

National Committee Meeting

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

June 3-4, 2006

Attending (co-chair) Susan Dorazio, (vice-chairs) Matthew Andrews, Ardenne Bunde, Matt Erard, Ruth Greenberg-Edelstein, Mal Herbert, Mary Loritz, Greg Pason and Steve Sears.

Saturday June 3

Meeting called to order at 9:50 am

Greg distributed a copy of "Rusty's Rules" as an alternative to Robert Rules and will make them available to all NC members.

Chairs

The follow NC members were elected to chair the following sections.

Saturday AM: Mary Alice Herbert

Saturday PM: Matthew Andrews

Sunday AM: Mary Loritz

National Office Report

Greg Pason gave the National Office Report. He reported that membership in good standing was slightly down, but that he had approx 75 web applications that were waiting for payment or waiver requests. Current membership in good standing stands at 1120 in good standing.

Motion: The Party endorse the Alliance for Fair Food and adopt the Alliance for Fair Food (including other immigrant worker support campaigns), Anti-Recruitment/Counter-Recruitment and New Orleans Lower 9th Ward solidarity as our summer activist campaigns. The NAC is directed to name 2 co-conveners for each campaign by June 15, 2006. These conveners are to be responsible for organizing campaign phone conferences at least once a month beginning on June 30th, with all members interested in the work invited. To support this work, each affiliate is asked to name point-person for each of these campaigns and to communicate their work to the conveners of Party commissions and via the monthly phone conferences.

Campaign conveners will be responsible for communicating with the National Office and will be the key organizers of workshops on these topics at the National Organizing Conference.

The Editorial Board is directed to add reports and/or articles on these campaigns in the upcoming issues of The Socialist for 2006 and the National Secretary is directed to promote these campaigns in The Organizer. Party candidates are encouraged to use these campaigns as part of their electoral work, if appropriate. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Motion: To direct the Publications Committee to revise and update literature and find ways to get quality alternative language translations. The Committee is also asked to help find Spanish language articles or other materials for Party publications. The NC recognizes that the Publications Committee is composed of Susan Dorazio and Ruth Greenberg-Edelstein as co-conveners and editors of all Party publications and The Torch. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Committees and Officer Responsibilities

Susan Dorazio submitted a proposal on "Dividing Up Administrative Functions".

To support the National Secretary by allocating the administrative functions of the Socialist Party according to tasks as follows:

National Secretary

- Reports to the membership via *The Organizer* and other postal mailings, e-mail, website, telephone and personal contacts.
- Stays in regular contact with the Treasurer, National Officers, and the standing Committees of the National Committee.
- Provides information, resources, and inspiration to locals, affiliates, members-at-large regarding national campaigns.
- Maintains National Office (includes bill-paying, etc.)

National Chairs and Co-Chairs

- Oversees budget; member of the Finance/ Fundraising Committee
- Oversees dues collection; member of the Convention Planning Committee

- Sets up monthly NAC phone conferences and three NC meetings per year; member of the Organizing Conference Planning Committee
- Stays in touch with/ facilitates between locals and commissions; member of the Organizing Conference Planning Committee

National Committee Members

- Actively participates in one of the following standing committees: 1) Organizing Conference Planning Committee 2) National Convention Planning Committee 3) Finance/Fundraising Committee 4) Internal Communications Committee
- Actively participates in one ad-hoc committee

The NC discussed the logistics of the resolution and the following resolution was proposed, specifically creating specific standing committees for a Chair/Co-Chair to head.

Motion: To create four Standing Committees; Organizing Conference Planning Committee, National Convention Planning Committee, Finance/Fundraising Committee and Internal Communication Committee with each to be convened by a Co-Chair or Co-Vice Chair. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Motion: To refer to the follow up on naming conveners for the Standing Committees to the National Action Committee. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Motion: The National Committee directs each committee or sub-committee convener/chair to send an update to the National Office by the 15th of each month, with the updates to be part of NAC minutes. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Unofficial Groupings

A proposal to clarify the National Office's requirements on how/when to recognize unofficial groupings that organize within the Party was discussed. Greg Pason submitted a series of guidelines for the National Office and the NC discussed, amended them.

