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It Deals With
The War Crisis
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Emergency Call Issued For National Socialist Convention To Meet April 7

PLANS for holding an Emergency National Convention of the Socialist Party immediately, in place of the proposed convention in September, were being rapidly pushed forward as this issue of The American Socialist went to press. It will start Saturday, April 7, probably in Chicago, altho St. Louis, Mo., and Cleveland, O., were also under consideration.

The decision to hold the convention, in view of the crisis now confronting the nation, was taken after considerable discussion by the National Executive Committee in session in Chicago, Saturday and Sunday, March 10-11.

It was felt that it was necessary to hold a convention at this time for reasons as follows:

Reasons For Convention.

FIRST: To determine the policy of the party in case this country should be drawn into the war.

SECOND: For the transaction of other business which may properly come before the convention such as the revision of the national platform and the party constitution.

Representatives of all the foreign language federations, German, Finnish, Lettish, South Slavic, Slovak, Bohemian, Italian, Scandinavian, Hungarian and Jewish, were called into the conference. They voiced their unanimous approval of plans for holding the convention.

Committee Is United.

National Secretary Adolph Germer, National Executive Committeemen Morris Hillquit and Anna A. Maley, favored the convention from the start, while Victor L. Berger was won over and John M. Work joined with the other members of the committee in order to secure unity of action. John Spargo, the fifth member of the committee, was not present. Voicing his opposition to the convention Committeeman Work said:

"I preferred and proposed that, instead of calling a convention, the executive committee should formulate a policy to be followed by the party in case of war, together with the reasons, and recommend to the membership that the same be initiated for a referendum vote. As everyone else was in favor of the convention, however, I voted for it for the sake of unity of action."

With this unanimous sentiment for the convention, telegrams were sent to all members of the national committee, to secure their approval, as follows:

"National Executive Committee proposes to call an Emergency Convention on April Seventh in place of contemplated September convention to determine party policy in case of war and transact other party business.

Language federations unanimously favor plan. Endorsement of national committee desired. Do you approve? Vote immediately by wire".

Favored By National Committee.

Immediately the replies began coming in it was evident that the committee would be in favor of the convention almost unanimously. Plans for holding the convention were then taken up in earnest. It was decided to limit the gathering to 200 delegates. These were apportioned as follows:

Alabama	1
Alaska	1
Arizona	2
Arkansas	2
California	5
Colorado	2
Connecticut	3
Florida	2
Idaho	3
Illinois	13
Indiana	5
Iowa	3
Kansas	4
Maine	2
Maryland	2
Massachusetts	10
Michigan	5
Minnesota	8
Missouri	3
Montana	2
Nebraska	2
Nevada	2
New Hampshire	2
New Jersey	7
New Mexico	2
New York	19
North Dakota	3
Ohio	10
Oklahoma	18
Oregon	3
Pennsylvania	13
Rhode Island	2
South Dakota	2
Tennessee	2
Texas	4
Utah	2
Vermont	2
Washington	7
West Virginia	2
Wisconsin	7
Wyoming	2

The manner of selecting delegates is outlined in a declaration sent to all state secretaries which appears on this page.

In view of the critical situation developing in this country it was decided to postpone all efforts to hold an International Socialist Congress in June as contemplated.

Other business was also transacted by the national executive committee as follows:

Plan For Three Leaflets.

Victor L. Berger was asked to write a leaflet on the question of universal military training to help in fighting the militarists on this question.

Morris Hillquit agreed to write a leaflet on the question of compulsory arbitration. This matter is coming more and more to the front as a result of the efforts of the railroad workers to secure an eight-hour day.

Scott Nearing will be asked to write an article on "The High Cost Of Living" for the April leaflet to be issued by the Socialist Party, the next in its series of monthly leaflets.

An appeal will be sent to all Socialist locals asking them to contribute to the defense fund to save Mooney from the gallows.

In his report to the National Executive Committee, National Secretary Germer reported that as a result of the anti-war campaign carried on by the party, "A flood of telegrams, letters, post cards, resolutions and petitions went into Washington adding strength to the position of the anti-war congressmen and causing the weaker, or those who were hostile to us, to hesitate in their action.

"The old congress adjourned without empowering Wilson to arm merchant ships, i. e., to protect Morgan's commerce. According to the most reliable reports we can receive, the pro-war forces are at work, seeking to have the new congress convene to confer the power on President Wilson that he sought for the old congress but failed to get. This situation brings up two questions. First, how are we going to prevent that power being conferred on President Wilson. Second, in the event it is conferred on him and he arms ships, which is the certain forerunner to war, and war results, what are the Socialists going to do? Shall we do as the European Socialists did and join in the war, or will we stand defiantly insisting that it is Wall Street's war and not ours and that we refuse to fight?"

Socialist Anti-War Meetings

By EUGENE V. DEBS.

In the twenty years that I have had a part in the Socialist movement, I have never seen such extraordinary Socialist meetings as are being held this year. I have seen some great meetings in my time but this year eclipses them all. Thousands flock to our meetings on account of our anti-war attitude and in this respect at least the war in Europe and the threatened war here are proving a boom to the Socialist movement.

On the present trip I have spoken in the largest cities in the Eastern States, and the largest auditoriums have been packed and jammed to the last foot of standing room and thousands turned away, unable to struggle thru the doors. All sorts and conditions of people attended these meetings, all or nearly all are equally enthused, and not only pay their admission fee gladly but buy literature and drop a coin into the contribution basket besides.

