

PROGRAM FOR

# CONSTRUCTIVE DEMOCRACY

Message and War Program of the

## NATIONAL PARTY

An Appeal to the Heart and  
Brain of America.

Adopted Chicago, March 6-7-8, 1918

### INTRODUCTION.

In 1776 this nation gave to the world the principle that "all men are created equal," as the foundation of political equality and self-government. Today this nation is fighting to establish the principle that all nations are created equal, the foundation upon which must be built the Republic of the World.

Out of the tremendous events of this war, if it is not to be fought in vain, must come an extension of democracy to every field of human life. This war is bringing a vast extension of power to all the people who do useful work. It is extending the functions and power of democratic government as an agent of the common good. It is developing equality of sacrifice in bearing the burdens of government. By its very destruction of

human life, it is making that life so valuable as to enforce greater care for the welfare of all members of society. In so doing it cannot tolerate moral and material waste among either its fighting or producing forces.

In international relations it has forced home the fact, that only by applying the principles of democracy and publicity can the world be made safe either for democracy or the existence of free peoples.

These conditions demand a new political organization as the expression of these new forces, that they may accomplish their full purpose. Otherwise though we win the war we lose our fight for democracy.

When the Central European powers sounded the tocsin of war, they had already planned and effected such a mobilization of all the human and material resources of their nations as suited the military purposes of their rulers.

Imperative necessity forced upon the democratic nations of the earth a tardy mobilization of their resources, and for the first time in human history we have seen the hitherto scattered and divided forces of science, industry, agriculture, and transportation, and all the wisdom of organized statesmanship, organized labor and all the crafts employing human energy, focused upon a single problem that is common to the interests of every man.

The necessities of modern warfare have driven to the common council table not only the military chieftains, but also the va-

rious national representatives of the financial, industrial and political organizations of the democratic peoples of earth. Only when the spirit of democracy has been present at these councils have they been able to evoke the unity of thought and command the united power of the nations required for the successful defense against the powers of autocracy. Thus there appeared the nucleus of that very embodiment of holy ideals of which mankind has dreamed, the beginnings of "The Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World." The conquering purpose of the Kaiser evoked a crusade for democracy; and to the organization and successful outcome of that crusade the children of democracy have brought their best and their all.

Modern warfare demands not only an army of chosen men, armed, equipped and adequately nourished at the front, but back of it another and even greater army, made up of at least four men and women for every man on the firing line, whose hands and brains plan and effect the production and the transportation to the firing line of the sinews of war. The whole nation goes to war. But a nation whose vitality is sapped, whose people freeze in winter or starve in summer, whose food supply is inaccessible or whose factories are stilled by an inadequate transportation system, cannot meet the requirements of modern war.

We have surveyed our resources; we have inventoried our properties; we have indexed our human and material forces. And

it is all on the altar. That our people might have coal, our nation has commandeered the coal. That the wheat and the coal might go to the fighting front, and to the army in the trenches of industry as well, we have drafted the railroad properties and the men who operate them into our army of democracy. To feed the boys in khaki we stint our tables every day, and cut our loaf in thinner slices that our allies may not lack for food. The wastes of peace, whether of men or material, we now count as luxuries, which a nation fighting for its life cannot afford.

### LABOR'S POWER TO SERVE CIVILIZATION.

The industrial army back of the fighting line must be mobilized effectively. It must be dependable, which means that its purpose must coincide with the purpose of the nation, and its spirit must coincide with the spirit of democracy. The democratic organization of labor happily did not wait for the hammer of the god of war to be thrown. Through all the lands the workers had long been organized. What else had been a mob was ready, mobilized, and drilled in its own disciplines, shot through already with the fervor and the passion of democracy, and willing to sacrifice everything but its own ideal and hope of democracy to compass the defeat of what it has come to know as the very embodiment of all its foes.

Labor will win this war. Labor must win this war. And to this accomplishment the workers bring not only the strength and

skill of hand and brain employed in their crafts and occupations. They bring also to the council table of the nations a wisdom learned in the years of struggle; a wisdom which knows the methods of organized self-government and can teach to the statesmen of the political world many a lesson of government.

Not for nothing have the men and women of labor gathered for nearly a century in the international councils of their own people. Not in vain have they accumulated their stores of strength and experience. To the altar of world democracy they bring now their choicest treasures; but they already know the ritual of that worship and have justly refused to leave their jewels at any strange shrine.

Because in this war nation fights nation, and armies are but projectiles whose effectiveness depends upon the driving power of the productive forces behind them, forces of production rank equal in importance with the armed forces in the field. The organization of labor power and industrial resources becomes a paramount condition to the winning of the war.