Motion: To pass a series of guidelines for recognition of "unofficial/unchartered" groupings point by point, with each point discussed, amended and passed or rejected. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Motion: Any unofficial/ unchartered grouping within the Party must meet the following basic guidelines to be recognized by the Party:

- 1) The grouping not be organized on democratic centralist lines. **Passed with 1 abstention** (Matt Erard)
- 2) The grouping is to be composed only of Socialist Party USA members in good standing if it wishes to identify itself as affiliated with the Socialist Party USA in any way. **Passed unanimously.**
- 3) (amended from original) The grouping produces a statement describing its purpose, which shall not conflict with the Party's Statement of Principles. **Motion passed w/ 1 abstention Matt Erard.**
- 4) The grouping shall submit a list of members to the National Office annually for membership verification. **Motion failed 4 No Ruth, Susan Mary and Matt Erard 3 Yes Steve, Mal and Matt Andrews. 1 abstention Greg**

New #4) The grouping shall elect a liaison and submit that name of the current liaison to the National Office. **Motion passed w/ 1 No Ruth**

- 5) All grouping meetings, including internet discussion lists, are to be open to all members in good standing of the Socialist Party USA, as long as these members make a serious effort to notify the grouping they wish to attend. **Motion failed w/ 1 Yes** (Greg Pason).

- 6) The grouping allows any member in good standing allows any members in good standing of the Socialist Party USA to affiliate without discrimination. Membership may only be restricted because of destructive behavior and claims of discrimination should be brought to the National Action Committee for review.

Motion withdrawn

New # 6) The National Office or appropriate bodies must recognize the request of Party members to be identified as part of one or more of these groupings in any or all party publications as long as the grouping meets the above guidelines and any future guidelines adopted by the National Committee. If a member identifies her/himself as a member of a grouping that does not meet these guidelines, she/he must state that the grouping is not recognized by the Socialist Party USA. **Motion passed unanimously**

#8 withdrawn

Motion: To approve the Guidelines for Unofficial/unchartered Groupings. **Motion passed unanimously**

Ardene Bunde was seated.

Motion: Recognized unofficial groupings must pay for their own mailings, internet access and other expenses.
Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting broke for lunch at 1:45 pm and re-adjourned at 3pm

Matthew Andrews chaired

Finances/Fundraiser

Motion: To grant \$2000 to the National Office from the Treasury. \$1000 to make up for unexpected publication expenses and \$1000 to produce and mail the September issue of *The Socialist*. The NC also directs the National Action Committee to review the budget in October 2006 so that recommendations can be made to improve it for the following year. The NC directs the Editorial Board to initiate a subscription drive for *The Socialist* with a goal of 250 subscribers by the end of 2006. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Dues

Motion: To direct the National Office to create new membership booklets for distribution starting on July 1, 2006. The booklet will be modeled on the IWW membership cards w/ stamps for dues payments and special fundraisers.
Motion passed unanimously.

Fundraising

Motion: The National Action Committee create a committee of three members to collect National Organizing Conference journal ads from Party affiliates, supportive organizations and international groups. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Motion: The National Action Committee create a committee of three members to help organize local fundraising events. The National Office is directed to help provide films, speakers or materials for these events, with proceeds from these events split between the local affiliate and national office. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Motion: The National Committee shall create a "Socialist Party Sustainers Club" for the purpose of targeted fundraising. The "Sustainers Club" shall be open to anyone upon submitting their contact information and making a donation of \$15.00 or more a year. Sustainers Club members shall be informed of all ways they can contribute financially to the Party's work and will be solicited on a regular basis. A detailed database of Sustainers Club members and their past donations shall be maintained and administered by the National Secretary, National Treasurer and Finance Committee. The Finance Committee shall be charged with creating a variety of ways for Sustainers Club members to give to the Party and its campaigns. Locals shall be sent materials to solicit for Sustainer Club members. Non-Party members in the Sustainers Club shall receive all national Party publications intended for public distribution. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Motion: To refer follow-up work on creating the Sustainers Club to the Finance Committee. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Treasurer

The NC read a resignation from Jim Schaefer as Party Treasurer. Jim agreed to stay on for up to three months to help find a replacement.

