

# Constitution of the African Blood Brotherhood

## Article I.—Name and Purpose.

Section 1. This organization shall be known as The African Blood Brotherhood.

Sec. 2. The purpose and aims of this organization shall be the mobilization of Negro thought and the organization of Negro manhood and womanhood toward meeting intelligently and fearlessly our problems, and conquering the enemies of the Negro race wherever they are found, whether among the white capitalist-imperialist robbers of Europe, the capitalist-cracker murderbund of the Southern States of the United States, the cunning Northern exploiters of Negro Labor (who work upon the prejudices of the workers of both races to keep the ranks of Labor divided and the Negro workers unorganized and thus available for scabbing purposes in the strife between Capitalism and Organized Labor), or the traitorous opportunists, petty bourgeoisie and would-be capitalists of the Negro race who in the past have sold the Negro worker body and soul to the enemy of the race: the white capitalist; and are even now organizing chambers of commerce, real estate agents' associations and other similar bodies the better to serve their white masters and earn the petty percentage allowed them for rent-gouging and price-gouging the workers of their race in the interests of white capitalism.

Sec. 3. Its motto shall be, "One for all, and all for one."

## Article II.—Membership and Dues.

Section 1. Every person of African descent shall be eligible to membership.

Sec. 2. Applicants for membership shall pay with their application one dollar (\$1.00) entry fee.

Sec. 3. Each member shall pay monthly dues of twenty-five (25) cents, including the month of his admission.

Sec. 4. Special emergency assessments may be levied by the Supreme Council. Assessments may also be levied by the Post Commander upon approval of the Supreme Council, following affirmative majority vote at a regular or special meeting of the post.

Sec. 5. Members who are two months in arrears in payment of dues or assessments shall be dropped from membership, unless within one month after notification by the secretary of their post (or by the Supreme Council in event no post has yet been formed in their territories) they place themselves in good standing.

Sec. 6. Post Commanders shall issue transfers upon request to other posts upon removal of members from their territories.

Sec. 7. Any paid-up member of the African Blood Brotherhood shall be admitted to the meetings of any post in whose territory he happens to be visiting.

## Article III.—Form and Units of Organization.

Section 1. The African Blood Brotherhood is essentially a propaganda organization. It is highly centralized in order to give the greatest effect to its purpose of developing an intensified and consistent propaganda (1) within the race for the mobilization and education of Negro thought for the achievement of Negro Labor solidarity throughout the world; (2) outside of the race for the removal and conquest of antagonism based upon misconception of the

Negro on the part of the white proletariat as the result of vicious capitalist anti-Negro propaganda aimed at dividing the ranks of Labor.

Sec. 2. Any seven persons of African descent, accepting the principles and tactics of the African Blood Brotherhood, can organize a post of the Brotherhood, notifying the Supreme Council of such organization and abiding by its appointments and instructions.

Sec. 3. In cities, towns and villages where a post is already in existence no other post can be organized, except in the several boroughs of large cities, with the sanction of the Supreme Council.

Sec. 4. Seven members shall be the quorum necessary for all meetings of the posts.

Sec. 5. The membership of a post shall not be limited in numbers.

Sec. 6. Posts shall be named for great men and women of the African races. The members of a post shall vote upon the name to be adopted, sending the name finally decided upon to the Supreme Council for record.

Sec. 7. Posts shall remit to the Supreme Council seventy-five (75) cents on each entry-fee payment, and five (5) cents on each monthly dues payment. Such remittance shall be made before the 15th of each month by the Post Commander (or in his illness or absence by the Secretary of Propaganda) who shall collect from the Treasurer the amounts due the Supreme Council. In the absence of both the Post Commander and the Secretary of Propaganda the Treasurer shall send direct to the Supreme Council. Remittances shall be accompanied by the Treasurer's report of collections, which shall be in duplicate, one for the Supreme Council, the other for the post. The Secretary of Economics shall also make out his reports in duplicate, one for the post and the other which he shall forward before the 15th of each month direct to the Supreme Council.

Sec. 8. Posts shall have the right to retain all sums collected other than initiation fee payments, monthly dues payments and assessments ordered by the Supreme Council. Monies raised from functions staged by the posts shall remain with the posts.

