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# Official Minutes of the General Committee of the Socialist Party of St. Louis, August 18, 1919

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St. Louis, Mo., August 18, 1919.

Special meeting of the General Committee called to order at 8:20 pm. Patterson elected chairman. The following comrades were seated on credentials: Oscar Gerges of Ward [Branch] 11; George Brown, Rosella Mueck, and Herman Wolf of YPSL [Circle] #3; A. Brown, Rose Savonovsky, and M. Levy of YPSL [Circle] #2.

By instructions of the chairman, the secretary [William Brandt] then read the following call for the meeting:—

To the delegates of the General Committee.

Comrades:—

At a regular meeting of the Executive Committee held Wednesday, August 13th, 1919, the following resolution, proposed by Comrade [G.A.] Hoehn, was unanimously adopted:

**“Resolved: that this Executive Committee recommend to the General Committee of the Socialist party of St. Louis, at a special meeting to be immediately called, that a general membership meeting of Local St. Louis be held with the coming two weeks for the purpose of discussing and adopting a draft for a national platform and program in accordance with present economic and social conditions, to be submitted to the National Emergency Convention of the Socialist Party at Chicago on**

**August 30, 1919, for consideration and adoption; and that this Executive Committee shall constitute itself as a committee on platform and program to immediately draft such a document, and provide a sufficient number of copies thereof for distribution among the party members at the General Membership Meeting of Local St. Louis, in order that the proposed very important document may be carefully and conscientiously considered by the membership at said meeting.”**

In accordance with the above resolution, the Executive Committee decided *to call a special meeting of the General Committee for Monday, August 18, 1919, 8:00 pm SHARP, at 940 Chouteau Avenue*, for the purpose of considering the proposition in the resolution.

Trusting that you will see the importance and necessity of your presence at this Special meeting Monday evening, I remain

Fraternally yours,

**W.M. Brandt,**  
Secretary.

After the call was read, a motion was made by Stutz and seconded, calling attention to the fact that several of the branches had requested a general membership meeting and these letters be read. Motion carried.

Communications from the 8th-9th Ward Branch, the North branch of the 27th Ward, Gravois German Branch, Bohemian and Jewish Branch, requesting a general membership meeting, were read.

Motion made and carried the communications be received and filed.

A motion was then made by Comrade Hoehn and seconded, that the call be received and the meeting be held at New Club Hall, Saturday evening, August 23rd, 1919, with I.E. Ferguson as the speaker to represent the left wing.

Amendment to the amendment made by Brandt, which was seconded, that the call be received and the meeting be held at New Club Hall, Sunday, August 24th, 2:30 o'clock, with none but Socialist Party members of our local be allowed to participate in the meeting.

Brandt was then granted the floor on the amendment to the amendment, and he called the delegates' attention to the fact that I.E. Ferguson had openly joined the Communist Party and produced documentary evidence to substantiate the statement; also, that this August 23rd meeting had been arranged by the local Left Wing group as a public mass meeting with Ferguson as the speaker and that circulars were freely and publicly distributed by the local Left Wing members at our public mass meeting held at New Club Hall last Sunday [August 17, 1919], announcing Ferguson's meeting as admission free. (Several copies of the circular being herewith produced.) It would be impossible for the party to attempt to transact its business at said meeting. Furthermore, that Ferguson was now organizing for the Communist Party, a dual organization to our Socialist Party, and he — Brandt — warned the delegates against committing our local to this dual organization.

Pfister, John S'Renco, Hoehn, Long, and Gergs spoke in favor of the amendment to the amendment by Brandt.

Stutz, Van Mill, Braun, Norvell, and Sigmund S'Renco spoke in favor of the amendment by Stutz.

Before the vote was taken, Comrade Stutz, the mover of the amendment, asked the chairman whether the "Left Wing" would be given the right to circularize the membership of Local St. Louis for the Ferguson mass meeting called by the Left Wingers for Saturday evening, August 23, 1919, at which Ferguson was going to speak. If such right of circularizing the Socialist Party members for said Ferguson meeting would be granted, Stutz said, he, in the name of the Left Wing comrades, would withdraw this amendment to call the party membership meeting *together with the Ferguson meeting of Saturday evening, and in that case he would not object if the Socialist Party would hold its meeting any other day or evening.*

Chairman Patterson ruled that this was a question for the delegates to decide, not for the chairman. No further action was taken in the matter and the delegates proceeded to vote on the subject before the meeting.

A rising vote was taken, and the amendment to the amendment offered by Brandt was defeated by a vote of 15 yes and 16 no.

Brandt then demanded a roll call on the amendment offered by Stutz, more than five delegates seconding it.

A roll call was then held on the Stutz amendment, which was carried by a vote of 16 yes and 15 no, the following being the roll call:

Shepard, absent; Kosman, absent; Wieger, no; Mueck, present but not voting; Bachman, present but not voting; Unger, absent; Boettcher, absent; Onken, no; Skoven, absent; Kraek, yes; Stutz, yes; Krieg, yes; Hullmann, yes; Witkay, yes; Pfister, no; Telthorst, no; Brandt, no; Hoehn, no; Dorn, absent; Boelling, no; Gergs, no; Proske, yes; Pape, absent; Haefele, absent; Hoffman, absent; Stolt, absent; Schmidt, absent; Pauls, no; Gerdes, no; Wagner, absent; Duerkop, absent; Hellwig, absent; Hendler, absent; Tourville, absent; Nye, absent; O'Brien, absent; Aldrich, absent; Stienstra, absent; Grimm, absent; [Sigmund] S'Renco, yes; Patterson, no; Rauss, absent; Braun, yes; Messmer, yes; Seifert, absent; Long, no; Ungerer, no; Scheidig, absent; Koch, yes; Van Mill, yes; Jetensky, absent; Krygel, yes; John S'Renco, no; Norvell, yes; Larson, absent; Hadwich, yes; Mink, yes; Ditrich, absent; Hellberg, yes; Hillmer, absent; Gutjahr, absent; Ebner, no; Meier, absent.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm.

*W.M. Brandt,*  
Secretary.

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*Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport*  
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