
Report of the National Executive Committee to the National Convention of the Socialist Party, Detroit, MI — June 25, 1921.

by Otto Branstetter

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International Relations.

The actions of your committee in relation to International affairs is covered in a report prepared by the Executive Secretary and published in the May [1921] number of *The Socialist World*, which you have before you. Two matters not dealt with in that report are the case of Comrades Mr. & Mrs. Schwartz and the Socialist and Labor Mission to Soviet Russia.

The Schwartz case is covered in a statement in *The Socialist World* for January [1921]. As stated therein, Comrade [Ludwig] Martens of the Soviet Bureau agreed to secure a report on this case from Russia but up to the present no word has been received about it.

At the last National Convention [New York, May 8-14, 1920] the following motion was adopted:

That the convention of the Socialist Party instruct the National Executive Committee to provide for the sending of a mission of 3 members, who may be selected from among the International Delegates and International Secretary, to carry our fraternal greetings to Soviet Russia and to investigate and report on the conditions in the world's first working class republic.

This matter was taken up at the meeting in Detroit on July 10th [1920] and it was decided to invite the participation of a number of labor organizations in the formation of a joint Socialist and Labor Mission to Russia. Comrades [James] Oneal, [Algernon] Lee, [Joseph] Cohen, and [Alexander] Trachtenberg were selected as the Socialist Party members of such mission.

Letters were immediately sent out to labor organizations but the replies were necessarily delayed as in

most instances it was necessary for the officials to lay the matter before their Executive Boards, who, in some cases, did not meet for weeks after the receipt of the invitation.

When the committee met at Pittsburgh on August 21st [1920], it took the following action:

Motion by Maily— That the Socialist members of the Mission apply for passports immediately and that the cooperating organizations be notified.

Carried.

In accordance with the above instructions, the delegates applied for passports about August 25th and a communication was sent to the State Department urging that the passports be granted.

August 27, 1920

Honorable Bainbridge Colby,
Secretary of State,
Washington, DC.

Dear Sir:

The Socialist Party, in cooperation with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the International Ladies' Garment Workers, the National Cooperative Association, and other organizations, is organizing an American Socialist and Labor Mission to Russia for the purpose of studying industrial and political conditions in Russia and the neighboring states.

The Socialist Party representatives on this Mission are Algernon Lee, James Oneal, and Alexander Trachtenberg of New York, and Joseph E. Cohen of Philadelphia. These delegates have made application for passports and I sincerely hope that same will be granted.

The social experiment being made by the Russian people is of the utmost concern to the whole civilized world. Either its success or failure will have the most far-reaching influence upon the future, not only of Russia, but of all other countries. Nothing of such stupendous importance as the

Russian revolution and the succeeding organization of the Soviet government has occurred within the history of modern civilization. The working class of the United States, in common with that of all other countries, is vitally interested in this matter and is desirous of being fully informed regarding the actual conditions existing in Russia at the present time.

It is true that the daily press furnishes a vast amount of information and a large number of persons, many of whom have been in Russia, have given publicity to their views and impressions through books and magazine articles. However, such reports and publications have generally been biased and influenced by preconceived ideas, either favorable or unfavorable to the Soviets, and there has been so much censorship, so much mere rumor, so much deliberate misrepresentation, and so much propaganda in the reports from and about Russia that the public does not know what to believe and does not have reliable information upon which to base an intelligent opinion.

Under these circumstances, the Socialist Party and the cooperating labor organizations desire to send official representatives in whose fairness, impartiality, and honesty we have implicit confidence, for the purpose of gathering first-hand and reliable information and reporting same to our membership.

We cannot conceive of any just reason why our representatives should not be given passports for this purpose, but on the contrary, believe that in common fairness and justice the government should give us an opportunity of securing information through sources that we consider honest and reliable.

Trusting that your Department will take this view of the matter and that the passports asked for by our representatives will be granted, I am

Very truly yours,

Otto Branstetter,
Executive Secretary.

No reply had been received to this communication or to the applications of the delegates for passports when the committee met at Atlanta on October 2nd [1920]. In response to the large number of communications, it was decided at this meeting to add a woman comrade to the delegation. This was later done through correspondence, Comrade Meta Berger being selected.

