

---

# Constitution of the Young Workers League of America: Adopted by the First National Convention, New York City — May 13-15, 1922.

As published in *Young Workers League of America: Manifesto, Program, Resolutions, and Constitution*.  
(Chicago: Young Workers League of America, n.d. [1922]), pp. 30-39.

## Article I. — Name and Purpose.

*Section 1.* The name of this organization shall be the Young Workers' League of America.

*Section 2.* Its purpose shall be to organize and educate the young of the working class to understand their true position in capitalist society, to work for the abolition of capitalism and to aid in the establishment of a Republic of Workers' Councils — a government functioning through the power of the proletariat to the exclusion of all other classes — as the first step towards the establishment of an International Classless Society, free from all political and economic slavery.



## Article II. — Emblem.

*Section 1.* The emblem of the Young Workers' League shall be a crossed hammer and sickle on a five-pointed star, surrounded by a circular margin, having at the top the words "Young Workers' League of America," and underneath the words "Clarity and Action."

## Article III. — Membership.

*Section 1.* All young proletarians between the ages of 14 and 30 shall be eligible for membership.

*Section 2.* Every applicant for membership shall have expressed his or her willingness to enter and abide by the rules and regulations of the organization, shall have paid the required initiation fee, and must be recommended by two members in good standing in the branch in which application is tendered.

*Section 3.* Every applicant to the organization must become a member of the study class conducted by the particular branch to which he makes application.

*Section 4.* Applicants for membership shall sign the following application card:

"I, the undersigned, declare my adherence to the principles and tactics of the Young Workers' League of America as expressed in its program and constitution; will be bound by its rules and regulations,

and affirm that I will actively participate in its work.”

*Section 5 (a).* Every applicant for membership shall pay initiation fee and dues when application is made. Final action on acceptance or rejection of the applicant for membership shall be made at the following business meeting. This rule shall not apply to the Charter Members of a newly organized branch during the first month.

*(b).* Applicants for membership shall be proposed and accepted only at the regular business meetings of the branch.

*(c).* Applicants who are unable to pay the initiation fee or dues because of unemployment, strike, or similar reasons, may be exempted from payment of same if so recommended by the two members who propose the applicant and if approved by the City Central Committee or City Executive Committee.

*Section 6.* A member may transfer from one branch to another upon certification by the Branch to which he belongs and if approved by the City Central Committee or City Executive Committee. Transfer to another city or district must pass through regular channels. A transfer shall be granted only if the member has complied with all the obligations of the League.

#### **Article IV. — Units of Organization.**

*Section 1.* The unit of the organization of the Young Workers’ League shall be the Branch, consisting of not less than five members.

*Section 2.* Two or more branches in the same city shall form a City Central Committee. The City Central Committee may include branches in adjacent territory where no City Central Committee exists.

*Section 3.* No branch of any one language in a certain locality shall be divided into two branches unless its membership is at least 100. The branch must be divided into two branches equal in membership when its membership reaches 150.

*Section 4.* The National Executive Committee is empowered to create districts and further subdivisions whenever it deems this necessary. No districts shall be formed or other divisions made in the organizational structure other than the division of a branch into two branches after the call for the National Convention has been issued.

#### **Article V. — Administration.**

*Section 1.* The Supreme body of the Young Workers’ League of America shall be the National Convention.

*Section 2.* Between conventions the National Executive Committee elected by the National Convention shall be the supreme body and shall direct all the activities of the League.

*Section 3.* The City Central Committee shall have the power to supervise the activities of the branches within its jurisdiction. In case a district organization exists, the District Executive Committee has the power to supervise the activities of the subordinate units within its jurisdiction.

*Section 4.* Language branches of the League shall have the same relation to the City Central Committee as the English speaking branches.

*Section 5.* Language propaganda committees shall be appointed by the National Executive Committee, whenever it deems this necessary, to supervise the work amongst the foreign speaking youth. The language propaganda committees are directly responsible to the National Executive Committee.

