

Membership Series by Language Federation for the Socialist Party of America.

Dues Stamps Sold by Month — January 1917 to March 1919.

Adapted from original in Socialist Party Papers, Duke University, unspecified film reel. Copy in Theodore Draper Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford U.

Date	Bohemian Czech	Finnish Finn	Estonian Est	German Ger	Hungarian Hun	Italian Ital	Jewish Jew	Lettish Lat	Lithuanian Lith	Polish Pol	Russian Rus	Scandinavian Scan	Slovak Slvk	So. Slavic SSI	Ukrainian Ukr	SUM
January 1917	2,103	12,782	†	5,879	1,114	1,026	3,484	1,221	1,922	†	†	2,066	598	†	†	—
February 1917	1,470	9,971	†	5,874	682	642	3,624	772	2,461	†	†	1,249	818	†	†	—
March 1917	1,720	12,118	†	5,346	1,296	1,021	3,590	1,003	3,021	†	†	1,530	763	†	†	—
1917 Q-I ave.	1,764	11,624	133	5,700	1,031	896	3,566	999	2,468	333	517	1,615	726	2,833	1,413	35,618 ‡
April 1917	1,303	9,851	†	4,591	1,045	715	3,391	450	2,522	†	†	1,553	735	†	†	—
May 1917	1,054	8,178	†	4,624	1,071	923	2,872	1,069	3,088	†	†	2,074	648	†	†	—
June 1917	1,798	7,575	†	5,902	1,001	613	3,604	527	3,439	†	†	2,172	561	†	†	—
1917 Q-II ave.	1,385	8,535	133	5,039	1,039	750	3,289	682	3,016	333	517	1,933	648	2,833	1,413	31,545 ‡
July 1917	1,276	9,901	†	6,282	1,342	747	3,800	1,267	4,572	†	†	1,276	505	†	†	—
August 1917	661	9,874	†	4,580	940	865	3,487	932	3,945	†	†	2,259	622	†	†	—
September 1917	1,344	10,074	†	4,817	1,099	732	3,910	763	3,113	†	†	2,227	719	†	†	—
1917 Q-III ave.	1,094	9,950	133	5,226	1,127	781	3,732	987	3,877	333	517	1,921	615	2,833	1,413	34,539 ‡
October 1917	1,143	11,200	0	6,460	1,141	874	4,787	828	4,016	400	550	1,927	734	3,496	1,840	39,396
November 1917	1,556	7,061	400	6,400	1,139	976	4,939	1,189	2,882	600	500	2,361	633	3,006	1,200	34,842
December 1917	1,584	6,961	0	5,255	936	847	4,861	1,220	2,097	0	500	2,793	790	1,997	1,200	31,041
1917 Q-IV ave.	1,428	8,407	133	6,038	1,072	899	4,862	1,079	2,998	333	517	2,360	719	2,833	1,413	35,091 ‡
* 1917 TOTAL *	1,418	9,629	133	5,501	1,067	832	3,862	937	3,090	333	517	1,957	677	2,833	1,413	35,505

Date	Bohemian Czech	Finnish Finn	Estonian Est	German Ger	Hungarian Hun	Italian Ital	Jewish Jew	Lettish Lat	Lithuanian Lith	Polish Pol	Russian Rus	Scandinavian Scan	Slovak Slvk	So. Slavic SSI	Ukrainian Ukr	SUM
January 1918	1,150	12,429	400	7,059	1,501	591	4,041	1,283	3,607	400	600	2,645	709	4,013	2,400	42,828
February 1918	1,086	11,506	400	7,099	1,277	679	3,990	480	4,378	1,500	2,000	2,821	720	2,676	0	40,612
March 1918	1,473	11,157	400	7,210	1,080	754	3,922	1,269	5,863	1,000	600	2,852	830	3,699	2,400	44,509
1918 Q-I ave.	1,236	11,697	400	7,123	1,286	675	3,984	1,011	4,616	967	1,067	2,773	753	3,463	1,600	42,651
April 1918	864	13,098	†	5,208	1,513	572	4,152	973	3,812	†	†	2,506	640	†	†	—
May 1918	1,533	8,485	†	5,480	965	817	3,783	1,131	3,872	†	†	2,387	1,039	†	†	—
June 1918	962	6,912	†	5,298	1,185	596	4,143	887	3,901	†	†	1,513	1,098	†	†	—
1918 Q-II ave.	1,120	9,498	400	5,329	1,221	662	4,026	997	3,862	867	1,696	2,135	926	2,332	1,684	36,755 ‡
July 1918	793	10,846	†	8,274	1,031	578	3,171	941	3,701	†	†	1,857	341	†	†	—
August 1918	1,365	10,100	†	5,594	1,054	536	3,325	1,365	2,127	†	†	2,137	492	†	†	—
September 1918	577	12,496	†	3,970	1,186	474	3,763	1,061	3,844	†	†	1,916	631	†	†	—
1918 Q-III ave.	912	11,147	400	5,946	1,090	529	3,420	1,122	3,224	867	1,696	1,970	488	2,332	1,684	36,827 ‡
October 1918	673	5,113	400	5,150	1,090	502	3,164	1,207	2,619	800	2,000	1,511	347	0 §	1,700	26,276
November 1918	830	7,334	0	5,680	1,500	458	3,199	1,226	3,154	1,000	2,098	1,718	572	2,400	1,200	32,363
December 1918	1,360	11,482	800	8,008	2,018	963	4,826	1,351	4,760	1,400	2,878	1,923	699	1,200	2,400	46,068
1918 Q-IV ave.	954	7,976	400	6,279	1,536	641	3,730	1,261	3,511	1,067	2,325	1,717	539	1,200	1,767	34,902
* 1918 TOTAL *	1,056	10,080	400	6,169	1,283	627	3,790	1,098	3,803	867	1,696	2,149	677	2,332	1,684	37,711 ‡

