

Platform and Constitution  
OF THE  
Social-Democratic  
WORKINGMEN'S PARTY  
OF  
NORTH AMERICA

Revised and adopted by the Congress at Philadelphia  
July 4th, 5th and 6th, 1875.

HWS  
8 SOD

OFFICIAL DOCUMENT.

NEW YORK  
S. D. PRINTING ASSOCIATION, 154 ELDREDGE STREET.  
1876.



# PLATFORM.

## A.

The Social Democratic Workingmen's Party seeks to establish a free state founded upon labor.

## B.

Each member of the Party promises to uphold to the best of his ability the following principles:

1. Abolishment of the unjust present political and social conditions.
2. Discontinuance of all class rule and class privileges.
3. Abolition of the workingmen's dependence upon the capitalist, by the introduction of cooperative labor in place of the wages system, so that every laborer will get the full value of his work.
4. Obtaining possession of political power as the prerequisite for the solution of the labor question.
5. United struggle, united organisation of all workingmen, and strict subordination of the individual under the laws framed for the general benefit.
6. Sympathy with the workingmen of all countries, who strive to attain the same object.



We furthermore demand:

1. a. All public officers shall be elected by a direct vote of the people.

b. Every inhabitant over twenty years of age shall be entitled to suffrage.

c. Introduction of the One-house-representative system.

d. All Enactments shall be laid before the people for ratification or rejection.

2. Improvement of our present judicial system and introduction of free administration of justice.

3. Abolition of conspiracy laws in all the states.

4. Abolition of all indirect taxes and introduction of a single progressive income- and property tax.

5. Abolition of all monopolies; manufacturing to be carried on by free cooperative Trade unions (labor societies) under the guarantee of the people with government credit.

6. Adoption of obligatory school-laws for all children between the seventh and fourteenth year, and free use of all public educational institutes. Prohibition of childrens labor for industrial purposes.

7. Introduction of the eight hour system for all workingmen.

8. Regulation of female labor in occupations detrimental to health or morality. Equalisation of women's wages with those of men.

9. Prohibition of prison labor in the interest of private individuals. The prisoners to be employed by the state and only for public purposes.

10. As the contract system leads invariably to corruption, bribery and felony, we demand its abolition by the state and that all work for the general and municipal governments shall be by days wages, according to the eight hour system, prescribed by law.

11. Sanitary inspections of workingmen's habitations and work shops.

12. State- and national bureaux for labor statistics shall be established.

13. Banking and insurance shall be conducted by the state.



# CONSTITUTION.

## 1. ORGANISATION.

The organisation is a centralised one, in which each member has to conform to the laws and resolutions.

## 2. REPRESENTATION.

The Party shall be represented by an annual Congress. It decides upon all propositions and occurrences of general party interest, settles finally all disputes, which may occur, and names the seats of the Executive Board and Committee of Control, and also the place of the next Congress.

a. The Congress nominates candidates for national offices. (In doing this the votes of the delegates shall count according to the number of their constituents.)

b. The delegates to the Congress shall be elected by the branches in the following manner: Branches up to 50 members are entitled to one delegate, from 50 to 100 members to two delegates and for each additional hundred to another delegate.

## 3. MANAGEMENT.

The management of the Party shall be delegated to an Executive Board of five and to a Committee of Control of nine members.

## 4. EXECUTIVE BOARD.

The Executive Board shall be nominated by the local members (designated for this purpose by the Congress) and elected by the vote of the entire Party. Vacancies shall be filled through election of the local members and endorsed by the whole Party.

This board elects from its own members: a party secretary, an assistant secretary, a bookkeeper and a treasurer.

The duties are the following:

- a. To push agitation energetically.
- b. To represent the Party among itself and outside of it.
- c. To report quarterly upon the condition of the Party, and the treasury, to the branches.
- d. The Executive Board in conjunction with the Committee of Control has the power to refuse any society the entrance into the Party and to suspend such branches, as act against the Party interest, until the next Congress.
- e. It shall be the duty of the Executive Board, to lay before the branches all motions to be proposed at the Congress six weeks before it assembles: and all such motions must be handed to the Executive Board eight weeks before assemblage of Congress.

## 5. COMMITTEE OF CONTROL.

This Committee shall be elected in the same manner as the Executive Board. Their duties are:



a. To supervise the action and business transactions of the Executive Board and of the whole Party.

b. To examine the finances of the Executive Board every three months.

c. The Committee of Control shall suspend officers or members until the next Congress, if it can be proved that they have intentionally damaged the interests of the Party. The decision shall be rendered within six weeks after the charges have been made.

#### 6. BRANCHES.

a. Ten individuals, speaking a common language, who acknowledge the platform and regulations of the Party, and have no connection with other political parties, shall be entitled to establish a branch.

b. There shall be only one branch of each language in any place; if required this branch may meet for agitation in different districts. The business meetings to be general and to take place once a month.

Newly organised branches shall ask the Executive Board for admission and at the same time pay their subscriptions for the current month and hand in a complete list of members.

c. Each branch shall elect three officers - a secretary, a financial secretary and a treasurer. These shall advance local agitation, and correspond with the Executive Board.

d. In places containing several branches, an Organisation-Committee of five shall be elected in a general meeting, which shall manage the local agitation.

e. Upon a motion of one sixth of the Party members, a Congress may be called which must meet within six weeks.

f. Every branch shall collect 10 cts. per month for agitation and management and shall forward one half of this amount to the Executive Board; shall report quarterly to the Executive Board; shall report quarterly to the Committee of Control and send an annual financial report to the Congress.

#### 7. DUTIES OF THE MEMBERS.

a. Every workman may become a member of the party, if he agree to uphold and advance its interest.

b. Members whose dues are three months in arrear, shall be suspended and deprived of all rights until they have paid up.

c. Every member is required to become a citizen according to law.

#### 8. GENERAL RULES.

a. Within six weeks after the Congress the election of party- and branch officers must take place and each branch shall inform the Executive Board of the result.

b. Members can hold only one office. Officers whose term has expired can not be reelected. In filling vacancies they are again eligible however.

c. Every member on entering the party receives a programme, the constitution and a card of membership, upon payment of five cts. The card must serve as a certificate, and the monthly dues are to be receipted thereon.

d. The nominations for state, county or town elections are to be made by the party members of the respective places, in meetings called for this purpose, and must be at once reported to the Executive Board.

e. In nominating candidates, the following rules must be observed:



The candidates must be approved members of the SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC WORKINGMEN'S PARTY, who have for at least six months been active within the Party.

Every candidate must promise in writing, to uphold with all his power the principles and demands enunciated in our program and to resign his mandate if two thirds of the party members in his district should demand it.

f. Changes and amendments of the Platform and Constitution can only be made in the annual Congress, and must be laid before the branches to be voted upon before they become laws.