On October 7th [1920] the delegates received their passports and the question as to time of departure, which had necessarily been held in abeyance until the passports were received, was immediately taken up. Comrade Joseph Cohen was in a position to start at any time on 10 days notice. Comrade Oneal was unable to go at all (as he had informed the committee some time previously), and the other members for vari-

ous reasons wished to postpone their departure until spring, Comrades Lee and Trachtenberg being unable to leave the work they were engaged upon until that time. The objection was also advanced that the late fall or early winter was the very poorest time to go to Russia as the inclement weather would add to the difficulties known to exist.

It was therefore decided that the Mission should sail late in February or early in March [1921] and the delegates were so instructed.

Later, the invitation to send delegates to the Vienna Conference on February 22nd [1921] was received and the committee considered the advisability of sending the Russian Mission as delegates to Vienna, and having them proceed from there to Russia. However, we faced the same difficulty of our delegates, with the exception of Cohen, being unwilling and unable to sail in time to attend the Vienna Conference.

In addition to this difficulty, the financial condition of the National Office was such as to make it impossible for us to finance the delegation. The unions in the clothing industry, in which we have a large number of members and from which we had expected substantial financial support for the Mission, were locked out or on strike, and the wave of unemployment in all lines was already affecting the income of the party and making it extremely difficult to raise large sums for any purpose.

In the meantime, also, had been received the report of the actions of the Second Congress of the Communist International and its adoption of the "21 Points," the reply of their Executive Committee to our application for affiliation, and the reports of the arrest and imprisonment of Mr. and Mrs. Schwartz, Albert Boni, and other investigators. With these facts in mind it was considered doubtful if our delegation would be admitted to Russia. That there was ground for such doubts has since been proven by the refusal to admit Senator France, William H. Johnston of the Machinists, and others who went on similar missions.

Under these circumstances, inability of our delegates to go before spring, the shortage of funds, and the uncertainty of the reception and treatment which would be accorded our delegation, motions were submitted to the committee on January 8th [1921] by Melms, reconsidering the decision to send the Mission to Russia and on January 10th by Oneal, recon-

sidering the decision to send delegates to Vienna. Both motions were adopted — [George] Roewer and [Bertha] Mailly voting “No” on the motion by Melms and Mailly voting “No” on the motion by Oneal.

Since the adoption of these motions on January 20th and 22nd, respectively, no further action has been taken by the committee regarding the Mission to Russia and the matter is referred back to this convention for such action as you deem advisable.

The Amnesty Campaign.

The principal activity of the committee (aside from the Presidential Campaign last year, the principal features and the results of which are well known to the delegates) has been in connection with the efforts to secure the release of our imprisoned comrades and of all political prisoners.

Following the demonstration at Washington last May [1920], at the close of the New York Convention the committee attempted to keep alive the public interest in the question of Amnesty and to carry on as continuously and aggressively as possible the agitation for their release.

In addition to continuous publicity in the National Office Press Service, as well as in *The New Day* and *The Socialist World*, the following communication was sent on June 18th [1920]:

Joseph P. Tumulty,
Washington, DC

Dear Sir:

On May 15th a Committee from the National Convention of the Socialist Party headed by Mr. George E. Roewer, Jr. presented you with a memorial to the President requesting general amnesty for all persons convicted under wartime legislation for alleged offenses of a purely political nature.

We were assured at that time that you would call this to the attention of the President, and have been expecting some action or reply thereto on his part.

Will you kindly inform us whether this memorial was presented to the President and what action, if any, has been taken regarding the request contained therein?

Yours very truly,

Otto Branstetter,
Executive Secretary.

A reply was received to this communication saying that the memorial had been presented to the President.

On July 10th [1920] the committee met at Detroit, adopted resolutions for the release of political prisoners, and elected another delegation to visit Washington and press for definite action on the part of the administration. The President pleaded ill health as a reason for not receiving this delegation and their visit was therefore postponed. At the same meeting a call was issued setting September 13th [1920] as a day of general protest in behalf of political prisoners.

