

1910/5.989

Second International Conference of Socialist Women at Copenhagen

(Arbejdernes Forsamlingsbygning, Jagtvej 69) on the 26th and 27th of August 1910.

Opening Fryday, 26th of August, 9 o'clock in the morning.

Provisional Agenda:

1. Opening.
2. Measures for securing more regular relations between the organised Socialist Women of all countries.
3. Practical work in favour of universal Woman Suffrage, viz. Adult Suffrage.
4. Social protection and provision for motherhood and infants.
5. Various matters.

Provisional Standig Order.

1. The Bureau is composed of the first and second president and two secretaries.
2. Sittings are held from 9 to 1 o'clock in the morning and from 3 to 7 o'clock in the afternoon.
3. Motions concerning the different points of the agenda have to be brought in written and must be backed by at least ten delegates, if they shall be discussed.
4. Motions concerning the standing order may be proposed viva voce, must be backed by at least five delegates and have to be settled at once.
5. Closure or adjournment of the debates being proposed, it is only allowed to speak once pro or contra.
6. Who wishes to speak, has to hand over his name in writing.
7. Supporters of private motions are allowed to speak but twenty-five minutes, debaters only ten minutes. Nobody is allowed to speak more than twice about the same question — except supporters of private motions.
8. Resolutions are carried by the absolute majority of the delegates; in case of parity of votes the motion is considered to be rejected.
9. Voting is done by showing hands; if proposed by ten delegates, there must be voted by nations.

John Lindberg

Motions and Resolutions.

To the agenda:

1. The action of Socialist Women for the maintenance of Peace.
British International Socialist Women's Bureau, London.
2. What shall women do to combat international militarism and secure peace?
Women's Club Stockholm-South.
3. As it can be stated as a fact, that ignorance and prejudice about the relation of sexes, contempt of the unmarried mother and her want of rights in society are some of the greatest obstacles in emancipating women, and as even the title given to women depends on their relation to the man, the Conference resolves to discuss the following question: How shall women work with the chance to combat effectively the obstacle to definitive emancipation of the female sex, according to the above-mentioned arguments?
Women's Club Stockholm-South.

To point 2 of the agenda: Measures for securing more regular relations between the organised Socialist Women of all countries.

1. Considering the multiform conditions of carrying on the economic and political struggle of the organised women workers; considering the great importance of the example of the more advanced countries for the economically and politically less developed ones; considering the hence following importance of an international mutual understanding the Women's Conference decides to take in view that there is established at the International Socialist Bureau an International Inquiry Office for socialist women workers' organisations of the whole world, which should receive all informations concerning working women.
Silesian and Cracovian Women's Organisations
of the Polish Social-democratic Party of Silesia and Galicia
(Austrian Poland).

2. In order to render easier understanding and also international solidarity of the working class, the Women's Conference resolves to urge all editors of socialist women's papers to exchange their journals between themselves.

Silesian and Cracovian Women's Organisations
for the Polish Social-democratic Party of Silesia and Galicia
(Austrian Poland).

3. The Executives and all other leading corporations of the social-democratic women's movement in the different countries have to give regularly notice to the International Socialist Women's Secretary of the organisations, their state, the number of their members, their propaganda and organisations work as well as of great actual questions coming forth, the actions carried out thereat by women and the Social-democratic Party and the position taken up by working women towards these matters.

General Women's Club Stockholm.

4. The International Socialist Women's Secretary is bound to give the Executives of socialist women's societies and socialist women's papers in the different countries notice of the participation of working women in the workers' movement; these informations shall be based upon the reports sent to the secretary from all countries.

General Women's Club Stockholm.

5. The Conference decides the foundation of an International Socialist Women's Paper which not only has to publish the reports about the International Socialist Women's Movement, but also has to discuss by our principle the women's question in all its extent and connexion, and show up its importance for the socialist movement, proceeding from the questions appearing actually in the different countries and concerning the women's question.