*Section 6.* Delegates to the committees or other units of the Workers’ Party of America shall be elected by the corresponding committees or units of the Young Workers’ League and vice versa.

#### **Article VI. — Conventions.**

*Section 1.* The National Convention is the supreme body of the Young Workers’ League of America and shall be called by the National Ex-

ecutive Committee at least once a year.

*Section 2.* Emergency conventions with all the power of regular conventions may be called by the National Committee or upon demand of organizations representing 40 percent of the membership.

*Section 3.* The number of delegates to the National Convention shall be determined by the National Executive Committee. Delegates shall be apportioned to the City Central Committees or district committees, or committees of subordinate units where such exist, according to membership based upon average dues paid for the period of three months prior to the call for the convention. Delegates to the National Convention shall be elected by the City Conventions, or conventions of districts or subordinate units where such exist, with proportional representation for all branches.

*Section 4.* Elections to city conventions, or district conventions, or conventions of other subdivisions where such exist, shall be determined by the City Central Committee, district committee, or committees of other subdivisions where such exist, upon a basis of proportional representation.

*Section 5.* Members of the City Executive Committee, or District Executive Committees, or the executive committees of other subordinate units where such exist, shall have all the rights of regular delegates at the conventions of their respective units, but no vote unless they are regularly elected delegates.

*Section 6.* Delegates to the City Conventions, or district conventions, or conventions of other subdivisions where such exist, may be from any subdivision within the respective territory.

*Section 7.* Any member of the organization may be elected to the National Convention outside of the jurisdiction of the city organization or district organization or other subdivision where such exist.

*Section 8 (a).* The agenda and other National Convention matters shall be submitted by the National Committee to each branch through regu-

lar channels, for discussion at the same time the call for the National Convention is issued.

(b). The agenda for the National Convention shall be issued at least 60 days prior to the convention.

(c). The press of the Young Workers' League shall be opened to discussion on important matters at least 60 days prior to the convention.

(d). Delegates to the National Convention shall be paid railroad expenses and an allowance not exceeding \$15.00 to cover other convention expenses.

(e). The National Executive Committee is authorized to assess the membership to cover all convention expenses. Every City Central Committee, or district committee or subordinate committee units where such exist, shall raise its quota of the convention expenses on the basis of the membership within its respective territory.

## **Article VII. — National Executive Committee.**

*Section 1.* Between conventions the National Executive Committee shall be the supreme body of the League and shall direct all its activities.

*Section 2.* The National Executive Committee shall consist of seven members elected by the National Convention. The Convention shall also elect five alternates, to fill vacancies in order of vote. When the list of alternates is exhausted, the National Executive Committee shall have the right of selection.

At least five members of the National Executive Committee shall reside in the city in which the National Office is located.

*Section 3.* Members of the National Executive Committee must have been members of the Young Workers' League for one year at the time of their nomination, or hold membership in an organization affiliated as a body within 60 days after the first National Convention.

*Section 4.* The National Executive Commit-

tee shall elect an Executive Secretary and all other officers.

*Section 5.* All press and propaganda activities shall be under the control of the National Executive Committee.

*Section 6.* The National Executive Committee shall make a report of the activities and finances of the League at least once every two months.

*Section 7.* A complete auditing and accounting of the League shall be made once every six months. No paid employee or paid official shall serve on the auditing committee.

### **Article VIII. — Districts and Subordinate Units.**

*Section 1.* Wherever a unit higher than the city organization exists, the respective committee of such higher unit shall submit and carry out all instructions of the National Executive Committee. It shall make remittances, financial statements, and reports to the National Executive Committee at least once every month. It shall submit financial statement and report on the activity in the territory under its jurisdiction to the membership at least once every month.

*Section 2.* City Conventions shall be held at least once every six months. Wherever organizations higher than city organizations exist, conventions shall be held at least once every six months.

*Section 3.* The City Central Committee shall consist of delegates from each branch as follows:

Every branch shall have at least one delegate up to and including 20 members. It shall be entitled to an additional delegate for each additional 30 members or major fraction thereof. The total delegation shall not exceed 5 for any one branch.