Motion by Roewer — That the 13th of September, the second anniversary of the commencement of Comrade Debs' trial, be set aside for nationwide meetings of protest and demand for the release of all political prisoners; that the Executive Secretary be instructed to give proper publicity to this event and to urge every local in the United States to arrange a meeting for that day, and that the locals be requested to contribute the proceeds of such meetings to the National campaign fund.

Carried.

In response to this call, meetings were held by many locals in all parts of the country on September 13th, and on the 14th a committee consisting of Comrades Roewer, Oneal, Mailly, and Baskin interviewed Attorney General Palmer and again presented arguments for the immediate release of the politicals.

On January 6th [1921], a committee consisting of Comrades Algernon Lee, Frances Witherspoon, and Jacob Panken were given a hearing, as representatives of the Socialist Party, before the sub-committee of the Senate Judiciary Committee in a public hearing on Senator France's amnesty resolution.

At the committee meeting held in Chicago on December 4th, 5th, and 6th [1920], it was decided to circulate a National Petition to Congress. The immediate launching of this campaign was delayed on account of the expectancy in many quarters that some and perhaps many of the prisoners would be released either on Christmas or New Years' day.

When these days passed without the hoped for releases, arrangements were made for the new campaign. It was evident that nothing could be expected from the Wilson administration and plans were therefore made to bring such influence as our campaign

might develop to bear upon the incoming rather than the outgoing administration.

Petitions, resolutions, and leaflets, as well as other forms and supplies were printed and the committee made final plans for the campaign at its meeting in Boston on March 5th [1921]. It was decided that a headquarters should be opened at Washington immediately and that the culmination of the campaign should occur at Washington on April 13th and 14th with the presentation of the petition to Congress and the appearance of various sub-committees and delegations before influential members of the administration.

One feature of the campaign, the picketing of Congress and the White House, was abandoned at the request of many comrades, who feared that it might be detrimental to the success of the campaign.

Comrade Harriot Stanton Blatch was placed in charge of the work at Washington and opened headquarters there on March 14th, a month prior to our demonstration. A report of the work is printed in the April issue of *The Socialist World*, which you have before you.

Following the demonstration, the Washington Headquarters was kept open until June 1st [1921] with Winnie Branstetter in charge. During this period, Comrade Branstetter presented a large number of petition signatures and resolutions adopted by labor unions and other bodies, which had been delayed in reaching Washington, to Mr. Christensen, Secretary to the President. She also had interviews with several members of the Cabinet and Department of Justice officials and with a large number of Senators and Congressmen.

The headquarters there have been closed since June 1st but it is planned to reopen them on July 1st, with Comrade Lilith Martin in charge.

So far the only tangible result which can be attributed directly to the work of our committee is the release last June [1920] of Kate Richards O'Hare, but the publicity secured for our numerous demonstrations and delegations and the distribution of over 500,000 pieces of amnesty literature has done much to keep the question before the public and has educated a steadily increasing number of non-Socialist citizens in regard to political prisoners and the injustice of their conviction and continued imprisonment.

It goes without saying that the agitation for the release of all political prisoners must be continued and the question of the next step to be taken and the methods and means of continuing this work is referred to this convention and the incoming Executive Committee.

Prison Comfort Club.

In direct connection with the amnesty agitation is the work conducted by the Prison Comfort Club under the direction of this committee. The purpose of this club is to furnish imprisoned comrades with such comforts as are allowed under the prison regulations and to extend relief to their families when necessary and to as great an extent as possible. From July 1st to December 31st [1920], \$1,868.25 was raised for this purpose, of which \$1,810.24 was expended — leaving a balance on hand of \$58.01.

Since the first of the year, the receipts for this fund have been negligible and the expenditures correspondingly small. This relief work is practically at a standstill and we have rendered no material relief to either the prisoners or their families since January 1st [1921]. This is due partly to the fact that there was a widespread belief that the release of the political prisoners might be expected at any time and the interest in the relief work was correspondingly lessened.

The membership and our sympathizers in all parts of the country must be made to realize that while the amnesty agitation must be kept up, that the relief work must not be neglected. The incoming Executive Committee should take prompt steps to renew relief work of the Prison Comfort Club and to see that it is not allowed to lapse again as it has during the past 6 months so long as a single comrade is behind prison walls.

