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Every six months, the National Executive Committee shall elect an auditing committee of three members to audit the financial books of the National Office. Branch, city and district financial books shall be audited at least once in three months, by auditing committees elected by the respective organizations. The N.E.C. shall be authorized to send an accountant to the districts to examine their books whenever it sees fit. The duly audited reports of the National Office shall be published in the official organ of the I.L.D., the LABOR DEFENDER.

INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE

80 East 11th Street, Room 402

New York, N. Y.



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The INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE



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Its CONSTITUTION and Organization Resolution

adopted by the

Fourth National Convention held in
Pittsburgh, Pa., Dec. 29-31, 1929.

Published by

INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE
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FOREWORD

The Fourth National Convention of the International Labor Defense held in Pittsburgh, Pa., on December 29-31, 1929 paid special attention to the organization problems confronting the I. L. D. The Convention pointed out the past organization shortcomings and adopted a new constitution in line with the needs of the present period of increased class battles.

It is of utmost important for every worker interested in the building of the I. L. D. into a real mass organization to carefully study the two documents published in this pamphlet and to help build the I.L.D. into a powerful shield of the working class.

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Resolution on Organization

Adopted by the

Fourth National Convention of the International Labor Defense

Pittsburgh, Pa., December 29, 30, 31, 1929.

WE are going through a period when the class struggle is growing ever more intense in the United States and the world over.

The feverish preparations of all capitalist countries for a new imperialist world slaughter, the rationalization of industry with its consequences for the workers—speed-up, stretch-out, wage-cuts, mass unemployment, smashing of the Trade Unions and other labor organizations—call upon the workers to organize their forces for an ever more militant struggle for better working conditions and against exploitation and oppression.

In this period of general capitalist crisis it is to be expected that in the approaching tremendous class conflicts in America, persecutions of the workers by the employing class and their governments will increase even more than at present. The savage sentence of the 7 textile workers in Gastonia to 20 years imprisonment, the attempt of the coal operators and the reactionary United Mine Workers to suppress the strike of the coal miners in Southern Illinois with the aid of bayonets; the severe sentence of the three comrades in Martins

Ferry to five years imprisonment on a charge of criminal syndicalism; the refusal of the Supreme Court of the United States to review the case of the three Woodlawn defendants who were sentenced by the courts controlled by the Jones & Laughlin steel corporation to serve 5 years in prison; the high sentence against the 5 women workers in Los Angeles on a charge of violation of the "Red Flag Law" and the numerous other arrests and deportations of workers in various parts of the country are sufficient to show what is to be expected in the approaching period.

Under these conditions the International Labor Defense must be built on such a basis that it will be able to meet the attacks of the bosses and to provide the necessary assistance and defense to the persecuted workers and to the class war prisoners.

Progress Since Last Convention

Since the last convention the I. L. D. went through a difficult period. While its burdens have increased tremendously, due to the increased attacks on the workers by the government, it was at the same time being viciously attacked by the bureaucracy of the A. F. of L., by the social fascists and other enemies of the working class who were trying to discredit the organization in the eyes of the workers.

Nevertheless, the Fourth Convention notes that the I. L. D. has made considerable progress since the Third Convention, both ideologically and organizationally, and it has increased its dues paying membership from ap-

proximately 5,000 in 1927 to 6,500 in 1928 and 7,250 during 1929.

It has also made considerable progress in increasing its collective membership. The I. L. D. has now in its ranks such important militant organizations as the National Miners Union with a membership of approximately 19,000; the National Textile Workers Union, with a membership of several thousand; the Hungarian Workingmen's Sick Benefit and Education Federation and many others.

Since the Third Convention the I. L. D. has succeeded in establishing itself in at least 19 new states. There are at present six states where the I. L. D. is yet to be organized.

It is especially significant that during this period the I. L. D. has penetrated North and South Carolina, Virginia and Georgia. It has established a solid organization in New Orleans and in the agrarian section, where we have at present several branches. Since the last convention the I. L. D. has taken the first steps to penetrate into the factories, mines, shops and mills and to recruit Negro members into the organization. The membership drive for 50,000 new members, while not realized, brought some definite results.

Shortcomings

The convention, recognizing the progress made since the last convention, considers it necessary to point out a number of serious shortcomings which must be overcome immediately if the I. L. D. is to become a militant mass organization.

The I. L. D. in the past has been organized on a rather loose basis, not adapted to the present situation, when the struggle assumes a more militant character. The language form of organization, with no roots in the factories and with several practically independent language sections, each carrying on campaigns of its own, selling dues stamps and raising funds independently of the national organization, weakens the fighting efficiency of the organization and causes considerable confusion in the ranks of the I. L. D. As a result of the language form of organization, little attention has been paid until very recently to work in the factories, shops, mills and mines, and most of the city central committees were unable to function properly.

