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## **Statement of Party Policy by the Socialist Party in National Convention, Chicago, Illinois — February 24, 1925.**

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The convention called by the Conference for Progressive Political Action, held in the city of Chicago February 21 and 22, has met and adjourned. We regret having to announce that the convention disappointed the hopes of those who expected it to lay the foundation and set in operation the machinery of an independent Labor Party in the United States. The time seemed to have come for the organization of such a party but soon after the convention assembled it became apparent that the wide disagreement among the delegates as to its basic principles would defeat all efforts to launch a party committed definitely to independent political action in the interest of the producing classes.

At the very beginning of the proceedings the railroad unions, which constituted the great bulk of membership represented by the Conference and gave such prestige and promise to the movement, withdrew from the convention. Their leaders declared that they had no mandate to commit their organizations to independent political action and that they would therefore continue their non-partisan policy in political affairs.

The remaining delegates with but few exceptions were neither representative of the producing classes nor in harmony among themselves as to the kind of a party to be organized.

Following adjournment of the Conference, after the withdrawal of the railroad brotherhoods, the remaining sessions were attended by those only who favored the organization of a new party, and these delegates constituted an entirely different body from that composing the original Confer-

ence. It is true that they decided to form a new party, but it was clear that the party to be so organized was far more likely to be a liberal party composed of the middle class than a militant political organization of the toiling and producing masses of America.

The Socialist Party, be it said, consistently cooperated with the Conference for Progressive Political Action from the day of its inception and gave its wholehearted support to the independent candidacy of Senators LaFollette and Wheeler in the recent campaign. In both the Conference and the campaign the Socialists gave their time, their means, and their energy, freely and unselfishly, to meet their obligation and to achieve the end in view. They did not bargain for advantage of any kind, nor did they expect or receive any political compensation whatsoever.

The Socialists served that movement from a high sense of duty, believing thoroughly in its value for the political education of the producing classes, and hoping that in time it would develop into a powerful political instrument in the hands of the American workers, agricultural as well as industrial, mental as well as manual, in the protection of their interests and the promotion of their welfare in their struggle against exploitation and for their ultimate emancipation.

For the Socialists are profoundly convinced that there is no escape nor substantial relief for the American people from the economic and political domination of the greedy special interests of which they are now the victims, save alone

through the laboring masses, organized as a powerful, irresistible political force throughout the nation, boldly challenging the corrupt and oppressive misrule of the pirating oligarchy now in control, in the name of the American people.

Without such a party all political achievement of the workers is inadequate and ineffective, and true social progress utterly impossible.

The parties of the capitalists and the middle class, whether openly reactionary or well-meaning liberal parties, are organically tied up with the existing order of social and economic injustice, and they cannot therefore successfully combat its evils under penalty of their own destruction.

For this reason, therefore, to add a new party of the middle class, such as the recent convention in its closing sessions, with its diminished attendance, determined upon, no matter how “progressive” or liberal-minded, would be of no avail to the workers in the long run, but on the contrary would divert them from their direct and necessary struggles by holding out illusory hopes which would inevitably end in disappointment and disaster.

The Socialist Party, finding itself unable to cooperate with the Conference after it had placed itself definitely on record as being opposed to the organization of a Labor Party, and thus practically excluded from the Conference, decided, through its delegates, as the only course consistent with its attitude, to withdraw from further participation in the Conference and to sever entirely its connection with that body.

The Socialist Party has no regret for the part it played in the proceedings of that movement. It demonstrated to the workers of America its entire freedom from dogmatism and sectarianism, and its sincere desire to serve the cause of labor and

progress under all possible conditions and circumstances.

And moreover, the Socialist Party is still ready and willing to merge its political functions in a genuine independent political party of American workers and will certainly continue to put forth its best efforts to that end. To this it should be added that by specific action of the convention of the Socialist Party, state, county, and local organizations of the party are authorized, with the approval of the National Executive Committee, to cooperate as far and as fully as possible with all other bona-fide labor parties.

To have prolonged our party affiliation with the Conference for Progressive Political Action after the withdrawal of the railroad brotherhoods, and after its refusal to stand for a Labor Party could have resulted in no conceivable good either to the Conference or to the Socialists, but on the other hand would inevitably have given rise to confusion and complications equally disastrous to all concerned.

In the light of the facts here presented it is perfectly obvious that so far as the Socialists are concerned, the Conference has fulfilled its mission, and we now sever our relations with it and its representatives with no feeling of resentment or unfriendliness, whatever may be our disappointment.

And now once more we raise high our unsullied banner, and with principles inviolate and ideals undimmed, we stand forth as the representatives of the Socialist Party, appealing to the American toiling and producing masses to join us in building up the party of their class — the party standing staunchly and uncompromisingly for their rights and their aspirations, and in speeding the day of its triumph in America.

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

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