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Workers' Party of SA  
Minute book of the  
Independent Labour Party

# MINUTE BOOK

Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.)

Central Branch

Membership

S. L. Abel  
136 Adderley Street  
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INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY (S.A.).

Central Branch

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CENTRAL BRANCH, INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY (S.A.)  
HELD AT THE ARGUS BOARD ROOM ON THURSDAY, 27th. July, AT 8:15 P.M.

The Meeting was called to order by the Organising Secretary of the Party at 8.30 p.m.

It was decided that Comrade Benischowitz be Temporary Chairman.

Before proceeding to the election of Officers and an Executive Committee, a letter from Comrade A.Z. Berman was read by the Organising Secretary. Comrade Berman regretted that he was unable to attend the Meeting as his presence was required at the City Hall.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

The following Officers were then appointed:-

Chairman - M. Benischowitz

Vice-Chair - M. Lopes

Treasurer - C. von Gelderen

Secretary - P. Kostoh

Executive  
Committee

M. Barnett

H. von Gelderen

H. Lunn

It was resolved that Central Branch hold monthly meetings. The first Wednesday in each month was chosen as the most convenient date for meetings.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Secretary read a letter from the Relief Committee for the Victims of German Fascism (Cape). The "prime consideration of this Committee is to alleviate the German fighting workers and their dependents". Comrade M. Lopes, after pointing out the importance of the work of this Committee, moved that Central Branch appoint three delegates to the Conference to be held on 7th. August at the Banquet Hall, City Hall, Cape Town. The motion was carried unanimously. Comrades D. Lunn, C. von Gelderen, and P. Kostoh, were delegated to attend the Conference. The Secretary was instructed to communicate this decision together with the names of the delegates to the Secretary of the Governing Body so that credentials could be issued.

NEW BUSINESS

Comrade F. Lopes moved that the Executive Committee draw up a syllabus of Lectures and arrange to invite all Party Members to the Lectures. The motion was carried.

A motion introduced by Comrade M. Lopes to the effect that the Executive Committee negotiate with the Secretary of the Governing Body for the purpose of obtaining a permanent hall for all Party Members was carried.

Comrade F. Lopes moved that the Executive Committee organize a Dance. The motion was accepted and a Dance Committee consisting of Comrades Barnett, Matthews, Jacobson, Wolpe, and D. Lunn was appointed to cooperate with the Executive Committee.

The meeting was then closed.

M. Lopes Vice-Chairman  
Pavel Kostoh Secretary



INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY (S.A.)

Central Branch

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, CENTRAL BRANCH, INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY (S.A.), HELD AT 122 LONGMARKET STREET, CAPE TOWN, ON 1st. AUGUST 1933 AT 8.15 P.M.

COMRADES PRESENT.

Comrades M. Barnett, M. Benischowitz, C. von Gelderen, H. von Gelderen, P. Koston, and H. Lunn, were present. Comrade M. Lopes was excusably absent on account of illness.

AGENDA.

Minutes, Correspondence, and General Business.

MINUTES.

The minutes of the first meeting of Central Branch held on Thursday, 27th. July, 1933 were read by the Secretary.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A letter dealing with the suspension of Mr. C. Pearce from membership in the Party and expressing good wishes to the Branch was received from the Organising Secretary.

GENERAL.

(a) Lectures for All Party Members.

A Committee consisting of Comrades Benischowitz and M. Lopes was appointed to cooperate with the Organising Secretary and the Secretary of the Governing Body for the purpose of drawing up a syllabus of lectures to be attended by all Party members.

(b) Lectures and Readings for Central Branch.

Comrades Benischowitz and Koston were detailed to arrange for lectures and readings to be delivered at Central Branch meetings.

(c) Permanent Hall for All Party Members.

In accordance with the instructions received from the Branch Meeting of July 27th. it was decided that the Secretary communicate to the Secretary of the Governing Body the following decision:-

Central Branch is prepared to cooperate with the other Branches of the Party for the purpose of obtaining a permanent hall for the use of all Party members. Central Branch is willing to donate 25% of its total income towards such a hall if the other Branches contribute a similar proportion of their incomes. We recommend that the Secretary of the Governing Body arrange for a meeting of the Executive Committees or representatives of all Branches to discuss and plan this matter.

(d) Dance

Comrades Barnett, Benischowitz and Koston were instructed to cooperate with the Dance Committee to prepare for a dance to be held on Saturday, 2nd. September at the Hotel Edward if possible. It was decided ~~that~~ to charge 3/- for single and 5/- for double tickets.

(e) Party Conference.

The Secretary was instructed to notify the Governing Body of the following recommendation,-

## INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY (S.A.)

Central Branch.

MINUTES OF 1st.AUGUST 1933 - Continued.

In view of the present state of the Party, the lack of a detailed Constitution, and of a programme based upon a careful analysis of the economic conditions of South Africa, Central Branch urgently recommends that the Governing Body of the Party arrange for a Party Conference to be held as soon as possible. We suggest that the week-end of September 30-October 2 would be a suitable time.