Motion: The National Committee thanks Jim Schaefer for his years of service as Treasurer, accepts his resignation as well as his offer to stay on for up to three months to help with the transition to a new Treasurer. The NC asks Cde. Schaefer for suggestions on possible replacements and asks for his help in creating a job description for the position of Treasurer. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Motion: The National Action Committee is directed to coordinate a NC mail ballot for a new National Treasurer no later than September 3, 2006. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Structural

A resolution to hold at least one National Committee meeting a year by internet/ phone teleconference was discussed.

Motion: To direct the Internal Communications Committee to discuss the possibility of holding at least one National Committee meeting by internet/telephone conference. **Motion passed unanimously**

Convention

Motion: To move the date of the 2007 National Convention to August. The Convention Planning Committee is directed to formulate the basic logistics of doing so to the next NC. **Motion passed with 1 no Matt Andrews and 3 abstentions Matt Erard, Steve Sears and Greg Pason.**

The NC discussed possible problems with an August NC meeting.

Motion: To reconsider. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The motion was withdrawn.

Publications

Mal Herbert gave the Editorial Board report, stating that the EB suggested producing quarterly issue of The Socialist and better coordinate publications with other Party publications. The EB suggested Diane Brand as the new Editor.

Motion: To name Diane Brand as Editor of The Socialist. **Motion passed unanimously**

Motion: To direct the Editorial Board to work with the Editorial Collective of Socialist Women on producing six issues of Party publications for 2007. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The NC discussed the membership of the Editorial Board and agreed to set the Editorial Board at seven with a possible additional (8th) member to be added later by the National Committee.

Motion: To name Eric Chester, Mary Alice Herbert, James Marra, Tina Phillips, Steve Rossignol and Kristy Treacy as the Editorial Board of The Socialist, with Mary Alice Herbert as convener/chair. The NC directs Mary Alice Herbert to contact former Editorial Board member Michael Baker to give him this information. **Motion passed unanimously**

Motion: To extend the Hammer & Tongs deadline to July 15, 2006. **Motion passed unanimously.**

National Organizing Conference

Steve Sears gave the NOCC report. Matt Erard also reported that we needed to purchase Liability insurance for the event.

Motion: To send \$500 from the Treasury to the National Office to help cover National OC costs, including liability insurance. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Motion: To set the National Organizing Conference registration fee as \$10 to \$35 (self defined sliding-scale).

Motion passed with 2 Nos (Mary Loritz) and Ruth Greenberg-Edelstein.

Plenary Topic

Motion: Whereas the conference is being held in Detroit, the former solidly union "motor city," systematically de-industrialized by forces of global capitalism and whereas,

- Community-labor organizing is critical to the building of a mass movement for social change
- Our newly-revised platform plank on labor is a valuable organizing tool
- There are labor and community organizers and activists within our Party who can provide useful information and ideas to conference participants
- Part members have contacts with other radical unionists and community organizers at the local, national and international levels

Be it resolved that the theme of the plenary for the National Organizing Conference be "Radical Perspectives on Community-Labor Organizing." The plenary would consist of a panel of speakers on this topic. Possibilities include Klas Ronnback, a member of the Swedish syndicalist union known as SAC; someone from the Farmer Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC); a labor activist and/or historian from the Detroit area (maybe someone from Labor Notes/Solidarity); Susan Dorazio from the Socialist Party, who has experience bringing a radical perspective to her work as one of the shop stewards of UAW Local 2322, Jack Gerson, a member of the Bay Area local of the SP and a teacher-union activist; and a member of the IWW. A question-and-answer and discussion period would follow the short presentations by the speakers. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The committee agreed on the following basic structure for the Conference.

Saturday

Doors open at 9 am w/ opening comments 9:30 am * Opening Plenary 10 am to Noon * Lunch break Noon to 2 pm *Workshops 1st session 2:00 - 3:15pm * Workshops 2nd session 3:30 – 5:15pm *Local action (McDonalds?) 5:30 – 6:40 *Social Event 7 pm to ?

Sunday

Doors open at 9 am * Recap of 1st day and opening comments 9:30 am *Workshops 3rd session 10:00 – 11:15pm *Workshops 4th session 11:30 – 1:15 pm *Report- backs 1:30 – 2:30 *Closing remarks 2:30 pm

The committee agreed to set aside space for "guerrilla workshops"

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm

Sunday June 4

Meeting called to order at 9:50 am

Mary Loritz chaired

SNC/ Campaign Clearinghouse

The NC discussed the Campaign Clearinghouse report by Jeff Brindle.