Federation of Socialist Women's Clubs in Holland.

To point 3 of the agenda: Practical work in favour of universal Woman Suffrage.

1. Concerning Women Suffrage the Second International Conference of Socialist Women confirms the resolution carried by the First Conference at Stuttgart in 1907.

Considering the many attempts to cheat the great majority of the female sex by a limited women's enfranchisement and block thus in the same time one of the ways of the whole proletariat to the conquest of the political power, the Conference emphasises again especially these principles:

„The Socialist Women's movement of all countries repudiates the limited Woman's Suffrage as a falsification of and insult to the principle of the political equality of the female sex. It fights for the only living concrete expression of this principle: the universal woman's suffrage which is open to all adults and bound by no conditions of property, payment of taxes, or degrees of education or any other qualifications, which exclude members of the working class from the enjoyment of the right. They carry on their struggle not in alliance with the bourgeois Women's Righters, but in alliance with the Socialist Parties, and these fight for Woman's Suffrage as one of the demands which from the point of view of principle and practice is most important for a complete democratisation of the suffrage.“

Considering the increasing importance of the political emancipation of the female sex for the proletarian class-struggle, the Conference calls further attention to the following rules of tactics:

„The Socialist Parties in all countries are bound to fight with energy for the introduction of Woman Suffrage. Consequently their fight for the democratisation of the Suffrage in the legislative and administrative bodies in the State and Commune must especially be fought also as a struggle in favour of Woman Suffrage, and they must raise this demand in their propaganda as well as in the Parliament and insist on it with all their power. In countries where Manhood Suffrage is already far advanced or completely achieved, the Socialist Parties must take up the fight for the universal Woman's Suffrage, and with that naturally put forward all the demands which remain in order to obtain complete citizenship for the male proletariat.“

It is the duty of the Socialist Women's movement in all countries to take part in all struggles which the Socialist Parties fight for the democratisation of the Suffrage, and that with all possible energy, but also to see that in this fight the question of the universal Woman Suffrage is insisted on with due regard to its importance of principle and practice.“

The Social-Democratic Women of Germany
and the Federation of the Social-Democratic Party's
organisation of Berlin and neighbourhood.

2. In order to forward political enfranchisement of women it is the duty of the socialist women of all countries to agitate according to the above-named principles indefatigably among the labouring masses; enlighten them by discourses and literature about the social necessity and importance of the political emancipation of the female sex and use therefore every opportunity of doing so. For that propaganda they have to make the most especially of elections to all sorts of political and public bodies. In case the women have the right of voting at such bodies — local and provincial administrative bodies, arbitration-courts for trade-disputes, state sickness insurance — the women must be urged to make full and reasonable use of their right; if the women have no vote at all or a limited one, the socialist women must unite and guide them into the struggle for their right; in any case there must be emphasised thoroughly the demand of full political Women Suffrage.

On occasion of the annual May-demonstration — without regard to its form — the request of full political equality of the sexes must be proclaimed and substantiated. In agreement with the class-conscious political and trade organisations of the proletariat in their country the socialist women of all nationalities have to organise a special Women's Day which in first line has to promote Women Suffrage propaganda. Their demand must be discussed in connexion with the whole women's question according to the socialist conception of social things. The Conference must have an international character and be prepared with care.

Clara Zetkin, Käthe Duncker and other comrades.

3. Considering that even in those countries in which the so-called universal suffrage exists, only one half of the adult population enjoy it, but the women are disfranchised;

considering that only the action of the whole proletariat without any distinction of sex is creating a power strong enough to attain the ends pursued by the struggling and enlightened working-class, and taking into account that the struggle for emancipation of the working women will be tremendously advanced, if we make the demand of political rights for women one of the most actual reforms we strive for;

the Second International Women's Conference resolves to urge all socialist parliamentary groups to support most energetically those efforts of the women and advocate their full enfranchisement. The Conference calls, too, the working women's organisations of all countries to a fervent propaganda in favour of the political qualification of their sex.