Labor, whether manual or mental, mechanical, managerial, or professional, is gaining a ruling position in all fields of society. This position must be strengthened until those who do useful labor are in control of society. During the war this means a rapid extension of labor representation upon all bodies concerned with the management of the war, and especially those engaged in

the organization and management of war industries and in the marketing and transportation of products.

This extension of the power of Labor must center around the farmers' organizations, trade unions and the professional associations. There is no other way to organize labor for social purposes. Industry and labor must be mobilized, but there is no way to mobilize a mob. Just in proportion as the nations have recognized and utilized such organizations have they secured for the war a dependable civilian army.

Therefore the unions and the farmers' organizations must be made an integral part of the national mobilization of industry for war and for peace after the war. Only in this way can the labor supply be effectively utilized, workers secured where needed, unemployment prevented and the whole waste of disorganization avoided.

In the midst of war all the nations involved have awakened to the vital necessity of preserving and protecting human life. This protection must be extended. If the dire need of the war forces children and women further into industry, every restriction and provision tending to protect their health and well-being must be extended and maintained. It will not profit us to save our institutions if we leave a physically and morally weakened population to dissipate those institutions.

### **REDUCTION OF HOURS OF LABOR.**

The hours of labor must be shortened. The experience of this war has proven that

the "basic eight-hour day" is not only essential to the preservation of the welfare of the workers, but is more efficient for production than a longer day.

The protection of Labor and the well-being of society can be assured only if Labor shares at once in determining the terms of employment. Only by collective bargaining through Labor's chosen representatives can the interests of Labor and society be protected. We therefore insist that, in all contracts for the production or purchase of war material by the government, clauses must be included providing for such collective bargaining, as well as for a minimum wage based upon a standard of life assuring opportunity for health and enjoyment, and rising with each increase in the cost of living.

Hitherto industry has been chaotic and ruthlessly wasteful, depending for its incentive upon private greed and for its organization upon the competition of duplicating plants or their combination into private monopoly. This system has collapsed under the stress of this war, and thus threatens the very existence of organized society.

The whole effort of industrial organization for this war has been directed toward the restriction or abolition of the present inefficient and wasteful system of industry. Success in the prosecution of the war, in the utilization of resources, and therefore in the preservation of the very existence of the nation, depends upon the rapidity with which this old system can be transformed

into a new one based upon the purposeful organization of industry.

For the first time this nation is seeking to give a common social purpose to industry. It is seeking to compel the very combinations its laws have hitherto forbidden. It is trying to abolish the waste and friction due to the present system. For these purposes it is organizing great anti-waste campaigns, compelling the union of hitherto competing industries, defining by "priority orders" those industries most necessary to national life and pressing everywhere for greater production of essentials.

### **ABOLITION OF POVERTY.**

This process must be accelerated and continued after the war, for the purpose of fighting the enemies of poverty, disease, unemployment and social degradation. Today the social purpose which gives unity to industry is the need of defending democratic institutions against the threat of German autocratic imperialism. With the close of the war this process must be continued and extended to defend society against hunger, misery and ignorance.

If, in spite of the fact that 30,000,000 of the best youth of the world are engaged in destroying wealth, with the most marvelous instruments of destruction that twentieth century inventiveness can produce, while the majority of the remaining workers are engaged in producing either these instruments of destruction or the means to maintain those engaged in that destruction, it is nevertheless possible still to maintain the

populations with little more economic suffering than takes place in times of peace, there is no longer any ground for denying that poverty and all that flows from it can be driven from the earth.

This war can be prosecuted, and the civilian population maintained, only by the use of the social surplus for the sole purpose of prosecuting the war. Hitherto that social surplus has been appropriated as a reward for private ownership. Today we are using much of this surplus for war. More of it must be taken by taxes upon excess profits, increased until no individual is permitted to exploit for his individual gain the sacrifices of a nation.

Increased income taxes which discriminate against unearned incomes, so graduated as to exempt a minimum sufficient to maintain the healthy well-being of all, and to check the accumulation of great fortunes, must be enacted. The existence of such a social surplus in private hands should be steadily diminished by the extension of government ownership and operation of monopolized industry, and pending this action, by such a restriction of prices and regulation of production as will absorb the surplus at the source.

At the close of the war this process should continue, and the social surplus which will then flow into the hands of the government should be used for such social purposes as the people may determine. This surplus should first be diminished by such an increase in the payment to labor as will insure

healthful conditions of life for every useful member of society. The remaining surplus, with the savings due to the intelligent organization of society already under way, which must be extended, will amount to vast sums annually, will afford a fund for the reconstruction of society, the acquirement of such property as society may wish, the development of a great housing program, and provide the capital necessary for the extension and development of socialized industry.

### **WAR AND THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.**

Neither economy nor efficiency nor democracy is capable of normal development while burdened with the unnatural handicap of alcohol.

