Section 1. The National Committee shall elect a committee of 5 from the party membership of the locality selected for the party headquarters to supervise and assist the Secretary as the National Committee shall require and direct. Said committee of 5 shall form part of and be a quorum of the National Committee, but shall be subject to removal at any time by the National Committee. On the question of removal the said Local Quorum shall have no vote. †

“The Local Quorum until the next National Convention shall be composed of the members of the National Committee from the states of Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, Iowa, and Kentucky.”
—Resolution adopted in spring of 1903.

Section 2. Any member of the National Committee not a member of the Local Quorum may require the National Secretary to submit to a vote of the whole National Committee questions as to the removal of the local committee or the National Secretary; also for its consideration any part of the work of the National Secretary or of the local committee or any business belonging to the National Committee

Article V. National Secretary.

Section 1. The National Secretary shall be elected by the National Committee, ~~and shall be~~

~~subject to removal at its discretion; his term of office to be for one year, beginning with the year 1902. The National Secretary shall be subject to removal at the committee's discretion.~~

Section 2. The National Secretary shall be in communication with the matters of the National Committee, the officers of the organized states and territories, and with members in unorganized states and territories. The National Secretary shall receive as compensation the sum of \$1,000 annually.

~~[§1.] The Secretary shall prepare a monthly statement of the financial and other business of his office, and when approved by the Local Quorum of 5 shall issue the same to all party organizations, in such way as the National Committee shall direct. §~~

Article VI. State Organizations.

Section 1. Each state or territory may organize in such way or manner, and under such rules and regulations, as it may determine, but not in conflict with the provisions of this constitution.

Section 2. A state or territory shall be deemed organized and shall have a right to affiliate upon the organization of not less than 4 branches, each branch to consist of not less than 5 members. Each state or territory so organized shall receive a charter. ‡

Section 4. [sic.] In states and territories in which there is one central organization affiliated with the party and representing at least 10 local organizations in different parts of such state or territory respectively, the state or territorial organization shall have the sole jurisdiction of the members residing within their respective territories, and the sole control of all matters pertaining

†- This section was originally paragraph 3 of “Duties and Powers” in the Aug. 1901 Constitution. “Article IV — Local Quorum” did not appear in the original document.

‡- This section was originally paragraphs 1 and 2 of “Affiliation of States and Territories” in the Aug. 1901 Constitution.

§- This section was originally paragraph 1 of “Reports” in the Aug. 1901 Convention.

to the propaganda, organization, and financial affairs within such state or territory, and the National Committee and sub-committees or officers thereof shall have no right to interfere in such matters without the consent of the respective state or territorial organizations.†‡

Section 5. The State Committees shall make semi-annual reports to the National Committee concerning their membership, financial condition, and general standing of the party.§

Section 6. The State Committees ~~Each state or territory~~ shall pay in to the National Committee every month a sum equal to 5 cents for every member in good standing within ~~the respective state or territory~~ their respective territories.Δ

~~{§3.} The platform of the Socialist Party, adopted in convention or by referendum vote, shall be the supreme declaration of the party, and all state and municipal organizations shall, in the adoption of their platforms, conform thereto.◇~~

Article VII. Headquarters.

The headquarters shall be located at Chicago, Ill. (Adopted by Referendum, 1904). ~~Headquarters shall be located at St. Louis, Missouri.~~ But said headquarters may be changed by the National Committee, subject to a referendum of the party.

Article VIII. Amendments.

This constitution may be amended by a National Convention, subject to a majority referendum vote of the party or by a referendum without the action of such a convention, and it shall be the duty of the National Committee to submit such amendment to a referendum vote within 30 days after being requested to do so by 5 locals in 3 different states.

Article IX. Referendum.

Section 1. All acts of the National Committee shall be subject to referendum vote after the same manner as provided in the preceding section.

Section 2. All propositions or other matters submitted for the referendum of the party shall be presented without comment.

Article X. Basis of Representation.

The basis of representation in any national convention shall be by states, each state being entitled to 1 delegate at large and 1 additional delegate for every 100 members in good standing.

†- This "state autonomy" provision originally appeared as paragraph 6 of "Duties and Powers" in the Aug. 1901 Constitution.

‡- Footnote by Hermon Titus: "An amendment to this section was adopted, allowing the National Committee to send speakers to a Local at the special request of said Local. We cannot find a copy of it."

§- Formerly paragraph 3 of an article entitled "Reports" in the Aug. 1901 Constitution.

Δ- This provision appeared as an article entitled "Revenue" in the Aug. 1901 Constitution.

◇- This provision appeared as paragraph 3 of "Affiliation of States and Territories" in the Aug. 1901 Constitution.

Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport.

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