

Constitution and Laws

OF THE

ONE BIG UNION

Preamble.

Modern industrial society is divided into two classes, those who possess and do not produce, and those who produce and do not possess. Alongside this main division all other classifications fade into insignificance. Between these two classes a continual struggle takes place. As with buyers and sellers of any commodity, there exists a struggle on the one hand of the buyer to buy as cheaply as possible, and, on the other, of the seller to sell for as much as possible, so with the buyers and sellers of labor power. In the struggle over the purchase and sale of labor power the buyers are always masters—the sellers always workers. From this fact arises the inevitable class struggle.

As industry develops and ownership becomes concentrated more and more into fewer hands; as the control of the economic forces of society become more and more the sole property of imperialistic finance, it becomes apparent that the workers, in order to sell their labor power with any degree of success, must extend their forms of organization in accordance with changing industrial methods. Compelled to organize for self-defence, they are further compelled to educate themselves in preparation for the social change which economic developments will produce, whether they seek it or not.

The One Big Union, therefore, seeks to organize the wage worker, not according to craft, but according to industry; according to class and class needs, and calls upon all workers to organize irrespective of nationality, sex, or craft into a workers' organization, so that they may be enabled to more successfully carry on the every-day fight over wages, hours of work, etc., and prepare themselves for the day when production for profit shall be replaced by production for use.

WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

(Amended at Winnipeg Convention, January, 1920.)

Name.

Clause 1.—The name of the organization shall be the ONE BIG UNION.

Membership.

Clause 2.—Membership in the O. B. U. shall be open to all wage workers. No member shall be eligible for any elective office in the O. B. U. who is carrying a membership card in any International Union, and no delegate to represent a unit who carries any other form of union card.

Initiation Fee.

Clause 3.—The maximum initiation fee to be charged by local units for new members shall be One Dollar.

Shop Cards.

Clause 4.—Union Shop Cards shall be issued to those local units desiring same for display in such places of employment where all the employees are members of the O. B. U.

Certificates.

Clause 5.—Certificates shall be issued to Central Labor Councils and District Boards and isolated units; said certificates shall designate the jurisdiction of the organization to which they are issued.

Executive Board.

Clause 6.—A General Executive Board shall be elected consisting of a chairman, secretary, and representatives of the various industries.

Clause 7.—The General Executive Board shall be elected by and from the duly accredited delegates attending conventions. The Executive Board shall remain in office until their successors are elected. The wages of the officers of the General Executive Board shall be \$40 per week. Expenses of organizers away from home shall be \$5 per day. Any member of the Executive Board not receiving money for expenses shall receive \$50 per week wages.

Clause 8.—The members of the General Executive Board may act as general organizers or in a consultative capacity at the discretion of the Central Labor Council or District Board they represent. All members of the General Executive Board acting as general organizers shall be at all times under the direction of the General Chairman.

All members of the General Executive Board, acting as organizers, must send in duplicate financial and written reports twice a month, one copy to be sent to headquarters of the district or unit in which the organizer is working, and the other to the General Executive Board.

Clause 9.—It shall be the duty of the chairman to preside at all meetings of the General Executive Board. He shall have charge of, and be responsible for, the general administration of the organization.

Clause 10.—It shall be the duty of the General Secretary to keep a true account of all monies received, and all monies paid out; he shall deposit all monies or cheques received by him in such a bank or banks as may be named by the Executive Board; he shall be at all times in a position to render to the Executive Board an account of the financial condition of the organization.

He shall render to the Central Labor Councils and District Boards a quarterly financial report, duly certified by chartered accountants.

He shall keep the minutes of all meetings of the General Executive Board in a book provided for that purpose; he shall pay all bills when satisfied of their correctness, and shall sign all cheques; he shall be bonded in a responsible surety company for the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000), and the bond shall be approved of and paid for by the General Executive Board.

Recall.

Clause 11.—A member holding office on the General Executive Board must at all times maintain his credential both from his own local unit to Central Council or District Board, and from his Central Council or District Board to the convention. Any local unit withdrawing the credential of an Executive Board member from local Central Council or District Board shall provide statement for reason for so doing, and Central Council or District Board shall immediately make a full investigation. Should the recall, as instituted by the local unit be warranted, the Central Council or District Board shall then revoke credential as held by Executive Board member, and request Executive Board to immediately fill the vacancy.

Clause 12.—Any officer of the O. B. U. may be recalled by a majority vote of the District Board or Central Labor Council which sent said officer to the convention.

Clause 13.—In the event of a vacancy occurring on the Executive Board, it shall be filled by the membership of Central Labor Council or District Board from which the previous member was elected.

In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of the Chairman or Secretary of the Board, the remaining members of the Board shall immediately fill the position.

Clause 14.—Meetings to determine the recall of any officer, whether local unit, Central Council, District Board or General Executive Board, must be specially summoned, all members being notified.

Clause 15.—Local units, whose delegates on Central Council or District Board have been elected to membership on the General Executive Board, shall fill vacancy on Central Council or District Board by electing an alternate delegate.