Sec. 9. Posts may expend such sums as they have the right to retain for such activities and purposes as are expressed in the constitution and in the "Orders in Council" emanating from the Supreme Council, but may not undertake expenditures outside of such activities without the sanction of the Supreme Council. The sanction of the Supreme Council may be sought through petition of at least one-third of the total membership of the post desiring it.

Sec. 10. Each post shall draw up a semi-annual budget of the proposed expenditures for the coming six months for submittal to the Supreme Council.

Sec. 11. The officers of the post shall be as follows: Appointive (by the Supreme Council): Post Commander and Secretary of Propaganda. Elective (by the post membership), Secretary of Negro History, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Secretary of Economics, Secretary of Commerce, Secretary of Labor Unions and Co-operatives and Sergeant-at-Arms. Their rank shall be in the order given.

Sec. 12. There shall be a Committee of Propaganda for every post, appointed by the Post Commander who shall name as Chairman the Secretary of Propaganda. On this committee the Secretary of Negro History as well as the Post Commander shall enjoy the status of an ex-officio member. This committee may be dissolved only by order of the Supreme Council, in which event a new committee shall be appointed after thirty days and within sixty days of the order of dissolution.

#### Article IV.—Conventions.

Sec. 1.—Conventions shall be called once a year by the Supreme Council for the purpose of electing an executive head of the African Blood Brotherhood, receiving reports from the Supreme Council, devising tactics, etc., and functioning while in session as the supreme governing body of the Brotherhood.

Sec. 2. While the regular convention is in session the Supreme Council shall be considered dissolved, but shall be represented at the convention by the Executive Head.

Sec. 3. Conventions may not continue in session longer than ten days.

Sec. 4. Emergency conventions, with all the powers of regular conventions, shall be called by the Supreme Council, upon its own initiative, whenever conditions warrant, or upon the demand of posts representing at least fifty per cent. of the total membership of the organization. At such conventions the Supreme Council shall not be dissolved, but shall be merged into the convention, being represented by the Executive Head or any other person delegated by the Executive Head from the Supreme Council, and shall have its full vote of seven.

Sec. 5. Each post may elect one member to the conventions, and one member additional for each full hundred members over the first hundred.

Sec. 5. The first act of the regular conventions shall be the election of the Executive Head for ensuing term.

#### Article V.—The Supreme Council.

Section 1. The Supreme Council is the governing body of the African Blood Brotherhood when the conventions are not in session. It shall consist of the Executive Head, elected by the conventions, and six other members whom he shall appoint.

Sec. 2. Candidates for the office of Executive Head must have been members of the Brotherhood for two consecutive years.

Sec. 3. The identity of the appointed members of the Supreme Council shall not be revealed either by themselves or by the Executive Head who appoints them.

Sec. 4. A member of the Supreme Council proven guilty of: revealing his identity, commission of indiscretions, race treason or sexual intercourse with persons of the white races may be expelled from the Supreme Council by a unanimous vote of that body, the guilty member not voting. Trial shall be by the Supreme Council. The Executive Head shall have power to fill such vacancies created. Trial of the Executive Head for any of the offenses herein described shall be by the regular convention, or in case that is too far away by an emergency convention which the Supreme Council has the power to call.

Sec. 5. The Supreme Council shall appoint the Post Commanders, the Post Secretaries of Propaganda, and the international, national

and district organizers, who shall work under the direct control of the Supreme Council, and subject to removal at the discretion of that body.

Sec. 6. The Supreme Council shall make annual financial reports to the conventions, and may exact a pledge of secrecy from the conventions of certain expenditures of whose necessity the conventions are convinced, but whose nature it would be, in the opinion of the Supreme Council and a majority of the delegates to the conventions, unwise to reveal.

Sec. 7. A complete audit and accounting of Brotherhood funds shall be made once every year (unless otherwise ordered by the conventions). The Auditing Committee shall consist of three members elected by the conventions. The conventions shall also elect three alternates. No member of the Supreme Council and no paid official of the organization shall be a member of the Auditing Committee.

Sec. 8. The Supreme Council shall designate the offices for which financial compensation shall be given. The Supreme Council shall also fix (and may revise) the amount of such compensation.

Sec. 9. All moneys collected by the Supreme Council or its organizers from individual members prior to their organization into posts shall be retained in whole by the Supreme Council, and be used to defray expenses of the organizers, etc. The moneys so collected shall have no bearing on the sums to be paid over to the Supreme Council by the posts from the entry fee payments and monthly dues payments. The posts shall recognize such payments and may not collect a second time from these members nor in any way discriminate against them, but shall admit them to full membership rights and privileges upon presentation of their receipts for monies paid to the Supreme Council or its agents.