The Presidential Campaign.

The 1920 campaign was one of the most remarkable in the history of the Party. Handicapped by the weakness and disorganization engendered by 3 years of persecution and of internal dissension, the Party entered the campaign bankrupt, and without credit, and actually without sufficient money at times for the postage required to circularize our members and sup-

porters with a request for funds.

The appeals were gotten out, however, and met with a surprising response as the campaign progressed. As shown on the attached auditor's report, a campaign fund amounting to \$55,804.60 was raised. Of this amount, \$50,024.50 was expended in the campaign and the remaining \$5,780.10 was applied to deficits in other departments.

During the progress of the campaign, 30,000 books and pamphlets were sold and 3,750,000 leaflets distributed. Twenty-four speakers were toured by the National Office covering all the more important sections of the country and speaking in hundreds of towns and villages in which no public Socialist meetings had been held since 1917.

The most interesting and spectacular of these tours were those made by Comrade Seymour Stedman, our candidate for Vice President, and Kate Richards O'Hare.

Comrade Stedman, accompanied by Eugene Wood, made a tour extending from coast to coast and spoke to tremendous audiences in all the larger cities.

Despite the heavy expense of long jumps between the dates, especially on the western tour, the meetings were so largely attended and the speeches so well received that the collections taken at the meetings exceeded the expenses by over \$3,000.

Comrade O'Hare was released from prison early in June [1920] and within less than 2 weeks thereafter started on a campaign, under the direction of the National Office, that lasted until election day. What is said of Comrade Stedman's tour is equally true of Comrade O'Hare's. Record breaking audiences and record breaking collections were daily occurrences and in addition to the campaign value of her meetings, \$2,000 was netted for the campaign fund.

All the other speakers, in proportion to their ability and popularity, met the same uniform success and our meetings were the biggest feature of the campaign.

An interesting situation developed at the National Convention of the Farmer-Labor Party when Comrade Eugene V. Debs' name was placed before them as a nominee for their Presidential candidate. Acting under instructions from the committee given in anticipation of such an event, Executive Secretary Branstetter announced that it would be impossible for

Comrade Debs to accept the nomination and asked that his name be withdrawn. This action perhaps prevented a very embarrassing situation and received hearty approval and commendation from Comrade Debs.

The result of the campaign in the number of votes counted by the old parties in control of the election machinery — 914,947 — while far below what had been hoped for, demonstrated conclusively that the Socialist Party was still a factor and potentially a tremendous factor in the political life of our national and that it was the only political party, right, left, or center, claiming to represent the working class that had the actual support of any important number of them.

There is but one "Labor" party in America — that party is the Socialist Party.

The Socialist World.

The last national convention [New York: May 8-14, 1920] adopted an amendment to the party constitution providing that *The Socialist World* be sent to all party members and that a portion of the dues be applied to that purpose.

Publication of *The Socialist World* was commenced with the month of July 1920. The regulations of the Post Office Department governing the second class entry of official publications sent to members whose subscriptions are paid as a part of their dues is quite strict and difficult to comply with in an organization as loosely formed as our own.

However, we have been able to comply with all requirements and despite the necessary red tape have made satisfactory progress in getting the names of our members on the mailing list. At the present time the number receiving *The Socialist World* regularly is 11,000 and new names are being added monthly.

Within a few more months we should be able to get the names of all members properly on the mailing list and thereafter have a means of direct communications between the National Office and the entire membership. When the organization gets back to normal conditions under which our energies are devoted to propaganda and organization work, *The Socialist World* should be of inestimable value to the organization in keeping the membership informed on party

matters, and in creating a closer contact and a better understanding and a greater degree of cooperation between the National Office and the membership as a whole.

The present cost to the party is approximately \$350 a month.

The committee feels that the prospective value of *The Socialist World* cannot be overestimated and that no matter what curtailment of expenses may be necessary by the general industrial depression and the condition of the party, that *The Socialist World* should be continued under all circumstances.

The New Day.