"Food will win the war." At the outbreak of hostilities the manufacture of alcoholic liquors in America was consuming the food equivalent of eleven million pound loaves of bread a day. The making of beverage spirits was prohibited and the production of beer was restricted, which effected the saving of half of this waste but the winning of the war is still jeopardized by this stupendous loss of an amount of food more than sufficient for the bread ration of the entire American Army.

The breweries consume millions of tons of coal and the saloons other millions, for the lack of which prices soar, the poor shiver, schools are closed, and industry staggers at a time of national crisis. The burden imposed by the hauling of grains, materials,

coal, and the bulky product for the liquor traffic, adds to the strain upon our over-taxed railroads and increases every hardship of undersupply.

The liquor press confesses that the traffic draws a million men, directly or indirectly, from the avenues of useful trades and professions and employs them at worthless work that weakens our fighting and productive power in this war.

To keep our soldiers fit to fight, the government protects them by a five mile dry zone around camps, cantonments and military and naval stations, and forbids the sale or gift of alcohol to them in any form. It is not less needful to keep those who work in field, shop, or office, fit to do their bit in this common struggle for the common good.

We heartily endorse the action of the twenty-seven states which have outlawed the traffic, and of Congress, which has submitted a Federal amendment for its abolition, and we urge the immediate ratification of that amendment for the conservation of the life and resources of the nation and the early winning of this war. Furthermore, we demand that Congress immediately forbid the waste of grain, fuel, or other useful products for beverage purposes during the war.

### **MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC INDUSTRY.**

The great extension of the field of governmental activity demands, and is bringing, a corresponding extension of democracy in government. When the war depends upon the labor of women in every depart-

ment of war work it is no longer possible to deny the right of suffrage to the feminine half of the human race. This fact has been recognized by the extension of suffrage to women in England and by the adoption of the suffrage amendment to the constitution of the United States by the House of Representatives. The National Party demands the submission of this amendment by the Senate and will everywhere give its support to secure the adoption of the amendment by the legislatures of the States.

The democratization of government further calls for more efficient machinery for making effective the will of the people in national and international affairs. It requires and is bringing on extension of such measures as the initiative, referendum and recall in domestic government, and the end of secret diplomacy in international relations.

A democracy that is to undertake the task of administering so great a portion of its life, and carry on such tremendous tasks of social transformation as the coming years will bring, must be educated. It must have not only technical knowledge for the management and administration of industry, political knowledge for the direction of a government with vastly extended functions, and international knowledge fitted to cope with the problems of a democratic world state and diplomacy, but it must also have a depth of training in all those fields of science and culture that form the foundation of continuous higher evolution.

For this reason the warning issued by the governments of this country and Great Britain against the decrease of appropriations for education during the war must not only be heeded, but the resources for education during and at the close of the war must be greatly increased. Moreover, in accordance with the principles of modern pedagogy, that education must be based upon democratic principles, and be especially directed to the preparation of citizens to play their proper part in such a democracy as this war is bringing forth.

### INTERNATIONAL POLICY—POLITICAL AND INDUSTRIAL.

Just as the idea of private monopoly in industry is giving way under the stress of the war to common ownership and democratic management; just as the war is being waged to make democratic government safe from the assaults of autocracy, so it is also leading to the substitution of a world republic of equal democracies for the old idea of imperialism.

The very mechanical changes developing under the stress of war are abolishing the importance of lines upon the surface of the sea or the land, lifting the politics of the world into a third dimension where national rivalries are less important than common interests, and making the establishment of some sort of international confederacy imperative.

International transportation upon the high seas, communication by cable and wireless,

travel in the air, national ownership of shipping, are but a few of the things that are compelling such action. We welcome the steps in this direction already indicated by our government and urge that this movement be accelerated.

We ask that in the determination of the terms of peace the increased power of Labor be recognized by the admission of the Peace Council of representatives of Labor. We urge that this peace council be made the beginning of the organization of a World State to which shall be entrusted the administration of those things that nations must enjoy in common, and the monopolizing of which has been the cause of so many wars.

### **PROBLEMS OF INDUSTRIAL DEMOBILIZATION.**

The menace of war compelled a reconstruction of all our national processes for the purposes of the war. Demobilization, when the war is done, will bring us face to face with a problem at least as great, in the reconstruction of the nation for the purposes of peace.

Millions of men will be discharged from the army and the navy, and from the thousands of factories engaged in the manufacture of arms, ammunition and military supplies. The demobilization of the industrial army will disemploy many millions more than the number of those discharged in the demobilization of the army and the navy, since the industrial army required for the support of military operations employs at

least four persons for every man employed in the fighting line.

The mere human needs of these millions of American citizens will call immediately for the adequate furnishing and efficient distribution of food and clothing, housing, education and employment for every person thus thrown out of his previous connection. We cannot complacently face the alternative of want, suffering, degradation and crime which will sweep our land with ravages worse than those of war. Neither dare we furnish conditions for the development of an American pauper working class with no sense of responsibility for the peaceful and orderly progress of the nation.

