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# **Finn Federation Report Pledges Aid for Party: Reorganized Socialist Division now has 3,300 Members with 66 Locals in 14 States: Publish Two Papers: Convention Decides Central Office Will Be Moved from Chicago to Fitchburg, Mass.**

Unsigned report in the *New York Call*, v. 14, no. 274 (Oct. 1, 1921), pg. 7.

(Special to *The Call*.)

FITCHBURG, Mass., Sept. 30 [1921].—The office of the Finnish Federation of the Socialist Party [Yhdysvaltain Sosialistipuolueen Suomalainen Järjestö] has just made public a complete report on its recent convention in this city [Aug. 13-15, 1921]. The federation, composed of elements that seceded from the Finnish Socialist Federation when that organization was taken out of the Socialist Party by its officials, reaffirmed its allegiance to the Socialist Party and pledged itself to continue work along the lines of the platform and program of the Socialist Party.

Twelve delegates, elected by referendum of the membership, each representing approximately 300 members, were present at the convention.

The Reorganization Committee, elected last January in accordance with the suggestion of the National Office, from the locals of Fitchburg, Maynard, and Quincy, Mass., and Newport, NH, presented its report to the delegates. After reviewing the dissension inside the old federation and the split last winter, the committee gave a detailed account of its own work in reorganizing the Federation since the Communist disrupters left the party. The old Finnish Federation had 7,000 members that belonged to the Socialist Party at the time of the Waukegan convention [Dec. 25, 1920-Jan. 2, 1921], where the majority of the delegates de-

cided to withdraw. Approximately half of these members complied with the decision of the convention and the other half remained in the party.

The reorganized Finnish Federation had at the time of the convention 66 locals in 14 states, i.e., 20 in Massachusetts, 4 in Vermont, 7 in New Hampshire, 5 in Maine, 4 in Connecticut, 5 in New York, 1 in Rhode Island, 4 in New Jersey, 5 in Pennsylvania, 7 in Ohio, and 1 each in the states of Delaware, Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin. The membership of the Federation is now 3,300. The reorganized Federation is subdivided into 3 district organizations, one comprising the New England states, one New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and part of Connecticut and Pennsylvania, and the third the remaining portion of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and the middle western states. Much of the propaganda work of the Federation is done by the district organizations.

In connection with 9 locals there has been organized Young People's Socialist Societies, chartered by the National Office of the Socialist Party. These societies have 217 members. Seventeen locals have conducted Socialist Sunday Schools for 946 children.

Ten locals have brass bands, 9 locals have singing societies, 18 locals have dramatic societies, and 13 locals have athletic clubs.

Nineteen locals own their halls and meeting

places. The value of real estate owned by the locals of our Federation is \$448,022, and the value of movable property is \$67,378.

Thirty-one locals have libraries containing 4,987 volumes, valued at \$5,405.

The locals of the Finnish Federation own a publishing house, which is in Fitchburg and has branch offices and bookstores in New York City and Quincy, Mass. The publishing house publishes a daily paper, *Raivaaja*, and a semi-monthly scientific and literary journal, *Nykyaika*.

The Propaganda Committee kept 2 speakers continually on the road from the end of January [1921] to the end of May. Sometimes the committee had 4 speakers in its employ. In addition to this the district organizations have sent their speakers to the locals and to the unorganized cities.

The committee has also published and distributed 3 pamphlets, one dealing with the causes of dissension in the Federation, the second containing an appeal to the Finnish workers in behalf of the Socialist Party, and the third containing the fraternal delegate's report to the convention of the Socialist Party and the most important resolutions of the convention.

The most important question before the convention was to decide the form of the Federation. As every party member still remembers, it was proposed that the Detroit Convention [June 25-29, 1921] should radically change the status of the language federations of the party. The Finnish locals were wholeheartedly in favor of the proposition. But the Detroit Convention did not adopt the new plan. No changes were made in the relations between the federations and the party. The National Executive Committee at its meeting held after the convention, however, left the Finnish locals a free hand to continue the form of organization which had been temporarily in vogue since the split last January [1921], if they did not want to return to the old form of organization.

