

Resolution on Economic Organization

(Adopted by the Fifteenth National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party of America, New York City, May 5–10, 1920)

Whereas, There exists today in the United States two conceptions of what an economic organization should be; and

Whereas, One conception—that held by the American Federation of Labor and kindred unions—is that the organization should concede the right of capitalists to own and control industry, and should be built upon narrow craft lines for the sole purpose of protecting its members in their employment and of securing petty improvements in the conditions of Labor; thus becoming a mere “watch-your-job-and-boost-your-pay” organization; and

Whereas, The other conception—that held only by the Workers’ International Industrial Union—is that the economic organization of Labor should deny the right of capitalism to continue in the ownership and control of industry and that it should be build upon industrial lines, not only with the aim of more effectively co-operating in the daily struggle against the employing class, but for the supreme purpose of taking possession of the industries and operating them in the interests of society as a whole; and

Whereas, “Neutrality” toward economic organizations of Labor on the part of a political party of Socialism is equivalent to neutrality towards organizations that endorse and support the system of private ownership of the social means of producing wealth, the system which the party is fighting; and

Whereas, The bona fide or revolutionary Socialist Movement needs the economic as well as the political organization of Labor, the latter for propaganda and as a civilized means of registering public opinion through the ballot; the former as the only conceivable organized force without which all ballot is impotent, and which force is essential for ultimately locking out the capitalist class from the industries; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Socialist Labor Party do all in its power to show the fallacy of craft unionism, and urge the workers to organize industrially on the principles of the Workers’ International Industrial Union.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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