Silesian and Cracovian Women's Organisations
of the Polish Social-democratic Party of Silesia and Galicia
(Austrian Poland).

4. In opposition to the Congress of the bourgeois International Women's Suffrage Alliance at London in 1909 the Social-democratic Women's Conference emphasizes the principle, that the question of woman enfranchisement can only be solved on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage without any restrictions. Therefore the Conference urges the social-democratic parliamentary groups to be energetic supporters of the working women's interest, whenever suffrage questions are before the Parliaments, in order to bring about a just dealing with this matter guaranteeing every woman her full chartered franchise.

To conquer universal suffrage for all adult without distinction of sex there must be worked by speeches, conferences, meetings and discussions, by spreading literature, as pamphlets, leaflets, articles in women's papers and the social-democratic press; by national and international demonstrations; besides the socialist women and their organisations must work in that direction on all occasions, where in the different countries constitutional questions are to be treated.

General Women's Club Stockholm.

To point 4 of the agenda: Social Protection and Provision for motherhood and infants.

1. That this Congress, demanding as it does the National and International ownership of the means of production and distribution affirms, that it is the duty of the community to maintain the childbearing women, infants, and children attending school.

British International Socialist Women's Bureau, London.

2. The Second International Conference of Socialist Women at Copenhagen demands the following measures of social protection for mother and child:

I. Of the Labour-Legislation.

- a. The legal eight hours' day for all women workers above 18 years of age; the six hours' day for girls above 16 and under 18 years of age; the four hours' day for children above 14 and under 16 years; the prohibition of all wage-earning labour for children under the age of 14.
- b. The prohibition to employ women in such operations which by their whole nature must be particularly injurious for mother and child.
- c. The prohibition of such methods of work which endanger particularly the female organism and thereby injure not only that one, but also the child.
- d. For pregnant women the right to stop work without previous notice eight weeks before the confinement.
- e. For women in childbed the prohibition of working for eight weeks, if the child lives, for six weeks after abortions or if the child dies within this time.
- f. For nursing women the establishment of nursing-rooms in the factories.

II. Of the State Sickness or Motherhood Insurance.

- a. In case of unemployment caused by pregnancy an obligatory subsidy for eight weeks.
- b. For women in childbed an obligatory subsidy for eight weeks, if the child lives, for thirteen weeks, if the mother is able and willing to nurse the child herself; for six weeks, if the child dies within this time or in case of abortions.
- c. Levelling the subsidies paid to pregnant women, women in childbed and nursing ones with the average daily wages.
- d. Granting of obstetric services, medical treatment of pregnancy and childbed ailments and care for women in childbed at their home by skilled nurses.
- e. Extension of these measures on all labouring women — including agricultural labourers, home workers and maid-servants — as well as on all women whose families don't earn more than 250 £.

III. Of the Communalities.

Establishment of lying-in hospitals, asylums for pregnant women, women in childbed and infants; organisation of attendance to women in childbed at their home by special nurses; granting of benefits for nursing women as long as the mothers don't get subsidies during the nursing period by the state insurance; providing good, sterile babies milk.

IV. Of the State.

- a. Contributions paid to the Sickness and Motherhood Insurance and communalities in order to enable them to satisfy our demands.

- b. Enlightenment of women how to perform suitably their maternal duties by introducing into the obligatory continuation-classes training for girls in the care and management of infants. Distribution of leaflets containing instructions about nursing women in childbed, managing and feeding infants.

The Conference requests the following social provisions for the child, besides granting a uniform, gratuitous and lay instruction based on the integral education in schools whose leading principle is to develop the child's capacities by labour and for labour:

- a. Establishment of lay nursery-schools and „Kindergarten“ (play schools).
- b. Obligatory, gratuitous feeding of all school-children, in school-times of unprovided ones even in holidays and vacancies.
- c. Establishment of school-homes where unprovided children are looked after in physical and moral respect in leisure-times, including holidays.
- d. Establishment of sport, trips and camps for holidays.
- e. Establishment of baths, halls for swimming and gymnastic exercises and school-gardens.
- f. Appointment of school-physicians and school-dentists.
- g. Foundation of sanatoriums and wood-schools for sickly and weakly children.