Although the locals had supported the pro-

posed changes in the language federations, and although the delegates saw decided advantages if the present temporary form would be continued, for the sake of uniformity in the party organization, they decided to return to the old form of organization. The only change which was made is that the central office of the Federation which formerly had been at the party headquarters in Chicago, will, for the time being, be in Fitchburg, Mass., and the National Executive Committee of the Federation, which formerly was elected from the locals around Chicago, will be henceforth elected from the locals of Gardner, Fitchburg, Worcester, and Maynard, Mass. This change, which is, of course, temporary, was made necessary by the fact that practically all the Finnish locals are in the Eastern states. It is impossible at present to elect an Executive Committee which is representative from the locals near Chicago. The National Executive Secretary of the Federation can give better service to the organization if his headquarters are in the East. If the Federation in the future succeeds in reorganizing the Middle West and the West, then, of course, it will be necessary to remove the headquarters to Chicago.

The rules adopted by the convention provide that the Executive Committee of the Federation shall be elected in each December by general vote of the membership and hold office for the calendar year. The Executive Committee appoints the Secretary of the Federation. If the Secretary should engage in activities that are detrimental to the welfare of the Socialist Party, and the Executive Committee of the Federation refuses to remove him, the National Executive Committee has power to act. The National Executive Committee or its representative has also the right, whenever it deems necessary, to examine the books of the Federation in order to see that the affairs are properly conducted.

The Federation buys its dues stamps from the National Office of the Socialist Party and sells them to the locals at 40 cents. Locals must charge

their members 50 cents, as provided by the constitution of the Socialist Party.

The convention of the Federation will be held bi-annually.

The delegates were in accord with the position of the Socialist Party on internal and international matters. Not a single voice was raised to criticize the decisions of the [June] Detroit Convention.

The convention issued a proclamation appealing to the Finnish workers to join the Socialist Party, asking Finnish members to subscribe generously to the party's \$20,000 Sustaining Fund, and help the starving comrades in Russia. The Finnish locals were also urged to get into closer contact with their American comrades and give their energy and money for the upbuilding of the party.

The convention carefully instructed the incoming Executive Committee regarding propaganda work which is to be done in the future. The delegates realized that the chief cause for the dissension and the split in the Federation was the inadequate educational work done among the members and workers generally. The Federation in the past tried to obtain a large membership and it could not, with the means at its disposal, educate them to understand the theory of Marxian Socialism. The result was that those less informed in the theory of Socialism, following their emotions, stirred by the big revolutionary events of the world, abandoned Socialism and the Socialist Party. This error must be avoided in the future. Although we must continue to get as many new members into the party as we can, we must give special attention to the education of the members.

The convention therefore decided to keep

for the next 2 years one lecturer and one speaker continually on the road. In addition to this the district organizations will send speakers according to the financial means. In order to finance this educational work, the Executive Committee of the Federation was empowered to levy a special assessment of 60 cents per member per year for the next 2 years.

The convention of the reorganized Finnish Federation was very successful. During the 3 days it did much practical and constructive work. It was also a harmonious gathering, united in principle.

Our Federation is now smaller than it has been for many years. But the days of dissension and dissolution are past. The agitated and chaotic state of the European Socialist movement, which has reacted upon our movement here, is slowly subsiding. The progress of events demonstrated that the new revolutionary theories, built by the Russian Communists upon the moment's expediency, are false. The workers, and especially the Socialists, received an object lesson in Marxian theory that there is no shortcut to Socialism. And this lesson will be of immense value for the Socialist movement in the future. It will save it from destructive emotionalism.

And the political development the world over, and especially in Russia, is already clearly showing the correctness of the position of the American Socialist Party. That will be the greatest asset in the near future. The organization which did not shrink from the position it deemed correct, although the whole Socialist movement of the world was in turmoil, is bound to receive the support of the workers, and it will receive it if we do our duty in educating the working class.

***Edited by Tim Davenport.***

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