

# SLP says it's a workers' party

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

"We'll do as we always do on an election—we'll lose," one Socialist Labor Party member said.

But delegates from 18 states, attending the party's national convention at Southfield, viewed the party's presidential campaign as an opportunity to publicize their belief that capitalism should be replaced.

The convention, based on the theme that the bicentennial year should be the time

for another American revolution, met Saturday, Feb. 7 to Wednesday, Feb. 11 in the Northland Inn.

Party members believe that they are informing the workers of their interests and rights.

"We don't want to take over, we want to show them what their interest is," John Berkman of Wyandotte explained.

The vast majority of the American working class is not going to sit in a SLP study class and read one paragraph after another

until they conclude that the capitalist system is outmoded, party organizer Joseph Pirnion told members.

INSTEAD, PARTY members believe the workers will turn to the SLP for guidance when they realize that the party has never lied to them, said Edward Swiatok, campaign manager.

"If people did get together and get organized and examine what's going on in this society, capitalism would be in more trouble than it is now," Swiatok said.

The SLP wants industry to produce goods to meet the needs of the consumer and not for profit, said James Sun, a party member of 46 years from Westland.

## 'In our party no man seeks the nomination...'

By CARL STODDARD

For a moment, I panicked. Of course, I panic easily.

The press conference kicking off the Socialist Labor Party (SLP) of America's national convention was supposed to begin at 8 p.m.

But the activities board in the lobby of the Northland Inn the starting time of the conference was listed as 8 a.m.

Maybe, I thought, I was given the wrong time. Or maybe someone at the hotel made a mistake and put an "a" in place of a "p."

The only way to find out was to climb into the elevator and travel up to room 227.

It was nearly 8 p.m. as I walked out on the third floor hallway and looked around. If this was a scene of a press conference for a national political convention, where were the people, the television crews? And where was Walter Cronkite?

The door to room 227 was open and a young man with long blond hair was leaning against the doorway.

"IS THIS WHERE the press conference is supposed to be?" I asked.

It was, he said, and he invited me in.

I expected to meet a group of young radicals. I didn't. Most of the men inside the small room were at least 50. Some looked like college professors. Others appeared to have come from the working masses.

Joseph Pirnion grabbed me by the elbow. "Are you from the newspaper?"

I told him I was indeed and that I was here for the press conference. And I asked when it would begin.

Anytime I wanted it to begin it could begin, he said. I was the only media person in the room.

For starters, he directed me to a table loaded with SLP literature. There were pamphlets on socialist industrial unionism, capitalist motives, historical information on the SLP and scores of other reading booklets concerning the career within the capitalist industry.

Pirnion is an older man with thick glasses and a pipe that never seems to go out. He is also a member of the SLP National Executive Committee and one of three delegates from Ohio.

Along with 40 other delegates from 25 states, he was in Southfield to nominate a

candidate for U.S. president and vice-president, as well as nominate officers for the national SLP party.

I ASKED HIM who the party might nominate. Pirnion virtually boiled over with indignation and pipe smoke.

"In our party no man seeks the nomination," he declared. "The nomination seeks him."

He then launched into the basic position of the party which advocates peaceful overthrow of capitalism and replacing it with socialist industrial unionism. He also threw in some references to Karl Marx and called it off by explaining that the American bicentennial provided the perfect setting for a new revolution.

Pirnion joined the SLP 50 years ago. During that time, he has seen the party participate in every presidential election. In every election, of course, the Socialists have failed to put a candidate into the White House, but Pirnion is not discouraged.

"If enthusiasm had brought me into the party, that enthusiasm would have run out," he said.

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