As shown on an attached financial statement the deficit on *The New Day* was \$3,329.43 for the last 6 months of last year. The greater part of this deficit was created in November and December after the close of the Presidential campaign. During the summer months and the early fall, when active locals were placing large numbers of subscribers on the mailing list for propaganda purposes, the monthly deficit was not large and offered no serious obstacle to the continuance of the publication.

Immediately after the close of the campaign, however, the receipts fell off so rapidly that a deficit was created of approximately \$800 in November and \$1200 in December. Considering the financial condition of the National Office it was absolutely impossible for us to continue publication. It was not a question of the advisability of discontinuing publication or of continuing publication with a deficit and thus increasing the indebtedness of the National Office. Even though we had deemed it advisable to do so, we could not have continued publication at a loss without receiving additional credit from our printers, which they were unwilling and unable to extend. We were faced with the alternatives of discontinuing publication or having our printers refuse to print additional issues without cash payments, which we were unable to make.

It was therefore decided to discontinue publication, but in order to protect the subscribers and also to save the second class entry which was at that time still difficult for Socialist publications to secure, an effort was made to have some of the existing publica-

tions take over *The New Day* and fill its unexpired subscriptions, which represented a liability of about \$1500.

The matter was taken up with a number of the few remaining Socialist papers but none of them were in a position to take over the publication of *The New Day* with its inevitable deficit for some time to come, except the *Milwaukee Leader*. The *Leader*, however, was under the ban of the Postal Department, denied access to the mails and any attempt on their part to take over the actual ownership and control of *The New Day* would undoubtedly have resulted in the loss of our second class entry.

The *Leader*, however, was willing to make a considerable sacrifice in order to assist the party organization and prevent the death of *The New Day* with no arrangements for filling the unexpired subscriptions or compensating the subscribers. Arrangements were finally made whereby the *Leader* agreed to print *The New Day* for the National Office and to rebate whatever portion of their bill was necessary in order to cover the monthly deficit, the ownership and control of the paper being retained by the National Office.

It was evident, however, that such an arrangement could not be continued indefinitely and it was accordingly agreed that in case the *Leader's* second class entry was restored and the stop order on its mail revoked, the National Office, if it was not able to resume the expense of the publication within a reasonable time, would transfer the ownership of *The New Day* to the *Leader*. This condition having arisen and the National Office being in no position to resume payment of the monthly deficits, the ownership of *The New Day* has been transferred to the *Milwaukee Leader*.

The *Leader* in the meantime has doubled the size of *The New Day* and agrees to continue its publication as a Socialist propaganda paper, to fill all unexpired subscriptions without charge to the National Office, and to assume all debts and liabilities incurred since we commenced printing the paper in their plant.

The committee wished to continue *The New Day* as a National Office publication and reluctantly agreed to giving it up only because the financial condition of the party made it absolutely impossible to continue it. By this means the paper is saved to the party and to its subscribers and supporters.

The committee feels the *Leader* has rendered a valuable service to the party in this matter and that

the party is to be congratulated that the continued publication of *The New Day* is secured.

Literature.

During the past year the committee has published the following books and pamphlets:

A Nation Divided by Scott Nearing — paper — 10¢ — 2 editions — 10,000 each.

The New Slavery by Scott Nearing — paper — 15¢ — 2 editions — 10,000 each.

Now It Must Be Done by Irwin St. John Tucker — paper — 15¢ — 2 editions — 10,000 & 20,000.

The Campaign Primer by Art Young — paper — 10¢ — 1 edition — 25,000.

The Salaried Man — paper — 10¢ — 1 edition — 10,000.

1920 Campaign Book — paper — 60¢ — 2 editions — 2,000 each.

A History of Imperialism by Irwin St. John Tucker — cloth — \$2.25 — 1 edition — 1,000.

The *Campaign Book* and *A Political Primer* were strictly campaign books but the remainder are publications of permanent value and are continued in stock.

The committee has approved for publication a number of pamphlets which have not been published owing to the financial condition of the party and the comparatively light sales of literature at present.

Leaflets to the number of 4,250,000 comprising 15 different titles were printed during the campaign last year.