†- No data for this federation in the copy held in the Draper Papers, due either to Secretary Adolph Germer's oversight in the preparation of the original or (more likely) to 2 lost pages from the Germer report. The South Slavic Federation was first affiliated to the SPA in 1911, Polish in 1913, and the Russian and Ukrainian in 1915.

‡- Sum total is an estimate which includes projected memberships of the 5 federations not included in the extant data set. Projected memberships of these federations for 1917 Q-1, Q-II, and Q-III were made by simple insertion of the known Q-IV statistics, a very imprecise method; those for 1918 Q-II and Q-III were generated by determining the average of the known 1918 Q-I and Q-IV figures, a methodology which would seem to provide a fairly accurate estimate.

§- The Slovenian-dominated South Slavic Federation withdrew from the SPA briefly in October 1918 over the Socialist Party's continued stance against the World War.

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January 1919	1,724	13,084	800	8,311	2,185	836	5,679	1,598	4,898	2,400	3,788	2,448	1,287	1,650	2,800	53,488
February 1919	1,260	10,988	0	7,418	2,415	773	5,731	1,641	6,043	1,000	5,575	3,593	1,067	3,000	3,700	54,204
March 1919	1,546	12,996	400	8,215	2,823	852	7,341	1,515	5,679	2,200	7,572	2,313	775	2,300	6,000	62,527
1919 Q-I ave.	1,510	12,356	400	7,981	2,474	820	6,250	1,585	5,540	1,867	5,645	2,785	1,043	2,317	4,167	56,740

Note: In round numbers, a monthly average of approximately 19,000 more dues stamps were sold by the federations in the first quarter of 1919 than these groups averaged in the previous year. This membership boom was by no means limited to the 7 federations suspended by the Socialist Party's National Executive Committee at its quarterly meeting held in May 1919 (Russian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Polish, South Slavic, Hungarian, and Ukrainian). The Finnish Federation (+2,275), Jewish Federation (+2,450), German Federation (+1,800), Scandinavian Federation (+600), and Czech Federation (+450) accounted for nearly 40% of the total increase in the membership of the language groups in the period.

It should be borne in mind that the World War only came to a close on November 11, 1918, and it was that late event which made the prospect of a return to homes in the old country plausible for many. There was likely a great deal of pent up demand for re-emigration to Europe, many of the countries of which were in the process of undergoing exciting radical transformations. A red Socialist Party card was seen as an important credential by many of those seeking to re-emigrate to revolutionary Europe, particularly those seeking to eventually return to Soviet Russia.

That said, the March 1919 figure for the Ukrainian Federations does appear suspect, as does (to a somewhat lesser extent) the rather explosive growth shown by the Russian and Lithuanian Federations throughout the entire 1st Quarter. The possibility that there was systematic "padding" of membership figures by pre-purchasing stamps in conjunction with the party election of spring 1919 by these 3 federations cannot be dismissed.

SPA National Executive Committee member and factional leader James Oneal cites the following Federation dues figures for April 1919 in his 1927 book, *American Communism*: Latvian — 1,606; Lithuanian — 6,049; Russian — 7824; South Slavic — 3,115; Ukrainian — 3,836. Eager to make his case in justifying the NEC's draconian action against the 7 suspended federations, Oneal does not provide comparable data for those "loyal" federations which likewise experienced dramatic growth in early 1919. [p. 53].

Dividing the estimated Federation membership totals above into the known official paid membership of the Socialist Party (1917 — 80,379; 1918 — 82,344; 1919-QI — 104,882) provides the information that 44.2% were members of foreign language federations in 1917, 45.8% in 1918, and 54.1% in the first quarter of 1919.

Compiled with footnotes by Tim Davenport.

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