Conventions.

Clause 16.—This organization shall meet in convention annually, the convention call to be issued by the General Executive Board.

Clause 17.—The conventions shall consist of delegates from Central Labor Councils and District Boards or isolated units where District Board or Central Council is impracticable.

Delegates to be chosen from various industries where possible.

Clause 18.—The following shall be the basis of representation: One delegate for 1,000 members or less, and one additional delegate for each additional 1,000 members or major fraction thereof.

Clause 19.—A roll call vote may be demanded by any delegate, and should a roll call be demanded, the vote shall be compiled on the basis of representation of each accredited delegate.

No delegate to record more than the full number of votes upon which individual representation is based, namely, 1,000.

Clause 20.—All conventions of the O. B. U. shall pool transportation of the delegates. Transportation to mean railway or steamship fare only.

Clause 21.—Each convention shall fix the date and locality for the succeeding convention.

Clause 22.—The General Executive Board shall call a special convention within 30 days upon receipt of a demand from three or more District Boards or Labor Councils comprising a membership of not less than 16,000. The reason for such convention must be stated in the demand and incorporated in the convention call.

Per Capita.

Clause 23.—Per Capita Tax to the General Executive Board of the O.B.U. shall be ten cents per month, which shall be paid through the Central Labor Councils and District Boards where same exist.

All Central Labor Councils and District Boards shall issue a quarterly financial statement, one copy of which shall be sent to the General Executive Board; the same to be certified by chartered accountants or other qualified auditors approved of by the General Executive Board, and a monthly report of membership shall be sent to the General Executive Board by each local unit.

Upon the failure of any unit, Council, or Board to send in regular financial reports, or where there is reason to believe such unit is not fulfilling its financial obligations to the general movement, then the next higher authority shall have the right to audit the accounts of the delinquent organization.

Clause 24.—Any organization not within the jurisdiction of a Central Labor Council or District Board may be affiliated with and pay per capita direct to the General Executive Board.

Supplies.

Clause 25.—All supplies to be paid for by the local units in advance, except with the consent of the General Executive Board, and any arrears owing for supplies must be paid for in advance of per capita tax.

Clause 26.—All supplies to be furnished the membership at cost.

Clause 27.—General Executive to issue a special membership card for members sick, unemployed, or on strike. Local unions to be empowered according to their own needs and circumstances to release members from payment of dues during sickness, strikes, or unemployment.

Official Membership Receipt.

Clause 28.—Each organization affiliated with the O. B. U. must use the official membership receipt, unless exempt by the General Executive Board.

Clause 29.—The General Executive Board shall issue official membership receipt books in triplicate to the Central Labor Councils and District Boards, who shall distribute to their affiliated organizations; the original receipt shall be placed in the member's folder, and all the duplicate receipts shall be sent to the Secretary of the Central Labor Council or District Board, together with the monthly remittance of per capita tax; the triplicate receipts shall remain in the possession of the local organization.

Central Labor Councils.

Clause 30.—The following is recommended as a basis for representation of affiliated organizations to the Central Labor Councils: One delegate for the first 50 members, or less, and one additional delegate for each succeeding 100 members or major fraction thereof.

Clause 31.—No delegate shall be seated in a Central Labor Council who is not a bona fide wage earner and a paid-up member of the O. B. U.

Clause 32.—In small towns and in isolated places where few workers are employed, they shall organize into one unit, including all branches. Members of these branches shall be controlled by central organization of the industry to which they belong.

All members of the One Big Union shall affiliate with and pay dues to the unit representing the industry in which he is engaged, provided such unit is organized.

Clause 33.—All funds maintained by local units shall be the property of the members composing said local units.

Disputes and Strikes.

Clause 34.—Whenever any dispute exists which the local unit affected cannot settle through its Grievance Committee, the dispute shall be referred in writing to their Central Labor Council or District Board.

Clause 35.—A Central Labor Council or District Board to whom a dispute has been referred, shall, through their Grievance Committee, endeavor to effect a settlement; failing a settlement, the Central Labor Council or District Board, if they consider the dispute is of sufficient importance to the workers, shall refer the same in writing to the General Executive Board.

Clause 36.—If any Central Labor Council or District Board refuses to refer such dispute to the General Executive Board, the local unit affected shall have the right to refer the dispute to the General Executive Board.

Clause 37.—Should the General Executive Board consider a dispute of sufficient importance, they shall refer same in writing to the Central Labor Councils and District Boards. Should a majority of the membership affiliated with the Central Labor Councils and District Boards vote in favor, the General Executive Board shall be empowered to call a strike of all affiliated bodies.

Clause 38.—Nothing in the previous clauses shall prevent any Central Labor Council or District Board from calling a strike in their own district or industry: provided, however, that any Council or Board, calling a strike without the consent of the General Executive Board, does so on its own responsibility.

Clause 39.—Whenever a strike in any district or industry takes place, no member of the One Big Union shall handle directly or indirectly any products of the industry on strike.

For further information apply to the SECRETARY,
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