Four hundred and fifty thousand leaflets of 5 different titles were printed in connection with the Amnesty campaign last winter and 500,000 copies of 10 leaflets dealing principally with the Open Shop and Unemployment have been printed this year for general propaganda.

The Literature Department showed a profit of \$3,210.71 for the 6 months period ending December 31st [1920] and the inventory showed stock of litera-

ture and supplies on hand at that time to the value of \$9,928.11.

Membership and Organization.

The membership in good standing at the present time is approximately 17,000, a decrease of 10,000 from the average membership for the year 1920 and of 4,000 for the average of the year ending May 31st, 1921. Attached hereto is a tabulated statement showing the membership by months for both the English speaking branches and the Language Federations. The following is a summary of the tables:

Average Membership by Year. †

	<i>English</i>	<i>Federation</i>	<i>Total</i>
Calendar 1920	14,329 (53.5%)	12,437 (46.5%)	26,766
Year Ending May 31st	13,047 (61.3%)	8,241 (38.7%)	21,288
First 5 Months 1921	13,282 (76.1%)	4,182 (23.9%)	17,464

The English speaking membership has remained stationary since the last convention, while the Federation membership shows a decrease of a little less than 4,000. This loss represents the number of members lost by the withdrawal for the Finnish Federation as the membership in the remaining Federations has remained practically the same.

During the past two years an attempt was made to strengthen the organization in the weaker states through the establishment of Organization Districts in charge of a District Secretary appointed and paid by this committee. Three such districts were formed — the Southern District, in April 1920, including North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana; the Northwestern District, in May 1920, including Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana; and the Central District, including Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota.

The plan has failed to accomplish the results hoped for but is not an indication that it would succeed under more favorable conditions. Owing to the

†- Typographical error in data silently repaired and percentage calculations inserted by Editor.

Monthly Membership by Language Groups. †
(Dues Stamps Actually Sold)

<i>Month</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Jewish</i>	<i>Italian</i>	<i>Bohemian</i>	<i>German</i>	<i>Yugoslav</i>	<i>Lithuanian</i>
06/1920	24,470	14,904 (60.9%)	1,091 (4.5%)	416 (1.7%)	677 (2.8%)	800 (3.3%)	----- (0.0%)	253 (1.0%)
07/1920	22,313	10,510 (47.1%)	1,087 (4.9%)	1,187 (5.3%)	981 (4.4%)	543 (2.4%)	500 (2.2%)	77 (0.3%)
08/1920	22,502	12,169 (54.1%)	971 (4.3%)	751 (3.3%)	424 (1.9%)	990 (4.4%)	----- (0.0%)	263 (1.2%)
09/1920	22,796	10,369 (45.5%)	1,799 (4.5%)	986 (4.3%)	588 (2.6%)	680 (3.0%)	400 (1.8%)	105 (0.5%)
10/1920	28,183	14,315 (50.8%)	1,319 (4.7%)	409 (1.5%)	1,062 (3.8%)	510 (1.8%)	460 (1.6%)	413 (1.5%)
11/1920	27,419	17,192 (62.7%)	1,236 (4.5%)	1,057 (3.9%)	941 (3.4%)	560 (2.0%)	400 (1.5%)	166 (0.6%)
12/1920	20,451	10,695 (52.3%)	1,428 (7.0%)	916 (4.5%)	584 (2.9%)	490 (2.4%)	400 (2.0%)	113 (0.6%)
01/1921	24,587	19,813 (80.6%)	1,197 (4.9%)	945 (3.8%)	1,104 (4.5%)	689 (2.8%)	645 (2.6%)	194 (0.8%)
02/1921	15,973	12,292 (77.0%)	818 (5.1%)	885 (5.5%)	618 (3.9%)	740 (4.6%)	519 (3.2%)	101 (0.6%)
03/1921	18,792	13,875 (73.8%)	1,109 (5.9%)	1,235 (6.6%)	1,201 (6.4%)	670 (3.6%)	513 (2.7%)	189 (1.0%)
04/1921	18,300	14,710 (80.4%)	434 (2.4%)	979 (5.3%)	674 (3.7%)	640 (3.5%)	696 (3.8%)	167 (0.9%)
05/1921	9,669	5,719 (59.1%)	1,053 (10.9%)	919 (9.5%)	744 (7.7%)	380 (3.9%)	633 (6.5%)	221 (2.3%)
Average	21,288	13,047 (61.3%)	1,128 (5.3%)	919 (4.3%)	744 (3.5%)	380 (1.8%)	633 (3.0%)	221 (1.0%)
1921 ‡	17,464	13,282 (76.1%)	922 (5.3%)	933 (5.3%)	868 (5.0%)	641 (3.7%)	431 (2.5%)	189 (1.1%)

