

LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU

(Conducted by the INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY and the FABIAN SOCIETY)

FOR GIVING INFORMATION ON THE WORK AND POWERS OF MUNICIPAL BODIES, BOARDS
OF GUARDIANS, SCHOOL BOARDS, AND OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT AND RULES.

THE BUREAU was founded in the summer of 1899, after the Socialist and Labor Elected Persons Conference at Leeds, in order that members of the various local governing bodies of the United Kingdom, who have been elected with the special object of advocating Socialist and Labor measures on these bodies, might have not merely an annual Conference, but also a more constant means of inter-communication. It was further believed that a ready means of communicating with such members of elected bodies would be useful to the Executives of the I. L. P. and the Fabian Society, in order that suggestions for political action might be quickly brought to the attention of a large number of the local bodies concerned. The Bureau undertook to give information to the subscribers, whenever possible, on other subjects of importance, such as Trade Unionism, Co-operation, Friendly Societies, and on Housing of the Working Classes, Workmen's Compensation, Factory and Truck Acts, and other laws specially affecting working men and women.

The following Rules were adopted :—

1. That members of any elective governing body, and other interested persons, can become members on payment of 2s. 6d. per annum.
2. That the members be entitled to receive all the official publications of the I. L. P., Fabian Society, and any other bodies hereafter affiliated.
3. That every member be entitled to obtain from the Secretaries, without fee, answers to questions on subjects connected with the work of the Bureau.
4. That the funds be divided equally between the I. L. P. and the Fabian Society in return for services rendered, and that the expenses be defrayed equally by the two bodies.
5. That the management be in the hands of a joint Committee of Delegates appointed by the two Executives, and that the Secretaries of the two bodies be Joint Secretaries.

The scheme has met with general approval, and 124 members have subscribed. It was arranged that the first subscription should cover the period to the end of the year 1900, and that the second subscription should be due in January, 1901.

The Bureau has issued three publications during the past year, viz.—

The INFORMATION CIRCULAR, giving a list of the best books treating of the various local governing bodies in England, and also those dealing with various subjects specially interesting to members, such as Socialism, Trade Unions, Old Age Pensions, Housing, etc. Large numbers of this circular were purchased by the Fabian Society and the I. L. P., so that the net cost to the Bureau was only £1 13s. 6d. The Information Circular contained a list of books which the Fabian Society offered to lend to members of the Bureau for reference on payment of postage, if incurred. This arrangement is still in operation, but only a few members of the Bureau have taken advantage of it.

TWO REPORTS ON PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, issued in March and July, giving short abstracts of the principal Bills before Parliament on those dates.

A third Report on the Acts actually passed by Parliament has been prepared, and will be issued together with the present Report.

The issue of further Reports dealing with Blue Books of special interest to our members is contemplated by the Committee, if the membership of the Bureau justifies further expenditure.

The chief work of the Bureau, the answering of questions relating to Local Government, etc., has been regularly carried on, we trust, with satisfaction to our members.

Enquiries have been set on foot on several occasions, on behalf of members or otherwise, by circulars sent out to the Guardians, School Board Members, etc., by which valuable information has been obtained on special points, such as the effects of evening council meetings, the treatment of vagrants, etc.

The second Socialist and Labor Elected Persons' Conference, held at Glasgow at Easter, decided that the arrangements for the third Conference of 1901 should be formally entrusted to the Committee of the Bureau, which indeed had done much of the preliminary work necessary for the Glasgow Conference of 1900. The Bureau has therefore undertaken this duty, and a circular on the subject will shortly be issued.

The accounts of the Bureau, which are annexed, show a small balance in the hands of the Fabian Society, which has at the request of the Bureau acted as treasurer.

The Committee has remained from the first unaltered, and now appeals to the members to renew their subscriptions for the year 1901.

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD,

FREDERICK WHELEN,

JOHN PENNY,

I. L. P., 53 Fleet Street, London, E.C.

EDWARD R. PEASE,

Fabian Society, 3 Clement's Inn, Strand, W.C.

January, 1901.

Joint Secretaries.

Account from Commencement of Bureau, June, 1899, to Dec. 31, 1900.

RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.
124 Subscriptions for 1900 at 2s. 6d. ...	15	10	0
2 " " 1901 " ...	0	5	0
Donation	0	10	0
1,500 Information Circulars sold to F.S..	2	5	0
300 " " " " I.L.P.	0	9	0

£18. 19 0

EXPENDITURE.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Printing :—						
Prospectus	3	10	0			
Information Circular ...	4	7	6			
Nos. 1 and 2 Reports on Bills	3	15	0			
					11	12
						6
Postage :						
Sending out Prospectus I.L.P.	0	9	5			
Paid F.S. on account ...	2	10	0			
„ I.L.P. „ ...	2	10	0			
					5	9
						5
Stationery (Books)				0	4	0
Balance in hands of Treasurer ...				1	13	1
					£18	19
						0

Account from Commencement of School June 1893 to Dec 31 1900

RECEIPTS

EXPENDITURES

For salaries of teachers and other employees
For fuel and light
For rent of school house
For purchase of books and stationery
For purchase of supplies
For purchase of land
For purchase of building
For purchase of furniture
For purchase of equipment
For purchase of other property
For other purposes

Total Receipts
Total Expenditures
Balance on hand