If city committees upon this basis have less than 5 members, the city organization shall have the right to determine the representation to the CCC.

The City Central Committee shall elect its City Executive Committee (it may be elected by

the City Convention), which functions as the supreme body between meetings of the CCC. Members of the City Executive Committee who are not regularly elected delegates to the CCC shall have all rights of regular members on the CCC except the right to vote.

*Section 4.* The committees of the various units of the League are empowered to act within their jurisdiction, subject to the decisions of the next higher unit.

### **Article IX. — Discipline.**

*Section 1.* The National Executive Committee shall have the power to suspend or expel or reorganize any unit of the organization. In the case of district organizations the expulsion or suspension shall be by a vote of at least 5 to 2.

*Section 2.* No branch of the Young Workers' League shall have the power to expel a member, but it may suspend such member pending action of the City Central Committee, which shall have power to expel or suspend members recommended by branches for expulsion or suspension.

*Section 3.* Where no CCC exists, branches have the rights of the city organization.

*Section 4.* No CCC or higher unit, if such exists, shall have the right to suspend or expel a branch unless approved by the next higher body. No city organization or unit higher than the city organization shall be suspended or expelled unless approved by the National Executive Committee.

*Section 5.* Any unit higher than the branch may recommend to the National Executive Committee through regular channels the suspension, expulsion, or reorganization of any lower unit.

*Section 6.* Written charges must be presented against any member or unit accused of a breach of discipline. Such charges must be investigated by the next higher unit before discipline is carried out.

*Section 7.* Every member or unit shall have

the right of appeal whether expelled or suspended, to the next higher body.

*Section 8.* The National Executive Committee maintains discipline over its own members. It may suspend or expel by a vote of 5 to 1, the member to be suspended or expelled not voting.

*Section 9.* The member of the National Executive Committee suspended or expelled shall have the right to appeal in writing or in person to the next National Convention. In the meantime, his suspension or expulsion shall stand.

#### **Article X. — Finances.**

*Section 1.* Each applicant for membership shall pay an initiation fee of 25 cents, which shall be receipted for by an initiation stamp furnished by the National Executive Committee. The entire sum shall go to the National Office.

*Section 2.* Each member shall pay 25 cents per month for due stamps, which shall be sold to the CCC for 10 cents. The CCC shall sell the stamps to the branches for 15 cents, which in turn are to sell them to the members for 25 cents.

*Section 3.* Special assessments may be levied by the National Executive Committee or National Convention.

*Section 4.* Members unable to pay dues on account of unemployment, strikes, sickness, or for similar reasons shall upon application to their financial secretary be furnished with exempt stamps. The number of exempt stamps shall not exceed 15 percent of regular dues purchased by each City Central Committee each month.

*Section 5.* Members who are two months in arrears in payment of dues shall cease to be mem-

bers of the Young Workers' League in good standing. Members who are four months in arrears shall be stricken from the rolls.

*Section 6.* No member shall be permitted to pay advance dues for more than two months.

*Section 7.* Ten percent of the net income of all entertainments or other affairs by any unit of the organization shall be remitted through regular channels to the National Executive Committee.

#### **Article XI. — Press.**

*Section 1.* The National Executive Committee shall publish *The Young Worker* as the official organ of the League. It shall be issued at least once every month.

*Section 2.* The National Executive Committee shall supervise and control the issuance of literature and the entire League press.

*Section 3.* No subdivision of the League shall publish papers, leaflets, books, pamphlets, or other literature unless expressly authorized by the National Executive Committee.

#### **Article XII. — Meetings.**

*Section 1.* Every branch shall hold at least one business meeting and one educational meeting a month.

#### **Article XIII. — Headquarters.**

*Section 1.* The national headquarters of the Young Workers' League of America shall be in the city determined by the National Convention.

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

*Published by 1000 Flowers Publishing, Corvallis, OR, 2006. • Free reproduction permitted.*