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# **Social Democrats Plan Convention; Meet Next March**

## **Preliminary Eastern States Conference of Social Democrats in Philadelphia to Meet February 7 [1937]**

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PITTSBURGH, Pa.— Organizations that split off from the Socialist Party throughout the United States last year, because of their adherence to social democracy as opposed to dictatorship and terror, will found a permanent national organization at a national conference in Pittsburgh on March 14 [1937]. Delegates of state organizations of state organizations and local organizations in unorganized states, as well as language federations, will be present at the Pittsburgh conference.

Preliminary to this national conference, an eastern states conference will be held in Philadelphia on Sunday, February 7. The State Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of Pennsylvania will meet in Philadelphia that week and it has issued invitations to all eastern organizations to meet with it. These organizations include, besides Pennsylvania, state organizations in New Jersey, Maryland, Connecticut, and New York; state branches forming in Massachusetts and Rhode Island; the Jewish and Finnish Socialist Federations; and the District of Columbia.

### **The First Conference.**

Of the above state organizations, New York was excluded from the old Socialist Party at the Cleveland convention last summer [May 23-26, 1936] which was controlled by the Thomasites. Later in the year the state organizations in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Maryland withdrew from the Thomas-dominated party. About half the membership in New Jersey also seceded and two-

thirds left it in Massachusetts, leaving most of the membership in the eastern states out of the old party and the big majority of the membership is located in this region.

The Eastern States Conference will consider a tentative program for the larger national conference to be held in March, at which the Local Pittsburgh organization will act as host. At the state convention of the Pennsylvania organization last summer, where it withdrew from the Thomas organization, it was also decided to seek a national affiliation. Following the national conference next March, Pennsylvania will hold a special state convention, probably in Reading, and act upon the matter of affiliating with the national organization formed in Pittsburgh.

At the national conference in March delegates are expected to attend not only from the Eastern states and the two language federations, but also from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, the District of Columbia, and a number of the states farther West.

### **SDF Organizations.**

Since the Cleveland convention last summer which brought about the split in the Socialist Party, the Social Democratic Federation has been functioning as a provisional national organization. The SDF was organized at Cleveland immediately after the split and since then it has had the affiliation of state organizations in New York, New Jersey, Maryland, and Indiana, and has had the direct cooperation of the Finnish and Jewish federations.

G. August Gerber was chosen as Acting National Secretary of the SDF in Cleveland and he accomplished the important pioneer work of national organization to late in September, when other work made it impossible for him to continue and his duties were taken over by James Oneal. Since then, permanent organizations have been formed in New Jersey and Maryland and the District of Columbia will be organized soon. Indiana has also affiliated in this period and during the whole period locals have been organized in about a dozen states and members at large have been admitted in about 20 states.

### **The March Conference.**

Invitations to the Eastern States Conference in Philadelphia on February 7 were sent this week by the State Committee of Pennsylva-

nia, which will also hold its own session in the same city the day before. the reason for holding this preliminary conference by the organizations named is that they constitute the majority of the groups and organizations that are interested. There is little doubt of their agreement upon the essentials of a program which will be satisfactory to the delegates to the national conference next March.

The March conference will establish the permanent national organization of all those in the United states who stand for democratic Socialism and cooperation with the Labor organizations of the country in their struggle for betterment. The conference will choose permanent national officials, establish a national headquarters, and provide for the publication of literature in accord with its program, policies, and philosophy.

The State Executive Committee of the People's Party of New York will meet in the People's House Sunday to act upon the invitation extended by the Pennsylvania organization.

*Edited by Tim Davenport*

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