

---

# Michigan Charter Voided by NEC: Socialist Committee Charges Members Have Violate National Constitution. [event of May 26, 1919]

Published in the *New York Call*, May 27, 1919, pg. 4.

CHICAGO, May 26. — The Socialist National Executive Committee revoked the charter of Michigan by a vote of 7 to 3. It was known that this matter would come up owing to an amendment adopted by the last Michigan state convention, which outlawed advocacy of any immediate measures of interest to the working class.

Secretary [Adolph] Germer reported the matter, giving as his opinion that the state convention had violated the national constitution. The objectionable clause is as follows:

Any member local, or branch of a local, advocating legislative reform or supporting organizations for the purpose of advocating such reforms, shall be expelled from the Socialist Party. The State Executive Committee is authorized to revoke the charter of any local that does not conform to this amendment.

A majority of the committee held this violated Section 5, Article 2, of the national constitution.

A minority held that the committee should have Michigan officials present to interpret the clause before acting, and that, as the clause had gone to a referendum, we had no official report of the referendum vote.

The majority held the state convention had no more right to adopt and submit this clause for a vote than to adopt and submit a proposal to unite with the Republican Party. Party members present at the meeting asserted that the clause already has been adopted by a large majority of Michigan members.

The minority charged that the action of the majority, due to the vote of Michigan, in election of party

officials, will affect the majority adversely.

The majority holds that the minority is willing to connive at the breaking of the constitution in order to control the party and deliver it to the Left Wing. It also holds that the Michigan situation is only one phase of a systematic campaign for this purpose that will probably come up in other sessions.

Michigan had also adopted a resolution instructing party speakers and organizers to devote part of each address to “explaining religion,” strongly condemned as contrary to the general spirit and policy of the party, and in harmony with the general disruptive tendencies. However, no specific action was taken.

Secretary Germer also charges that 5 language federations have been feverishly at work increasing their membership in the past few months to carry all referendums. In 4 months the increase is 70 percent. A number of State Secretaries also complain of padding of the vote and Germer charges corrupt practices. Some 15,000 ballots disappeared from the National Office, he asserts, many ballots were marked by one man, and language branches are voting more members than records show they have. The whole matter will be investigated.

Local Cook County split Friday [May 23, 1919] over the disruptive policies of the Left Wing. Over 100 party delegates left the hall and charges are to be presented by the County Committee against the County Convention. Charges are made that the convention repeatedly violated the constitution. The party will no doubt proceed to reorganize in Cook County.

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

*Published by 1000 Flowers Publishing, Corvallis, OR, 2007. • Non-commercial reproduction permitted.*