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# Platform of the Socialist Party of Pennsylvania: Approved by the State Convention, Harrisburg, PA — May 29-30, 1920

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The Socialist Party of Pennsylvania makes its appeal to the voters of the state to support its candidates upon the principles herein set forth:

We are in the midst of a great national crisis, when the struggle was never more intense on the part of the masses of the people to wrest control from the powers of plunder.

## **Patriotism Capitalized.**

Taking advantage of the "patriotism" created by the war to silence and disarm all opposition, the profiteering corporations and trusts have boosted prices of food and clothing, fuel and shelter, beyond the reach of the consumer, and thereby reaped an increasing harvest of billions of unearned dollars. By means of these unheard of profits, they have tightened their stranglehold over the natural resources, industries, and other sources of livelihood upon which the people depend. They have likewise bought up the press, platform, educational institutions, and other avenues of public information, with the object of making their financial autocracy supreme.

In this desperate purpose, they have been ably assisted and accompanied by the Republican and Democratic parties, whose campaign funds they supply and whose policies they dictate. It is because of this close partnership between the dominant parties and the plutocracy, that the contrast grows more glaring between the privileged few who own the means of subsistence, render no social service, and accumulate fabulous wealth, as against the bulk of the people, who do

the necessary work, make the state the commanding industrial commonwealth that it is, yet receive barely an existence wage.

### **Constitutional Rights Denied.**

Because the legislature, executive officers, and courts of the state have always responded to the beck and call of the corporations and trusts, the injunction has become a serious menace to legitimate activities in labor disputes, working people on strike to improve their hard lot have been coerced by extraordinary armed force in the shape of the State Constabulary, comparable only to the mercenaries of tyrannical governments, the rights of free speech and free press have been wiped out, orderly meetings have been barred or broken up, peaceful labor champions have been jailed, still others assassinated, all in the sinister design of the ruling class to overthrow by violence our customary liberties, so that they may more readily subject the people to their despotic control.

In a final effort to destroy the constitutional methods of political expression, our legislature passed a so-called anti-sedition law which is utterly foreign and repugnant to the traditions of free America, and which, if not promptly repealed, can have no consequence except to encourage the ruling class to commit still more ruthless deeds of terrorism.

### **Old Parties Have Failed to Right Wrong.**

At the same time the dominant political parties have utterly failed to deal with pressing economic problems such as the criminally high cost of living, because there is no remedy except by cutting down the profits of the predatory capitalists, corporations, and trusts.

The Socialist Party therefore calls upon the voters of the state to defeat the old parties, and support only the ticket of the Socialist Party, as the party of the working class and all who are willing to accept its program of political and industrial democracy.

The Socialist Party pledges itself to the following public measures when elected to power:

## **Political.**

1. Repeal the so-called anti-sedition law and other repressive legislation.
2. Repeal the act establishing the State Constabulary, and prohibit the quartering of any troops among us in time of peace.
3. Insure suffrage to all men and women upon equal terms.
4. Establish the initiative, referendum, and recall.
5. Provide for the election of legislators and congressmen by proportional representation, so that all parties may share in the government according to their strength.
6. Grant self-government to municipalities over their own affairs.

## **Fiscal.**

1. Levy progressive income and property taxes and a graduated inheritance tax to take unearned wealth for state use.
2. Tax the unearned increment of land; all land held out of use to be taxed at its full rental value.
3. Make appropriations only to institutions in which the state has a share of control.

## **Industrial and Social.**

1. Take over all business vitally essential for the existence and welfare of the people, such as banks, railroads, mines, oil wells, mills, and administer them jointly with representatives of the workers, not for revenue or profit, but to secure just compensation and humane conditions to the workers and efficient and reasonable service to the public.
2. Take over the business of insurance, and provide for insurance against accident, sickness, invalidity, old age, and unemployment, without contribution on the part of the worker.
3. Have all state work done by the state.
4. Use state funds to promote the erection of large numbers of dwelling houses, to be rented at cost.
5. Promote education by increasing the pay of teachers to that of a dignified profession, taken the public school system out of the hands of the politicians, establish industrial training departments un-

der labor union supervision, and offer a comprehensive program of after-work educational courses to those who have been deprived of adequate schooling.

6. Encourage the farmers to raise sufficient foodstuffs to be sold at reasonable prices, by forcing down the cost of agricultural implements, fertilizer and seed, insuring adequate storing facilities and transportation, and securing well-paid, competent farm labor.

7. Assist the worker to build their labor unions into the closest solidarity, so that they may use their united class power for their immediate benefit and their final emancipation from wage-slavery.

8. Safeguard in every way the masses who toil against the class which exploits them.

### **The Socialist Goal.**

The Socialist Party points out the evils which the people suffer in Pennsylvania are similar to those in other states and nations, and that they will not be entirely removed until the nation and the world are carried for Socialism.

Socialism is that higher form of civilization wherein the means of existence necessary to us all, such as the lands, mines, mills, and railroads, now owned by the capitalist class, will be owned and operated by the people together, so that goods will be made for common use instead of for private gain, so that there will be neither classes nor class rule, and so that there will no longer be the buying and selling of human labor.

### **Internationalism Reaffirmed.**

The Socialist Party of Pennsylvania therefore reaffirms its loyalty and devotion to the principles of International Socialism, as set forth in the platform, declaration of principles, and resolutions of the Socialist Party of America, and pledges itself to work unceasingly to win the powers of government in order to close the reign of the money lords and bring forth the worldwide Socialist republic.

*Edited by Tim Davenport*

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