Sec. 10. The Supreme Council may suspend or expel any member of the African Blood Brotherhood at its discretion, upon a unanimous vote of the Council.

Sec. 11. The headquarters of the Supreme Council shall be in New York.

#### Article VI.—Press and Propaganda.

Section 1. The Crusader Magazine (New York) shall be considered the official organ of the A. B. B. and shall be supported by all posts and members.

Sec. 2. All propaganda shall be under the direct control of the Supreme Council, except such propaganda as is issued by the posts purely for membership increases, advertisements of meetings staged for membership drives, and as authorized in section 3, this article.

Sec. 3. Over their own signature, posts may issue pamphlets, leaflets and news releases dealing with matters in their territory.

Sec. 4. Literature issued by the posts shall be under the supervision of the post secretaries of propaganda.

Sec. 5. No post may publish newspapers, magazines or books without the permission of the Supreme Council.

#### Article VII.—Discipline.

Section 1. Post Commanders shall maintain a moderate discipline at meetings.

Sec. 2. The following offenses shall be deemed violative of the fundamental principles of the constitution and the program of the African Blood Brotherhood: (1) Refusal to

accept and carry out the decisions of the Supreme Council; (2) wilfully to block and disrupt the work of the organization; (3) in any way to betray organization trust.

Sec. 3. Formal charges must be laid before the Supreme Council in all cases and no action taken pending its decision and instructions.

Sec. 4. The constitution can be revised only by the conventions.

#### Article VIII.—Meetings.

Section 1. Meetings should be held weekly and not less than fort-nightly, and at such dates as are suitable to the post.

Sec. 2. Minutes and resolutions adopted at the meetings shall be forwarded to the Supreme Council monthly by the Corresponding Secretary. Whenever a motion is made upon a matter of great importance the Secretary shall dispatch same immediately to the Council.

Sec. 3. No officer shall be absent from more than two consecutive meetings without acceptable explanation to the Post. Disregard of this section will terminate office automatically.

Sec. 4. The Post Commander, or in his absence the next ranking officer, shall call the meeting to order, using the usual formula. Then shall follow in order reading and adoption of the minutes of previous meeting, special communications from the Supreme Council, including Order of Day, Unfinished Business, New Business, Dues, Enrolling of New Members, Readings, Adjournment.

Sec. 5. Debates shall be limited and all business before the post expedited as much as possible. The Post Commander may use his discretion in limiting debates or, upon protest, may put it to the vote.

Sec. 6. There shall be an allowance of time at all regular meetings for readings from such books or pamphlets as are recommended by the Supreme Council in its "Orders of the Day," and for general discussion of the work from which the readings are made.

Sec. 7. All votes carried by acclamation must be so stated in the minutes.

Sec. 8. Motion for adjournment shall be taken as near as possible to the regular hour designated by each post for the closing of its meetings. Such motion may not be denied by the presiding officer, but must be put to the vote.

#### Article IX.—Interpretation of Duties of Elective Offices.

Section 1. The Corresponding Secretary shall perform the duties usually pertaining to the office of Corresponding Secretary, as well as those usually pertaining to the office of Recording Secretary.

Sec. 2. The duties of the Secretary of Commerce shall be the collection of commercial data in the territory of the Post for quarterly submission to the Supreme Council, through the Executive Head of the organization.

Sec. 3. The duties of Secretary of Negro History shall be a study of and dissemination of all historical facts and traditions relative to the Negro.

Sec. 4. The Secretary of Economics shall make a special study of the subject of economics and be prepared to give information on the subject when called upon by the Post. He shall also perform the duties of "financial secretary," which are the collection of dues and fees, etc, the keeping of books, etc. He shall turn over all collections to the Treasurer and obtain a receipt for the same.

Sec. 5. The duties of the Treasurer shall be to receive all moneys collected by the Secretary of Economics, and to keep a correct account of the same. He shall issue checks and pay out moneys for disbursements authorized by the Post in regular or special meetings.

Sec. 6. The duties of the Secretary of Labor Unions and Co-operatives shall be to organize Negro labor and to devise plans and be prepared to take steps upon instruction from the Post to lower living costs for members and others in the territory of the Post through co-operatives.