The convention must point out that in the past we were lax in establishing the necessary discipline in the organization, with a large number of our members failing to pay dues, branches and even districts failing to make reports regularly to the higher bodies, and a number of our members failing to take active part in I. L. D. work.

This is seen, for example, in the fact that only about 10,000 members pay dues, while the reports indicate that there are many times that many members actually in the organization. In New York alone there are at least 5,000 members in the I.L.D., but only about 1,000 pay dues, and even fewer are taking active part in I. L. D. work.

One of the biggest errors of the I. L. D. in the past has been its failure to pay the neces-

sary attention to the persecutions of the Negro workers and to recruit these most oppressed workers into the I. L. D. The number of Negro members in the I. L. D. is negligible, and these joined mostly during the past few months. An example of the wrong attitude toward the Negro question is the fact that at the Philadelphia convention, no Negro delegates were present, and in New York, out of 240 delegates, only 3 or 4 were Negroes. The convention takes note of the fact that the N.E.C. has already taken the initial steps to overcome this great shortcoming, but that this has been only the beginning and that much more must be done in the immediate future.

The convention notices that there has been a tendency in the past to pay little attention to organizational work. Seldom were the local persecutions used for the purpose of popularizing the I. L. D. among the masses and to build the organization locally. The fact that during the past few months when some attention was being paid to organizational problems, there has been a steady increase in the dues payments shows that with a correct policy the I. L. D. can be built into a real mass organization, if sufficient attention is paid to the organizational problems.

The convention points out that drastic changes are necessary in the methods of our work and steps must be taken to carry on educational work among our membership to train them in the elementary principles of the class struggle.

Recommendations

In order to overcome these shortcomings and to build the I. L. D. the convention resolves:

1. That changes be made in the constitution of the I. L. D. to provide for:
 - (a) A clear definition of the functions of the I.L.D. and its methods of work as a militant working-class organization based on the class struggle.
 - (b) The building up of real functioning district organizations.
 - (c) The establishment of strict discipline.
 - (d) The formation of branches and defense committees in the shops, factories, mines and mills as a guarantee of turning the I.L.D. into a real mass organization.
2. Language committees or secretaries are to be appointed by the N.E.C. as departments of the national office and not as something independent of the general organization, all funds to go through the district and national offices, branches to be directly connected with their respective districts and city organizations instead of with their language sections.
3. The convention decides to continue the membership drive until March 18th, the date of the Paris Commune, and calls upon all members and branches to redouble their energies to reach the quota of 30,000 new members, at least 12,000 of whom should be Negro workers.
4. Steps are to be taken to link up the organizations affiliated on a collective basis closer with the I.L.D. work and a campaign be started inside those organizations to recruit individual

members for the I.L.D. and to get them to participate in all I.L.D. activities and campaigns.

5. A number of Negro workers to be placed on the National Committee and all districts to be instructed to add Negro members to their respective district committees. The field organizers engaged by the National Office for full time work shall include one or more Negro comrades.

6. The work of the National Executive Committee and of the District Executive Committees shall be departmentalized to include at least the following departments—organization, legal and educational.

7. Special work to be carried on among the young workers in accordance with the special resolution adopted by the convention on the subject.



CONSTITUTION
OF THE
INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE

*Adopted by the Fourth National Convention,
held in Pittsburgh, Pa., Dec. 29, 30, 31—1929*

Article I. Name.

The name of the organization shall be "International Labor Defense—Section of International Red Aid."

Article II. Aims.

The International Labor Defense is a broad non-Party organization based on the class struggle which aims to defend all workers who are being persecuted by the capitalist government and various other agencies of the employing class, for their participation in the class struggle, by rendering legal aid, moral and financial support to these workers and their dependents, by wide publicity, organizing mass demonstrations of support and protest, both here and abroad.

Article III. Membership.

Section 1. Every person, regardless of political affiliation, race or color, who signs an application card subscribing to the aims of the organization and agreeing to comply with its constitution, shall be entitled to membership in the International Labor Defense.

SECTION 2. International Labor Defense branches are formed in all shops, factories and all localities where there are at least five members; in special cases, branches shall also be al-

lowed to be formed of workers who speak the same language as special language branches.

SECTION 3. All members shall be attached to duly constituted branches; where branches do not exist, they shall become members-at-large, affiliated directly to the district or the national organization, where no districts exist.

SECTION 4. Wherever two or more branches exist in the same city, a City Central Committee shall be established. The C.C.C. shall constitute the governing body of the organization in each city. Each branch shall send delegates to the C.C.C. proportional to the membership. Delegates to the C.C.C. shall be elected on the basis of one delegate to every 20 members or majority fraction thereof, each branch to be represented by at least one delegate, no matter how small it may be.