The meeting was then closed.

M. Lopes

Chairman

Paul Koton

Secretary

# INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY (S.A.).

## Central Branch

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, CENTRAL BRANCH, INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY (S.A.), HELD AT 141 LONGMARKET STREET, CAPE TOWN, ON 21st. AUGUST 1933 AT 8.15 P.M.

### PRESENT

Comrades M.Barnett, C.Von Gelderen, H.Von Gelderen, P.Koston, M.Lopes, and H.Lunn were present. In the absence of M.Benischowitz, the Chair was taken by the Vice-chairman, Comrade M.Lopes.

### AGENDA

Minutes, Correspondence & Reports, General Business.

### MINUTES

The Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of August 1st. were accepted as read.

### CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS

(1) A letter from M.Benischowitz informing the Secretary of his resignation from the Party was read. Dr.Benischowitz stated in his letter that he had given his reasons for his action to the Governing Body of the Party at its meeting of August 14th. Comrade Koston reported that the reason for the resignation of M.Benischowitz as given by M.Benischowitz at the meeting of the Governing Body was that the Party was withdrawing from the Relief Committee for the Victims of German Fascism (Cape) to which withdrawal Dr.Benischowitz was opposed. Comrade Koston pointed out that the Party had not decided to withdraw from the Relief Committee. The resignation of M.Benischowitz was accepted.

(2) Comrade M.Lopes was asked to report on the progress of the Relief Committee for the Victims of German Fascism (Cape) since its inception. Comrade M.Lopes reported that at the Conference held at the Banqueting Hall on August 7th. about twenty-five organisations were represented. Although a few Trade Union delegates were present, the total number of Trade Unions participating was disappointing. The Communist Party and its subsidiary organisations attempted to turn the Relief Committee into a political body by introducing resolutions wholly outside the terms of reference by which the Conference was called. As at the first meeting of the duly-elected Relief Committee the Communist Party and its subsidiary organisations pursued the same tactics, the Governing Body of the Party called a meeting of all I.L.P. delegates to the Conference to decide the course of the I.L.P. in its relations with the Relief Committee. The meeting of I.L.P. delegates drafted a resolution embodying the aims and purposes of the Relief Committee and instructed Comrades Goodlatte and Lopes to present this resolution at the next meeting of the Relief Committee. On Sunday, August 20th., a meeting of the Relief Committee was held at which M.Benischowitz, chairman of the Relief Committee, was rude to Comrades Goodlatte and M.Lopes. The relief Committee decided to discuss the I.L.P.'s resolution at another and larger meeting to be held on Friday, 25th. August. The resolution of the I.L.P. plainly stated that there were two aims of the Relief Committee and only two, first

INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY (S.A.)

Central Branch

MINUTES OF AUGUST 21st.-Continued

First--

to raise funds for the German Victims, and second, to carry on propaganda against German Fascism. The resolution also laid down that political bodies may not attack other political bodies from the platforms of the Relief Committee.

Comrade M.Lopes in concluding his report pointed out the fundamental differences existing between the I.L.P. and the C.P. The Communist Party continually indulged in revolutionary phrases that did not correspond to concrete realities; their interpretation of Fascism was unscientific and unMarxian as they completely failed to distinguish between Fascism and ordinary bourgeois democracy. Comrade M.Lopes explained that this view of Fascism was totally incorrect and showed that any class-conscious German worker living now would much rather live under the ordinary capitalist democracy where he had the chance to openly organise and struggle for his political and economic rights than under Fascism whose aim was to completely destroy and suppress all working-class organisations.

Comrade Lopes also pointed out that the resolutions of the Communist Party calling for partial strikes and mass demonstrations were adventuristic as it was ridiculous to expect the South African workers, at their present stage of development, to strike or demonstrate for political purposes. The political strike could be carried out only by an advanced, well-organised proletariat.

After discussion, Comrade Lopes moved that Central Branch endorse the actions of the Governing Body of the Party and the course it has pursued in its relations with the Relief Committee for the Victims of German Fascism (Cape). Seconded by C. von Gelderen and passed unanimously.

(3) The Secretary reported that the recommendation to the Governing Body to hold a Party Conference in the near future had been accepted by the Governing Body. The date of the Conference was fixed for the 1st. and 2nd. of October. Other details had not yet been arranged.

(4) The Secretary reported that the matter of a permanent hall for the use of all Party members would have to be left over until the Party Conference.

(5) The report of the Secretary to the effect that the first Dance of the Branch would be held on the 7th. October at the Hotel Edward was accepted.

GENERAL BUSINESS

(1) It was decided to hold a lecture or debate some time in September. Arrangements were left in the hands of the Vice-chairman and Secretary.

(2) Comrade Barnett moved that all prospective members of the Branch must be proposed and seconded by members in good standing and endorsed by the Executive Committee. The motion was seconded by D.Lunn and passed.

(3) Comrade H.von Gelderen proposed the names of Miss B.Kaplan

INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY (S.A.)