Anti-war, anti-militarism, anti-high cost of living, and anti-capitalism, imperialism or plutocracy is what appeals to the people and the more radical it is the better it suits and the more enthusiastic is the applause.

Now is the time to build up our Party and our press. The working class and people generally were never so receptive. At every meeting the appeal for new members or for subscribers to The American Socialist and other Socialist papers should be made.

The Socialist Party will be very urgently needed in the coming months, notwithstanding there is no national campaign this year.

This is a good time to cease licker and to get to work. The Socialist Party is not all that it should be but it is the best thing we have thus far been able to produce, and with all that may be charged against it, it is today the most effective working class fighting machine in America. In every battle of the workers the members of the Socialist Party are at the front and the Party and its press are as a rule first in making the appeal for funds to support the strikers, to defend the arrested leaders, and to give the right kind of publicity to the struggle.

There are those ultra-radicals who denounce the Socialist Party, but when they get into trouble thru their own folly, they invariably turn first to the Socialist Party to come to their rescue; and not infrequently by the very political means and influence which these misguided comrades of ours so rabidly denounce, they find themselves in jail or slated for worse punishment.

Comrades, let us join heads, hands and hearts to make this the biggest year in the annals of the Socialist movement!

Now is the time. The very hour has struck. Let us all roll up our sleeves and get down to actual work. The knocking will keep till later on if we must have it. But for the present let us build the Party-construct the fighting machine so urgently needed by the workers to cope with the present situation. Let us resolve that before the sun of 1917 sets we shall have at least one hundred and fifty thousand red militants enrolled in the Socialist Party of the United States.

War, If It Comes, Must Not Find Us Unprepared, Says Convention Call

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY!

Comrades:---Your National Executive Committee hereby calls a Special Convention of the Socialist Party to be held on the 7th day of April 1917, for the purpose of determining the policy of the Party in case this country should be drawn into the war and for the transaction of all other business which may come before the convention.

The action was determined by the unanimous vote of the National Executive Committee. It was overwhelmingly endorsed by the National Committee. We feel confident it will meet the hearty support of the vast majority of the Party membership.

This summary call for a convention is not a regular proceeding under our constitution. It is an emergency measure necessitated by the sudden gravity of the situation which confronts the country, the working class and the Socialist movement.

The time is short. The danger is imminent. Delay may be fatal. If war should break out, our Party must present greater fidelity to principle, greater unity of purpose and greater solidarity of action than ever.

Only a full and representative convention, followed by a speedy vote of the whole membership can lay down an authoritative, uniform and effective Socialist course of action against war and during war. Only the determined and concerted effort of the whole party membership will conserve and strengthen our movement in this most critical period of our history.

TO WORK, COMRADES! ELECT YOUR FULL QUOTA OF DELEGATES WITHOUT DELAY. CONTRIBUTE THE FUNDS TO DEFRAY THEIR NECESSARY EXPENSES. THE WAR AGITATION OF OUR RULING CLASSES MUST BE MET BY US WITH REDOUBLED ENERGY. WAR, IF IT COMES, MUST NOT FIND US UNPREPARED.

Prompt Action! Request To State Secretaries On Convention Plans

To State Secretaries!

Dear Comrades:---In connection with the enclosed call for a special convention of the Socialist Party, I am directed by the N. E. C. to submit to you the following additional information and instructions.

The special convention called for April 7, 1917, is expected to take the place of the proposed September convention. In addition to the special purpose for which it is primarily called, it will transact all other business which would come before the regular convention.

The basis of representation and apportionment of delegates will be as provided in the pending referendum for the September convention and by the constitution of the Party. The convention will consist of 200 delegates, to be apportioned among the various states and territories in accordance with the average National dues paid for 1916.

The time is short and the usual methods of nomination and election of delegates cannot be followed. It is therefore suggested that you at once call a meeting of your State Executive Committee or take other appropriate measures to determine upon a mode of election which will give the comrades in your state the greatest opportunity for a popular election of delegates with due regard to the speed and dispatch required by the extraordinary circumstances.

If you should determine to choose all delegates at large, it is suggested that you at once call for nominations to be made by the locals in your state at special meetings to be immediately called for that purpose and that similar meetings be held by the locals at an interval of about one week for the purpose of voting.

But if your committee determines to apportion your quota of delegates among the different sections of your state, it is suggested that you make the apportionment at once and call upon each group of locals entitled to elect one or more delegates under your apportionment, to make nominations and to vote on candidates at special meetings.

In any event, it is desirable that all delegates be elected by April 1st. You are requested to inform this office of such elections as soon as they shall have taken place.

In view of the fact that the National Office has no funds to defray the traveling and other expenses of delegates, the states or delegates are expected to advance their expenses. But the convention will however, take measures to raise a fund for the repayment of such advances by a special assessment upon all members or otherwise.

We impress upon you the necessity of prompt action.

Boost For The Organization Fund!

An enthusiastic, successful, harmonious national convention will do more than anything else to solidify the ranks of the Socialist Party and make for a greater, more powerful organization.

This can be brought about to a very considerable extent by raising sufficient funds now, not only to meet the expenses of the convention but to pay for the increased organization activity that must be inaugurated after the convention adjourns.

Right now the convention is the greatest organization work that can be done.

Part of the \$50,000 Organization Fund, only a small part of which has so far been raised, will have to be used to finance the convention.

Have you contributed your share to this fund? Has your local contributed its share? If not, do so now! Send all contributions to the National Office, Socialist Party, 803 W. Madison St., Chicago, Ill.