SECTION 5. All workers' organizations, such as labor unions, workers' sports clubs, women's organizations, Negro organizations, cooperatives, workers' fraternal and benefit societies, etc., which sympathize with the aims of the International Labor Defense, shall be entitled to collective membership upon the payment of one cent or more per member per month, each organization to pay not less than one dollar per month.

SECTION 6. Every organization affiliated with the International Labor Defense in each city shall be entitled to send a delegate to the City Central Committee.

SECTION 7. The City Central Committee shall be connected with and receive instructions from their respective district organizations. Isolated branches or City Central Com-

mittees in places where there are no district committees shall be connected directly with the National Organization.

SECTION 8. Each branch or affiliated organization shall secure a charter from the National Office upon payment of one dollar.

Article IV. Administration

SECTION 1. The highest body of the I.L.D. is the National Convention which is to be held about once a year, and should consist of delegates of duly constituted branches elected on the basis of proportional representation of the membership. Collectively affiliated organizations shall be entitled to send delegates on the basis which will be determined by the National Executive Committee of the I.L.D.

SECTION 2. The National Convention elects a National Committee which leads and directs the work of the organization between conventions. It shall meet at least twice a year to review the past activities and lay out plans for the ensuing period.

SECTION 3. The National Committee selects a smaller executive committee to directly supervise and control the daily work and to handle all the financial affairs of the organization.

SECTION 4. The executive committee elects a national secretary and other necessary officers.

SECTION 5. The highest body of the I.L.D. in each district is the district convention which shall be held about once a year on the basis of proportional representation of the membership.

SECTION 6. The district Convention elects a district committee of as many members as may

be decided upon by the District Convention, which committee leads and directs the work of the organization between conventions. It shall meet at least once in three months.

SECTION 7. The district committee elects a smaller executive committee to direct and supervise the daily work of the district.

SECTION 8. The executive committee elects a district organizer and other necessary officers by agreement and with the approval of the National Executive Committee.

SECTION 9. All actions of the District Conventions and of the District Committees are subject to approval by the National Executive Committee.

SECTION 10. The District Committee shall divide the district into sections in accordance with the special geographical or industrial needs of the district.

SECTION 11. The City Central Committee elects a city executive committee of not more than 9 members. The City Executive Committee selects the City Secretary and such other officers as may be necessary for the work in the city.

SECTION 12. All actions of the City Central Committees are subject to approval by the respective District Committees.

SECTION 13. The branch is the basic unit of the organization. Branches are to be organized in all shops, mines and mills, cities or sections of cities where there are five members or more. Branches shall meet at least once a month.

SECTION 14. The branch elects the necessary officers each 6 months, as follows: secretary;

financial secretary; educational director; organizer, literature agent; city central delegate, where City Central Committees exist. Small branches may combine some of the offices. Larger branches should also elect an executive committee of five or seven members.

SECTION 15. In order to facilitate the development of activities of the I.L.D. among workers and workers' organizations of foreign speaking nationalities, the National Executive Committee shall appoint special committees which will carry on their work in the various languages under the instruction of the National Committee. These committees are to be located whenever possible in the city where the national office is located.

SECTION 16. All special language committees, district committees, city committees and officers must carry on their work in harmony with and according to the program and constitution of the ILD and instructions of the National Executive Committee. The National Executive Committee has the right to remove officials who do not comply with its policies and decisions and to require new elections.

Article V. Dues.

SECTION 1. Individual members pay an initiation fee of 25c and monthly dues of 20c to the branch. Members at large pay their dues directly to the district or to the national office, where no district exists.

SECTION 2. The National Office shall receive 10 cents for each dues stamp and 20 cents for each initiation stamp. Five cents on each dues stamp and five cents on each initiation stamp

shall go to the district office and five cents on each dues stamp shall be retained by the branch. The district committees must render to the national office itemized monthly reports regularly.

SECTION 3. Organizations affiliated as a body shall pay dues to the amount of one cent or more per member per month. The full amount of dues of organizations affiliated nationally shall go to the national office. Dues of organizations affiliated locally shall be divided equally between the national, district and city organizations.

SECTION 4. Members three months in arrears shall be considered in bad standing. Members 12 months in arrears shall be dropped from the membership rolls, unless their failure to pay dues was due to strikes, unemployment or sickness. Exempt stamps shall be issued in all such cases. No member shall be allowed to pay dues for more than six months in advance.

Article VI. Transfers.

The membership card shall have a space provided for transfers and all members presenting such transfers shall be accepted as members in the new locality.

Article VII. Press.

The official organ of the I.L.D. shall be the LABOR DEFENDER, to be issued monthly, or oftener. Every branch and affiliated organization shall be obligated to give the LABOR DEFENDER a wide circulation.

Article VIII. Affiliation.

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national organization devoted to defense of all workers against the attacks of the governments in all capitalist countries.

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