Motion: All new or renewing members will receive a Socialist National Committee contribution slip along with membership materials. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Motion: To change the SNC maximum contribution guidelines to the following:

\$100 local offices

\$300 state legislatures

\$500 state-wide offices

\$500 House of Representatives and Senate

Motion passed unanimously

The NC directed the National Secretary to update the Party's website clarifying that only SNC contributions go to electoral campaigns.

Electoral

The NC discussed the convention's Broad Left Party resolution and the constitution on electoral action.

Motion: Any Socialist Party member or affiliate may petition the National Committee for approval of a broad left third party. Members or affiliates petitioning for approval of a broad left third party are requested to provide information on whether the party will allow Socialist Party member candidates to run openly as Socialists and on Socialist programs. The National Committee shall use these criteria as the primary basis for decisions on whether to approve broad left third parties, but is not restricted from also considering other factors on a case by case basis.

Amendment: The change "provide information" to "provide *official* documentation". **Amendment passed**

5 yes (Greg Pason, Matthew Andrews, Mal Herbert, Susan Dorazio and Steve Sears) **3 No** (Mary Loritz, Matt Erard and Ruth Greenberg-Edelstein) and **1 abstention** (Ardene Bunde)

Motion as amended: passed unanimously

Local Endorsements

Motion: The National Committee interprets the SPUSA Constitution to allow Locals in states in which there is no state party and there is only one Local, to nominate and endorse state-wide candidates.

Motion passed w/ 2 No votes (Greg Pason and Steve Sears).

Green Party of Michigan

Based on the above resolution and the submission of a communication from the Green Party of Michigan, pre-approval of the Green Party of Michigan was reconsidered.

Motion: To approve the Green Party of Michigan under the National Convention Broad-Left Third Parties Resolution.

- 1) Whereas the Green Party of Michigan is a broad left third party which includes socialists in its leadership and membership.
- 2) Whereas the Green Party of Michigan has allowed Socialist Party members to run as candidates on its ballot line openly as Socialists and on socialist programs numerous times in the past.
- 3) Whereas leaders of the Green Party of Michigan have recently committed to continuing to allow Socialist Party members to use its ballot line while running under their own dual-party label and program.
- 4) The National Committee approves the Green Party of Michigan under the National Convention Broad Left Parties Resolution.

Amendment: To remove all sections except point number 4. **Amendment passed w/ 1 abstention** (Matt Erard)

Amendment: To add "based on new information submitted to the National Committee." **Amendment passed w/ 1 abstention** (Matthew Andrews)

Motion as amended: The National Committee approves the Green Party of Michigan under the National Convention Broad Left Parties Resolution based on new information submitted to the National Committee **Motion passed unanimously.**

Liberty Union Party

Motion: 1) Whereas the Liberty Union Party is a socialist party, which includes numerous Socialist Party USA members in its membership and leadership.

2) Whereas the Liberty Union Party has run Socialist Party member candidates in the past who have run as socialists.

3) Whereas the Liberty Union Party would be likely to permit Socialist Party member candidates to run openly as Socialists on socialist programs.

4) The National Committee approves the Liberty Union Party under the National Convention Broad Left Third Parties Resolution. **Motion passed 6 yes** (Matthew Andrews, Ardenne Bunde, Matt Erard, Mal Herbert, Greg Pason and Steve Sears) **1 No** (Ruth Greenberg-Edelstein) and **2 abstentions** (Mary Loritz and Ardenne Bunde)

Howie Hawkins endorsement

The committee reviewed materials submitted by the Socialist Party of New York and Howie Hawkins and discussed authorizing his campaign.

