
Circular Letter to Michigan Locals and Branches of the Socialist Party of America from Adolph Germer, Executive Secretary, June 3, 1919

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NATIONAL OFFICE SOCIALIST PARTY
220 South Ashland Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois.

June 3, 1919.

To the Socialists of Michigan!

Dear Comrades:—

On May 24th [1919] the National Executive Committee voted to revoke the charter of your state organization and reorganize the state.

The reason for the action was the constitutional provision adopted at your last state convention, which reads:

Any member, Local, or Branch of a Local, advocating legislative reforms or supporting organizations formed for the purpose of advocating such reforms, shall be expelled from the Socialist Party. The State Executive Committee is authorized to revoke the charter of any Local that does not conform to this amendment.

It is perfectly clear that this section violates the last paragraph of Section 5, Article 2; and section 3(a), Article 10 of the National Constitution, which read as follows:

Section 5, Article 2 — In all my political actions while a member of the Socialist Party, I agree to be guided by the constitution and platform of that party.

Section 3(a), Article 10 — The platform of the Socialist Party shall be the supreme declaration of the party and all state and municipal platforms shall conform thereto. No state

or local organization shall under any circumstances fuse, combine, or compromise with any other political party or organization, or refrain from making nominations, in order to favor the candidate of such other organizations, no shall any candidate of the Socialist Party accept any nomination or endorsement from any other party or political organization.

Former State Secretary [John] Keracher appeared before the National Executive committee and asked whether it was true that the Michigan charter had been revoked and if so the reasons for it. The desired information was given him. In turn he was asked whether the constitutional provision in question had been adopted by referendum, and it was suggested that in the event it had not, the committee might reconsider its action, but he refused to answer the question.

Since the revocation of the charter is known, we have received numerous letters from the comrades in Michigan approving the action of the National Executive Committee and assuring us that they are ready to cooperate to the fullest extent in reorganizing the state.

The National Office will proceed at once with the reorganization, so that you will have representation at the National Convention of the Socialist Party to be held in Chicago on August 30th [1919].

At once call a special meeting of your Local or Branch, read this and the enclosed communication, and inform us, without delay, whether you repudiate the section of the Michigan constitution above referred to and accept the present National Platform and Constitution as your guide until it is changed in the regular way.

If you decide to stay with the Socialist Party, and

we hope you will, fill in the enclosed charter application and forward it to this office. Regular dues stamps in unorganized states are 10¢ per month per member and 15¢ for duals. Accompany your charter application with a remittance of AT LEAST one month's dues.

In case there is not a sufficient number to form a Local or Branch, those desiring to belong to the party can do so by joining as "members at large" by paying 25¢ per month to the National Office, until the state is organized.

Do not lay this aside, but act at once. The times are ripe with unprecedented possibilities and we must build up an organization adapted to American conditions. A great movement looms up before us and every moment's delay is so much time lost.

Keep in mind that whenever a movement like ours grows and is on the verge of triumph, discordant elements creep into it and play into the hands of the enemy. This has happened time and time again. We have weathered it all. There is nothing surprising or disheartening about it.

We are looking forward to a favorable reply from you, feeling confident that you and the members of your local organization believe in tactics that are adaptable to American conditions.

Yours for Socialism,

Adolph Germer,
Executive Secretary.

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National Secretary Germer declares that he is receiving letters from all sections of the national commending the party National Executive Committee for the actions taken at its recent meeting.

"The sentiment voiced in these letters," says Germer, "is that we must have an American Party. One of the letters comes from a man who says he has been in the trade union movement in the west for many years.

"While we always welcome foreign comrades into the party," continued Germer, "if the party wishes to attain political success it must remain in the control of those who have made their homes here and intend to stay here, and not to those who have been here for only a short time, with the intention of going back to Europe."

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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