"Karl Marx – Friedrich Engels, *[On the Political Action of the Working Class and Other Matters]*." *Workers Unite!: The International 150 Years Later*. Ed. Marcello Musto. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014. 283–286. *Bloomsbury Collections*. Web. 26 Apr. 2023. <<http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781501302367.0093>>.

Downloaded from Bloomsbury Collections, www.bloomsburycollections.com, 26 April 2023, 09:59 UTC.

Copyright © Marcello Musto, 2014. You may share this work for non-commercial purposes only, provided you give attribution to the copyright holder and the publisher, and provide a link to the Creative Commons licence.

Karl Marx – Friedrich Engels,
*[On the Political Action of the
 Working Class and Other Matters]*¹⁰⁴

[...]

Formation of working women's branches

The Conference recommends the formation of female branches among the working class. It is, however, understood that this resolution does not at all interfere with the existence or formation of branches composed of both sexes.

General statistics of the working class

- a. The Conference invites the General Council to enforce art. 5 of the original Rules relating to a general statistics of the working class, and the resolutions of the Geneva Congress, 1866, on the same subject.
- b. Every local branch is bound to appoint a special committee of statistics, so as to be always ready, within the limits of its means, to answer any questions which may be addressed to it by the Federal Council or Committee of its country, or by the General Council. It is recommended to all branchesto remunerate the secretaries of the committee of statistics, considering the general benefit the working class will derive from their labour. [...]

¹⁰⁴ This text reproduces the main resolutions adopted at the London Conference of 1871. Written by Karl Marx (see note 1) and Friedrich Engels (see note 47), it was published in English in early November (London: International Printing Office, 1871) and in French and German a few days later. The full text may be found in GC, IV: 440–50.

International relations of Trades' Unions

The General Council is invited to assist, as has been done hitherto, the growing tendency of the Trades' Unions of the different countries to enter into relations with the Unions of the same trade in all other countries. The efficiency of its actions as the international agent of communication between the national Trades' societies will essentially depend upon the assistance given by these same societies to the General Labour Statistics pursued by the *International*.

The boards of Trade's Unions of all countries are invited to keep the General Council informed of the directions of their respective offices.

Agricultural producers

The conference invites the General Council and the Federal Councils or Committees to prepare, for the next Congress, reports on the means of securing the adhesion of the agricultural producers to the movement of the industrial proletariat.

Meanwhile, the Federal Council or Committee are invited to send agitators to the rural districts, there to organize public meetings, to propagate the principles of the International and to found rural branches.

Political action of the working class

Considering the following passage of the preamble to the Rules:

'The economical emancipation of the working classes is the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinate *as a means*';

That the Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association (1864) states:

'The lords of land and the lords of capital will always use their political privileges for the defence and perpetuation of their economical monopolies. So far from promoting, they will continue to lay every possible impediment

in the way of the emancipation of labour... To conquer political power has therefore become the great duty of the working classes;’

That the Congress of Lausanne (1867) has passed this resolution:

‘The social emancipation of the workmen is inseparable from their political emancipation’;

That the declaration of the General Council relative to the pretended plot of the French Internationalists on the eve of the plebiscite (1870) says:

‘Certainly by the tenor of our Statutes, all our branches in England, on the Continent, and in America have the special mission not only to serve as centres for the militant organization of the working class, but also to support, in their respective countries, every political movement tending towards the accomplishment of our ultimate end – the economical emancipation of the working class’;

That false translations of the original Statutes have given rise to various interpretations which were mischievous to the development and action of the International Working Men’s Association;

In presence of an unbridled reaction which violently crushes every effort at emancipation on the part of the working men, and pretends to maintain by brute force the distinction of classes and the political domination of the propertied classes resulting from it;

Considering, that against this collective power of the propertied classes the working class cannot act, as a class, except by constituting itself into a political party, distinct from, and opposed to, all old parties formed by the propertied classes;

That this constitution of the working class into a political party is indispensable in order to ensure the triumph of the social revolution and its ultimate end – the abolition of classes;

That the combination of forces which the working class has already effected by its economical struggles ought at the same time to serve as a lever for its struggles against the political power of landlords and capitalists –

The Conference recalls to the members of the *International*:

That in the militant state of the working class, its economical movement and its political action are indissolubly united.

General resolutions as to the countries where
the regular organization of the international is
interested with by the governments

In those countries where the regular organization of the international may for the moment have become impracticable in consequence of government interference, the Association, and its local groups, may be reformed under various other names, but all secret societies properly so called are and remain formally excluded.