Motion: To authorize Howie Hawkins, as a member of the Socialist Party of New York, to run for US Senate on the Green Party line. **Motion failed 4 yes** (Mary Loritz, Steve Sears, Ardenne Bunde and Ruth Greenberg-Edelstein) **4 no** (Susan Dorazio, Matt Erard, Matthew Andrews, and Greg Pason) and 1 abstention (Mal Herbert)

Motion: The NC agrees to hold a mail ballot vote on authorizing the candidacy of Howie Hawkins and the endorsement of the Socialist Party of New York if Howie Hawkins clearly lists his membership in the Socialist Party on his website and new materials and incorporated Socialist Party principles and platform planks in his campaign platform (as per the conventions Broad Left resolution). **Motion passed unanimously.**

Candidate Policy enforcement

1. Candidacies of Socialist Party members running on the ballot lines of other parties must be approved by the National Committee as mandated by Article VI Section 3 of the Socialist Party USA Constitution. Socialist Party member candidates who are running on the ballot line of another party not approved by the National Committee and whose individual candidacies have not been approved by the National Committee will be contacted by the National Office about constitutional requirement of getting National Committee approval. Candidates who do request National Committee approval within two weeks of being contacted by the National Office, either individually or through a proxy, will be directed by the National Committee to withdraw from their candidacies.

2. The candidacies of Socialist Party members running for office on the ballot line of an approved party automatically come under the jurisdiction of the National Committee if the candidates do not comply with National Convention Broad Left Third Parties resolution which requires Socialist Party member candidates to run openly as Socialists and on socialist programs. Socialist Party candidates running on the ballot line of an approved party will be contacted by the National Office if they fail to meet these two requirements stipulated by the National Convention Broad Left Third Parties Resolution. Candidates who fail to come into compliance with these requirements within two weeks after being contacted by the National Office will be directed by the National Committee to withdraw from their candidacies.

3. Socialist Party member candidates who ignore National Committee directives to withdraw from their candidacies are subject to a six month suspension from Socialist Party membership.

Amendment: To change references from individuals to state and local parties as follows (**in bold**)

1. **State or Local Party endorsements and approvals of** candidacies of Socialist Party members running on the ballot lines of other parties must be approved by the National Committee as mandated by Article VI Section 3 of the Socialist Party USA Constitution. Socialist Party member candidates who are running on the ballot line of another party not approved by the National Committee and whose individual candidacies have not been approved by the National Committee will be contacted by the National Office about constitutional requirement of getting National Committee approval. Candidates **and state or local parties** who do not request National Committee approval within two weeks of being contacted by the National Office, either individually or through a proxy, will be directed by the National Committee to withdraw from their candidacies **and endorsements.**

2. The candidacies of Socialist Party members running for office on the ballot line of an approved party automatically come under the jurisdiction of the National Committee if the candidates do not comply with National Convention Broad Left Third Parties resolution which requires Socialist Party member candidates to run openly as

Socialists and on socialist programs. **The State or Local Party of** Socialist Party candidates running on the ballot line of an approved party will be contacted by the National Office if candidates fail to meet these two requirements stipulated by the National Convention Broad Left Third Parties Resolution. **Affiliates of** candidates who fail to come into compliance with these requirements within two weeks after being contacted by the National Office will be directed by the National Committee to withdraw **their endorsement and authorization of the candidate to run the campaign.**

3. **State or Local Parties** who ignore the National Committee directives to withdraw their endorsements and authorizations of the campaigns their candidacies are subject to a charter suspension and matter will then be dealt with directly by the National Committee.

Amendment passed 5 yes Susan Dorazio, Ardenne Bunde, Mal Herbert, Mary Loritz and Greg Pason
2 no Matt Erard and Ruth Greenberg Edelstain **2 Abstentions** Matthew Andrews and Steve Sears

Motion passed as amended 6 yes Susan Dorazio, Ardenne Bunde, Mal Herbert, Mary Loritz and Greg Pason **2 no** Ruth Greenberg Edelstein and Mary Loritz and **1 Abstention** Steve Sears.

Dues

The NC discussed changing the current dues rules, specifically the section on full and partial waivers.

Motion: The Party may provide a waiver of dues only for strikers, the long-term unemployed, the incarcerated or applicants and members suffering great financial hardship upon receiving a letter establishing their condition.

Motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

Commissions

Motion: The National Action Committee is directed to review all active commissions and to report back to the NC on each one and which to re-charter. The NAC must report back no later than July 15th. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Motion: To charter the Environmental Commission and name Steve Sears as Convener/Chair. The Commission is granted a 6 month temporary charter. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Next NC

Motion: To hold the next NC meeting in Atlantic City NJ on October 21-22 2006. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm with the singing of the Internationale.

Minutes by Greg Pason