

## **National Platform**

*Adopted by the Sixteenth National Convention,  
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The world stands upon the threshold of a new social order. The capitalist system of production and distribution is doomed; capitalist appropriation of labor's product forces the bulk of mankind into wage slavery, throws society into the convulsions of the class struggle, and momentarily threatens to engulf humanity in chaos and disaster. At this crucial period in history the Socialist Labor Party of America, in 16th National Convention assembled, reaffirming its former platform declarations, calls upon the workers to rally around the banner of the Socialist Labor Party, the only party in this country that blazes the trail to the Workers' Industrial Republic.

Since the advent of civilization human society has been divided into classes. Each new form of society has come into being with a definite purpose to fulfill in the progress of the human race. Each has been born, has grown, developed, prospered, become old, outworn, and has finally been overthrown. Each society has developed within itself the germs of its own destruction as well as the germs which went to make up the society of the future.

The capitalist system rose during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries by the overthrow of feudalism. Its great and all-important mission in the development of man was to improve, develop and concentrate the means of production and distribution, thus creating a system of cooperative production. This work was completed in advanced capitalist countries about the beginning of the 20th century. That moment capitalism had fulfilled its historic mission, and from that moment the capitalist class became a class of parasites.

## *Socialist Labor Party of America*

In the course of human progress mankind has passed through class rule, private property and individualism in production and exchange, from the enforced and inevitable want, misery, poverty and ignorance of savagery and barbarism to the affluence and high productive capacity of civilization. For all practical purposes, cooperative production has now superseded individual production.

Capitalism no longer promotes the greatest good of the greatest number. It no longer spells progress, but reaction. Private production carries with it private ownership of the products. Production is carried on, not to supply the needs of humanity, but for the profit of the individual owner, the company, or the trust. The worker, not receiving the full product of his labor, cannot buy back all he produces. The capitalist wastes part in riotous living; the rest must find a foreign market. By the opening of the twentieth century the capitalist world—England, America, Germany, France, Japan, China, etc.—was producing as a mad rate for the world market. A capitalist deadlock of markets brought on in 1914 the capitalist collapse popularly known as the World War. The capitalist world can not extricate itself out of the debris. America today is choking under the weight of her own gold and products.

This situation has brought on the present stage of human misery—starvation, want, cold, disease, pestilence and war. This state is brought about in the midst of plenty, when the earth can be made to yield hundredfold, when the machinery of production is made to multiply human energy and ingenuity by the hundred. The present state of misery exists solely because the mode of production rebels against the mode of exchange. Private property in the means of life has become a social crime. The land was made by no man; the modern machines are the result of the combined ingenuity of the human race from time immemorial; the land can be made to yield and the machines can be set in motion only by the collective effort of the workers. Progress demands the collective ownership of the land on and

## *1924 National Platform*

the tools with which to produce the necessities of life. The owner of the means of life today partakes of the nature of a highwayman; he stands with his gun before society's temple; it depends upon him whether the million mass may work, earn, eat and live. The capitalist system of production and exchange must be supplanted if progress is to continue.

In place of the capitalist system the Socialist Labor Party aims to substitute a system of social ownership of the means of production, industrially administered by the workers, who assume control and direction as well as operation of their industrial affairs.

We therefore call upon the wage workers to organize themselves into a revolutionary political organization under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party; and to organize themselves likewise upon the industrial field into a Socialist Industrial Union, in order to consolidate the material power necessary for the establishment of the Socialist Industrial Republic.

We also call upon all intelligent citizens to place themselves squarely upon the ground of working class interests, and join us in this mighty and noble work of human emancipation, so that we may put summary end to the existing barbarous class conflict by placing the land and all the means of production, transportation and distribution into the hands of the people as a collective body, and substituting Industrial Self-Government for the present state of planless production, industrial war and social disorder—a government in which every worker shall have the free exercise and full benefit of his faculties, multiplied by all the modern factors of civilization.

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*Transcribed for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party  
Of America by John-Paul Catusco*

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