†- These numbers are for the 12 month period between the 1920 and 1921 SPA Conventions. Two Federations are not included in these statistics due to their withdrawal from the SPA: the Slovak (withdrew Nov. 1920; June to Oct. 1920 Average Membership of 242) and Finnish (withdrew Dec. 31, 1920; June to Dec. 1920 Average Membership of 6,963). Data is presented here in a revised form, making use of figures submitted in the appendix to Branstetter's report. Typographical error corrected silently.

‡- First five months — that is, the period after the departure of the Finnish Federation. May 1921 figures above are complete.

financial condition the committee was unable to continue the appropriations necessary to maintain the districts and the Northwestern District Office was closed in March and the Southern District on May 31st. The Central District has been self-supporting from the start owing to the fact that it contains one fairly well organized state — Iowa — and is still continued.

The committee feels that these district organizations have failed not on account of any inherent defect in the plan for district organizations but on account of the general conditions which have affected the party as a whole. The organization districts, being those states and sections where the party was weakest, were less able to withstand and overcome the unfavorable conditions than the more strongly organized states.

The committee recommends that the plan of District Organization be not abandoned and that the succeeding Executive Committee reestablish such districts when the conditions are more favorable for their success and the condition of the party will permit the expense of maintaining them until they are self-supporting.

Early in the year your committee undertook an extensive membership campaign, the features of which were a contest in the securing of new members during March and April [1921] with prizes for the individual members and the local and state organizations securing the largest number.

The committee regrets the necessity of reporting that the proposed drive was abandoned owing to the apathy and indifference of the membership and the lack of interest in and support of the proposed campaign.

In addition to the speakers and organizers routed during the Presidential and Amnesty campaigns, we have kept a number of speakers and organizers continuously in the field. Ten locals have been organized in Montana since the first of the year and correspondence with other points in that state indicates that we will be able to organize as many more within the next few months and again form a state organization. Equally successful work can be done at the present time in quite a number of the unorganized states but it will entail a considerable expense which the committee is not in a position to meet at present.

The sentiment of the public is more favorable and the interference with our meetings by the police

and by lawless groups is rapidly decreasing. Speakers are now using the streets without trouble in most parts of the country and the crowds are unusually large, interested, and sympathetic. The vast number of unemployed and the general industrial depression, however, results in very small collections as well as a decrease in literature sales. Under these circumstances, while splendid work can be done by local organizations, it is almost impossible to route speakers into unorganized and poorly organized territory without a resulting deficit for wages and expenses.

In curtailing expenses to meet the decreasing income of the National Office, the committee has decreased the number of speakers and organizers in the field until but three remain — W.R. Snow, Lilith Martin, and Mary McVicker. The routes of all these speakers expire the last of this month and they are being released at that time by the National Office. Comrade August Claessens will be the only speaker under our direction after June 30th [1921]. He is on an automobile tour with a party which includes three experienced speakers and organizers, August Claessens, Hilda G. Claessens, and Norman Goldstein. The tour is to extend from New York to Colorado and return and they are averaging two meetings a night at points en route. All these comrades are serving without wages and charging the party only for necessary expenses. Up to the time they reached Chicago the receipts from their meetings were more than sufficient to defray the expenses. As with other speakers, Comrade Claessens reports very large and interested audiences but the collections and literature sales, while sufficient to cover expenses, are light and show the rapidly increasing impoverishment of the workers. Local organizations and comrades should render every possible assistance to make the Claessens' tour a success.