We therefore demand, in view of the demonstrated facts concerning poverty-bred diseases originating mainly in the hovels of the city and the country, that the Housing Commission already created by Act of Congress in connection with the war industries, shall have its functions extended to include the period following the demobilization of the armies, and that there be provided for this purpose an appropriation of not less than two billion dollars.

### **IMMIGRATION.**

The strain upon our labor resources occasioned by the war, and the labor shortage in all departments of industry, have led to the suggestion that there be imported millions of Coolie laborers to meet the need. Against this dangerous proposal, every sincere and thoughtful American must be on guard. We warn the American people, es-

pecially the wage earners, against the perils to civilization which must result from such an experiment.

If we could not by any other method secure the industrial power necessary for the defeat of the military autocracies of the Central Empires, we should make the sacrifice, believing that to win this war is the only method of maintaining civilization's priceless heritage for our children; but we are not compelled to adopt this desperate measure.

A national organization of our industrial resources, including our labor supply, which the labor movement of this country is competent and willing to effect, would be far more efficient than the introduction of any number of laborers of alien speech and thought, difficult of assimilation, into our national life. Therefore, we enter emphatic protest against the proposal of certain shortsighted leaders of American industry, echoed by many other equally short-sighted citizens, to import hordes of Coolies and other alien laborers to replace the American laborers called into military service.

Not only would this result in the creation of a new race problem with infinite possibilities for evil, but when the time for the demobilization of armies is reached and our heroic soldier citizens return again to civil life, we must inevitably be confronted by a stupendous amount of unemployment in which the grim mocking central feature would be the employment of the unassimilated and possibly unassimilable alien, and

the unemployment and poverty of the American soldier citizen returned from the great sacrifice and service of the field of battle.

Therefore, we protest vigorously against the proposal of steel magnates and others to import foreign labor to take the places of American soldiers away from home. Such a policy would interfere with the re-employment of our soldiers when they return, and cause industrial and racial difficulties for many years.

### THE FOOD SUPPLY.

The world is suffering from a food shortage which the continuance of the war will aggravate. This must be met immediately by a tax on land values, which will force into use the idle land of the nation. Land which is now the property of the government, or which is available for the purpose, should be put under cultivation immediately with the use of the most advanced scientific methods of agriculture and the most improved farm machinery, and the interests of the farmers should be carefully safeguarded by intelligent governmental cooperation. Such a beginning will furnish the nucleus of an organization for food production and employment of labor after the war.

The breakdown of the system of food supply controlled through the privately owned cold storage and other warehouses, elevators, flour mills and packing plants, has demonstrated the imperative necessity of taking over at once the agencies by which our food supply is marketed.

Neither for peace nor for war will the people of this nation again consent to face an actual famine of coal in winter. Therefore we favor the extension of the plans of the Fuel Commission for the conservation of power for the furnishing of heat, light and power and demand that they be taken over under direct national ownership and control, guaranteeing to all the people the certainty of coal supply at reasonable cost, and eliminating isolated and uneconomical electric power and heating plants.

In making plans for power conservation during the war there should be an intelligent anticipation of future needs. There should be generous provision for wide extension and improvements of water power plants, and the interconnection of central power stations in times of peace, for the furtherance of industry and transportation. The execution of such plans will absorb large sections of the skilled labor now engaged in war industries and military service.

#### **TRANSPORTATION.**

The economic value of good roads is being better understood today than ever before, as the result of war pressure on our transportation system. A unified national system of paved highways would go far toward encouraging the opening of farm lands by making them more accessible to market; would enlarge the recreational life of the whole people by opening new lines of travel; and in its construction and maintenance would call for the development of a skilled army of roadbuilders whose cost

would be returned to the nation many times over in actual economic values.

The absolute breakdown of the American railway system in the greatest emergency which the nation ever knew, and the failure to properly develop the harbors and ports of the nation compel the demand that the government continue the operation of the transportation system in the interest of all the people.

The coordination of the telephone and telegraph systems will release much electrical equipment and thousands of skilled men that are needed now for the successful prosecution of the war. Therefore we demand the immediate nationalization of the electrical means of communication. We agree with the president of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company that there should be a telephone in every working man's home, and demand that in contemplation of this completed telephone system plans be made at once, the execution of which after the war will give useful employment to the thousands of skilled electrical men now in the nation's service.

#### **CONCLUSION.**

All this program, all these achievements of democracy, all the gains due to the great social revolution that has accompanied the war, depend for their existence and further progress upon the victory of democracy over autocracy in this war. If German imperialism and autocracy win, then democracy has failed to show itself capable of maintaining itself in the face of its age-long enemy