Central Branch

MINUTES OF AUGUST 21st.-Concluded

and Miss K.Silpert as members. They ~~were~~ seconded by C.von Gelderen and accepted as members.

(4) Comrade M.Barnett moved that the Executive Committee put before the Branch at the next Branch Meeting the question of the sale of literature and badges. This proposal was seconded by Comrade Koston and passed.

(5) The Secretary was instructed to send greetings to Comrade G.Lambley who is now in Natal.

The meeting was closed at 9.30 p.m.

-----Chairman

-----Secretary.

INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY (S.A.)

Central Branch

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CENTRAL BRANCH, INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY (S.A.) HELD AT THE ARGUS BOARD ROOM ON THURSDAY, 7th. SEPTEMBER, 1933.

AGENDA.

Minutes, Election of Chairman, Dance, Relief Committee, Party Conference, Literature and Badges, Financial Report.

The meeting was called to order by the Vice-Chairman at 8.30.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of 27th. July, were read and confirmed.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

A letter from M.I. Benischowitz informing the Secretary of his resignation from the Party was read. Mr. Benischowitz stated in his letter that he had given his reasons for his action to the Governing Body of the Party at its meeting of August 14th. Comrade D. Lunn moved that the Secretary be instructed to write to Mr. Benischowitz asking him to reconsider his decision. This was seconded by Comrade McBroom. Comrade M. Lopes stated that Mr. Benischowitz had had ample time in which to reconsider his decision between the meeting of the Governing Body of 14th. and the Delegates Meeting of August 19th. Comrade M. Lopes pointed out that Mr. Benischowitz had not replied to a personal letter sent to him by the Secretary of the Branch in which the Secretary asked Mr. Benischowitz to reconsider his decision and to attend the Delegates Meeting. Comrade Lopes said that as this was a matter of great importance to the Party he would prefer not to put Comrade Lunn's motion to a vote but would like rather to see unanimity of opinion on the matter. Comrades Barnett, D. Lunn, Phillips, and H. Lunn participated in discussion after which, with Comrade McBroom's permission, Comrade D. Lunn asked that his motion be withdrawn. Comrade M. Barnett then moved that the resignation of Mr. Benischowitz be accepted. This was seconded by Comrade McBroom and passed.

Comrade M. Lopes was elected Chairman of the Branch, Comrade M. Barnett was appointed Vice-Chairman and Comrade N. Salie was elected to the Executive Committee.

DANCE

Comrade D. Lunn reported that the Branch's first dance would be held on the 7th. October at the Hotel Edward. Tickets were now on sale and placards had been distributed. Although it was still early in the month and only a few reports had reached him, Comrade Lunn felt that the dance would be a success. The report was adopted.

RELIEF COMMITTEE

Comrade M. Lopes in reporting on the activities of the Relief Committee said that after a series of initial difficulties the Relief Committee was functioning as well as might be expected. The Public Meeting held at the Royal Theatre on Sunday, 3rd. September, had been disappointing because men who were in no way connected with the labour movement had been

## INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY (S.A.)

## Central Branch

MINUTES OF 7th. September, continued.

invited to speak. Comrade Lopes announced that the Relief Committee would in the near future hold a Concert at the City Hall and urged all members of the Branch to give the Concert as much publicity and support as possible. The report was adopted.

PARTY CONFERENCE

A letter was read from the Secretary of the Governing Body asking the Branch to appoint six delegates, three with votes and three with the right to speak but no vote, to the Party Conference to be held on 1st. and 2nd. October. The Branch was asked to prepare resolutions to be put before Conference.

After a good deal of irrelevant discussion, Comrade H. von Gelderen moved that the Branch meet in a fortnight to discuss resolutions to be presented at Conference. This was seconded by D. Lunn and adopted. Comrade Koston moved that the six delegates to Conference be constituted as a Resolutions Committee to draw up resolutions to be presented to the Branch at the next meeting. Seconded by Comrade Campbell and passed. The following were appointed as delegates to the Conference; - Comrades, C. von Gelderen, H. von Gelderen, P. Koston, J. Campbell, W. Duncan, and R. McBroom, the first three having the power to vote.

LITERATURE AND BADGES

It was decided that the Branch present a resolution covering I.L.P. badges at Party Conference. The drafting of the resolution was left to the Resolutions Committee. A Literature Committee consisting of Comrades Lopes and Koston was appointed and instructed to report to the next meeting of the Branch on literature suitable for use as Party propaganda.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The report of the Treasurer was adopted as read.

NEW BUSINESS

Comrade D. Lunn proposed the name of S. Duncan as a member of the Party. Seconded by H. von Gelderen.

Comrade Barnett moved that any printing that the Branch may require in the future should be given only to those firms that have the right to use the Typographical Union label. Seconded by P. Koston and passed.

The meeting was then closed.

*M. Lopes*  
-----Chrm.

*Paul Koston*  
-----Sec.

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**WORKER'S PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA, 1933-1935**

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