

Stan Willis
Collection

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES AND RULES



Box 1440, Post Office,
ELIZABETH STREET, MELBOURNE

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DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA therefore enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

RULES

1929

MEMBERS.

1. Any person desiring membership shall sign the application form signifying acceptance of the Principles of the Party. Such application shall be lodged with the Branch Secretary, whose duty it shall be to place same before the next business meeting, to which the applicant shall be invited, for consideration, when a majority vote shall decide, subject to ratification by the Executive Committee. Upon ratification by the E.C. an applicant shall be deemed a member as from the date of enrolment by the Branch. The E.C. shall issue to an approved applicant a membership card showing the name, address, registered number, date of enrolment, and name of Branch. Each approved applicant shall receive with the membership card a copy of the Rules.

2. A member shall not belong to more than one Branch at the same time. A member may transfer to another Branch provided a clear record be furnished by his last Branch. A member shall not belong to any other political organisation or speak from any other political party platform except in opposition.

3. No member shall issue or accept a challenge to debate other than on behalf of the Party, any further action shall rest with the Party.

4. Each member shall pay 6d. per week towards the branch funds, the only receipt recognised being the official due stamp. The payment of dues shall be waived in the case of members out of employment, or for any other reason that may be deemed satisfactory by the Branch. Members on becoming 13 weeks in arrear shall be immediately notified by the Branch Secretary, and if after the expiration of 14 days from the sending of such notice no satisfactory explanation be given, shall be struck off the books, and shall not be allowed to join any Branch while those arrears remain. Should the address of such member or members not be known same may be lapsed by majority vote. Any member taking up residence abroad shall automatically cease to be a member of the Party.

5. Members shall have the right to attend and speak at meetings of Branches other than their own, but shall not have the right to vote thereat.

6. Charges against any member shall be submitted in writing to the Branch and a copy supplied to the member accused. The Branch shall consider the matter and a majority consisting of two-thirds of those voting shall have power to expel any member, subject to ratification by the Executive Committee. An expelled member shall have the right of appeal to the Annual Conference.

7. The Executive Committee may at any time, and shall at the request of any Branch, call upon any Party speaker to undergo an examination by the Executive Committee. Should the Executive Committee be dissatisfied with such speaker he shall not be allowed to speak on behalf of the Party. A rejected member shall have the right to appeal to Annual Conference.

BRANCHES.

8. The branch shall be the unit of organisation. A Branch may be formed by five members or less if the E.C. deem that the local conditions make it necessary making written application on the prescribed form and receiving their sanction. Where two or more branches exist in any single Parliamentary or Local Government area, the Branches shall co-operate for the purposes jointly concerning them.

9. Branches shall conduct their branch meetings in accordance with a uniform set of Standing Orders. Branches shall elect their own officers and may draw up such bye-laws, as they deem necessary for their internal management, provided they do not conflict with the Principles, Rules, and Standing Orders of the Party. Each Branch to decide its own time and place of meeting; a quorum to be: for a Branch with a membership of ten or under, four members; the quorum to increase by one for every ten members.

10. A Central Branch shall be constituted to which individuals desiring to join the Party, but who reside where no local branch exists, or who, for approved reasons, prefer not to join a local branch, may be enrolled by the Executive Committee. Applications to be sent to the General Secretary. The E.C. shall appoint a Secretary to the Central Branch annually.

11. Each Branch shall report its numerical strength and financial condition once a quarter to the Executive Committee, such report to be audited and sent to the Head Office within one calendar month after the expiration of each quarter. Branches which have failed for two successive quarters immediately preceding a Conference to send reports as above shall not be entitled to send Delegates to such Conference, nor shall such Branch participate in any Referendum. The Secretary of the Central Branch shall report to the E.C., each half year, the numerical strength of the Branch, and the financial standing of each member.

12. Each Branch shall purchase from the Centre, dues stamps at the rate of 3d. for each financial member per week. Members excused under Rule 3 may be excepted.

13. Disputes between Branches shall be submitted to the Executive Committee, all statements being reduced to writing; copies of all documents in connection therewith shall be forwarded to the Branches concerned. The decision of the Executive Committee shall be binding with a right of appeal to the next Conference.

14. Branches shall neither sell nor distribute any literature, excepting handbills advertising meetings, which has not been approved of by the Executive Committee.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

15. The Executive shall consist of six members, to be elected annually by a vote of the Party; nominations shall be made by the Branches. The principle of the Second Ballot shall apply. A member of less than six months' standing shall not be eligible for candidature.

16. A member of the Executive Committee absent from three consecutive meetings or absent from six meetings in any quarter shall thereby forfeit his position on that body, and the attendance of any member arriving forty-five minutes after the opening of the meeting shall not be registered.

17. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once a fortnight, 3 members to form a quorum, and shall send a report of each meeting to the Branches, and report to the Annual Conference. Any member of the Party desiring to do so may be present at any meeting of the Executive Committee, and with permission may contribute to the discussion of any matter under consideration.

18. The Executive Committee shall make all arrangements for the Conference of the Party, carry out the resolutions of the Conference and those adopted by general vote, supervise the work of the organisation, establish and maintain communications with Socialist Parties of other countries, publish and control the Party Organ, establish a literary agency from which all Branches shall be supplied, appoint all Party representatives in Debates, and shall bank all Party funds not required for immediate use in a current account, arranging all matters relating thereto with the Secretary, Treasurer, and Trustees.

19. The E.C. shall submit a Financial Statement to the Branches each quarter, and with the report of the year's work shall submit to the Branches a Balance Sheet signed by the Auditors, at least one month prior to the Conference. The members of the Executive shall be entitled to attend and speak at the Conference, but shall not have the right to vote.

20. Should the action of any Branch or member be deemed by the Executive Committee to be an infringement of the Principles or Rules of the Party, or detrimental to the interests of the Party as a whole, the Executive Committee shall at once suspend such member or Branch from participation in all Party business apart from the matter in dispute, and shall immediately refer full particulars of the matter to the Branches, at the same time communicating the charges in writing to the Branch or member concerned and enclosing a copy of this rule. The E.C. shall submit their findings to a Party vote, the result of which shall apply as from date of suspension.

PARTY OFFICERS.

21. The Party Officers shall consist of an Organising Secretary, and Treasurer, who shall be Trustees, and two Auditors to be elected in the same manner as the E.C.

22. The organising Secretary shall be paid a salary to be determined by the Party. He shall supervise and help in the work at the Head Office, carry out the instructions of the Executive Committee, conduct Interstate Propaganda, and assist Branches in their internal organisation.

CONFERENCE.

23. A Conference of the Party shall be held annually at Easter. A Special Conference shall be called on a requisition signed by two Branches in good standing being sent to the Executive Committee. The Conference thus summoned shall be held within three weeks of the date of receipt of the requisition by the Executive Committee.

24. Each Branch shall be entitled to send two Delegates for the first twenty members or under, and one additional Delegate for every further completed ten members. Delegates must have been members for at least six months immediately preceding the Conference, except in the case of Branches which have been formed for less than that period. Delegates from such Branches may vote only with the consent of the Conference. Where Branches are unable to send their full number of delegates, the votes of their delegation upon all question where definite instructions have been given shall count according to the representation to which the Branches are entitled. If demanded by any delegate voting shall be by card based upon the membership of the Branch represented. A member of the Executive Committee shall not be eligible to act as Delegate to any Conference nor shall any member act as Delegate who has been on the E.C. whose work is under review.

25. The Executive Committee shall, twelve weeks before the Conference, make a call upon the Branches for resolutions and amendments to the Rules to be embodied in a Preliminary Agenda to be submitted to the Party eight weeks before the Conference. All amendments to resolutions received within three weeks thereafter shall appear on the final Agenda, which shall be issued to the Branches at least fourteen days before the Conference.

REFERENDUM.

26. A Poll of the Party may be taken at any time by the Executive Committee, but shall be taken at the request of not less than Two Branches sending a requisition stating the matter upon which the Poll is desired. Any member present at any Branch Meeting, held prior to the date fixed for the return of the voting papers shall be entitled to have his vote recorded.



32. No candidate shall be put forward by the Party for purposes of election, local or national, until there are sufficient qualified members in the ward or constituency to fill in nomination paper, and in no circumstances shall a member of the S.P.A. be supported on his nomination paper by a non-member.

31. Municipal, Parliamentary, or other such elections shall only be contested by the Party putting forward the full number of candidates for the vacancies in the particular ward, district, or constituency, and no member, though elected, shall take office unless the whole number be elected.

30. A member of the Party shall not stand for any political office except as the official candidate of the Party. All candidates shall pledge themselves to act, if elected, in accordance with the instructions of the Branch in the case of local bodies, and of the Executive Committee in the case of Parliament.

29. A member of the Party shall not stand for any political office except as the official candidate of the Party. All candidates shall pledge themselves to act, if elected, in accordance with the instructions of the Branch in the case of local bodies, and of the Executive Committee in the case of Parliament.

28. A member shall not be eligible for candidature for any political office unless he has been a member of the Party for six months.

27. No member shall be put forward for any political office until he or she has satisfactorily passed an examination test to be drawn up by the Executive Committee.

ELECTORAL ACTION.