The Social Democratic Women of Germany.

3. That the tendency to make use of boy and girl labour in monotonous and uneducational work is destructive in its results upon the health, character and subsequent industrial efficiency of the boys and girls themselves and upon the rates of wages and chance of continued employment of men and women, and this Conference therefore urges the desirability of so raising the standard of education as to secure to every boy and girl up to the age of 18 efficient physical and technical training and of making where necessary some provision for their maintenance during that period.

Women's Labour League, Great-Britain.

4. That in view of the prevalence of preventible diseases and the inability of large masses of the population in every civilized country to pay for skilled attendance and care this Congress demands that national provision should be made for the medical and nursing services, including the setting up of school clinics, hospitals, sanatoria, and convalescent homes at the public expense.

Women's Labour League, Great-Britain.

5. That in view of the number of distressing cases where after the death of the father of the family the widow is unable to provide the necessities of life for herself and her children and of the resultant injury to the community, this Congress urges the universal establishment of State Insurance for widows in the interests especially of those with young children and those incapacitated by age or illness.

Women's Labour League, Great-Britain.

6. The Conference declares it an absolute duty of the State to protect defenceless and poor citizens. To provide for mother and child the Conference has to recommend in first line such reforms as public obligatory motherhood insurance, viz the right of unmarried mothers and their children to a real subsidy paid by the father during the pregnancy and for education of the child. The Conference urges our comrades in the parliaments to strive for a rational reform according to really modern and just points of view.

General Women's Club Stockholm.

7. Considering the successes obtained in Sweden by arranging „lectures of fairy-tales and legends“* and the importance of a clear understanding of women for the great danger of the English Book Control Movement as being full of clerical and militarist spirit, the Conference is earnestly invited to commission the delegates of the different countries to endeavour in their respective organisations, that the children may be united and amused in the same educational manner as it is the case by the lectures in Sweden.

Women's Club Stockholm-South.

To point 5 of the agenda: Various matters.

1. That in all provision made to secure the right to work to able-bodied citizens and thus do away with the terrible results of unemployment special care should be taken to meet the needs of women and girls dependent on their own earnings.

Women's Labour League, Great-Britain.

2. Considering the actions of the women as far as they take part in the working-class movement, are an organised component

* There shall be given to the Conference a special report about those lectures.

of that movement itself, in which no special selfish interests are supported, the Conference urges all organised women of the world to stand in rank and file with the Social-democratic Parties and Labour Organisations and without regard, whether direct interests of the female proletariat are fought for, always to think that every success must raise the whole working class.

Silesian and Cracovian Women's Organisations
of the Polish Social-democratic Party of Silesia and Galicia
(Austrian Poland).

3. The Conference urges the social-democratic parties to enlighten everywhere women about socialism and to do so still more intensely than beforehand and in a manner regarding the special conditions of the different countries; further to inform the proletariat women of the successes of the workers' movement, the arms used therein (cooperative societies, trade unions, anti-alcohol movement) and above all about the political action of the Socialist Parties.

General Women's Club Stockholm.

4. The Conference declares: All political organisations and trade unions of women as well as the women's papers working for the special education of the female sex, as far as they recognise class struggle, have a right to material and moral support by the Social-democracy.

General Women's Club Stockholm.

5. As it is absolutely necessary to win women over for the ideas of Socialism, as therefore intense propaganda is required, and as it is very sure that this propaganda and education work is done best by women themselves, the Conference is asked to debate, whether founding special Social-democratic Women's Federations is useful, and declare, in what ways agitation among women should be carried on best.

Women's Club Stockholm-South.