The importance of street meetings at the present time cannot be overestimated and local organizations are urged to resume such meetings as extensively as possible with local speakers. Every possible effort should be made by the incoming Executive Committee to resume this character of work by national organizers. In the present crisis the spirit that animated the pioneers of the movement should be aroused and a staff of organizers and field workers secured who are willing and able to do the work required without guarantee of regular wages. Twenty, fifteen, and even ten

years ago we mustered dozens of valiant comrades into service who took the field for the party and depended upon their collections and literature sales for compensation. When these were not sufficient to pay wages — they had no wages; when their receipts exceeded a reasonable wage, they turned the surplus in to the party.

It was a hard life for those comrades, but they built the party. The same spirit of loyalty, devotion, and sacrifice is needed in the present crisis and will get the same results.

The reaction from the hysteria of the war and the indifference and neglect of the powers that be — both political and industrial — to the widespread unemployment and suffering of the masses is arousing millions of workers to a sympathetic interest in our party and its principles. These unemployed workers want our message, they greet our speakers eagerly and sympathetically, and the opportunity of reaching them should not and must not be neglected. To a large extent the future of our party depends upon our ability to take advantage of this opportunity to reach and educate and organize the great army of workers who are turning to Socialism as the only hope of escape from the misery of the Capitalist system.

The YPSL.

The Young People's Socialist League was affected in the same manner as the party organization by both the internal controversies and the general industrial and political situation. Following the decision of the old YPSL organization to sever its relations with the party and maintain an independent organization, a number of circles in New York, Milwaukee, St. Louis, and other points withdrew from the Independent Yipsels and were reorganized as the YPSL affiliated with the party. For the past year we have been unable to bear the expense of maintaining a Young People's Department in the National Office and the existing circles have been largely left to themselves to work out the rebuilding of the organization.

In spite of the enforced neglect of this work by the national party organization, the indomitable perseverance, courage, and enthusiasm of the young comrades has resulted not only in the maintenance of the

existing organizations, but in the organization of a number of new circles in different states and the formation of new state organizations in New York and Massachusetts.

Feeling that this work is too important to be neglected entirely, and in view of the fact that we are unable to maintain a department at the National Office, the committee has appointed Comrade Albert Weisbord of New York as Director with the understanding that he will maintain his office in New York and serve without salary. The encouragement given the circles by Comrade Weisbord's appointment should give a renewed impetus to the work and result in a strengthening and extension of the YPSL organizations.

Language Federations.

There are at the present time six Federations affiliated with the party — Jewish [Yiddish], Italian, Bohemian [Czech], German, Yugoslav [Slovenian], and Lithuanian.

Accompanying this report is a tabulation showing the membership and the amount paid in dues by each Federation monthly for the past year.†

This tabulation shows the average membership and purchase of dues stamps for the past five months [Jan.-May 1921] as follows:

	<i>Membership</i>	<i>Paid in Dues</i>
Jewish	922	\$ 77.10
Italian	993	98.26
Bohemian	868	67.78
German	624	59.58
Yugoslav	601	54.64
Lithuanian	174	17.40

The constitution provides that a minimum salary of \$28 a week and office space in the National Headquarters be allowed the Translator-Secretaries of Federations having 1,000 members or more. None of the Federations have this number at present and the committee, rather than cut off this assistance, has continued the payments to the Federations maintaining an average membership of 800 or more. Under this arrangement, a weekly salary of \$30 is paid to the Jew-

†- For monthly membership of each Federation, see page 8 of this document. Dues revenue statistics are not included here.

ish Translator and of \$28 to the Bohemian and Italian Translators. No regular salary is paid the other Translators but a monthly appropriation is made to the Yugoslav and German Federations equal to the amount of dues stamps purchased.

Offices, including light and telephone service, are furnished to the Bohemian, Italian,, German, and Yugoslav Federations without charge.

It is impossible for the committee to continue these payments under present conditions as the wages of each Translator amounts to more than is received in dues and in addition, we must bear the expense of the offices furnished, which, at fair estimate, costs the party \$30 each per month.

The situation is that instead of helping to support the National Office, the Federations are a liability and cost us from \$30 to \$100 each per month.

In justice to the Translators it must be said that we are from 2 to 6 weeks behind in the payment of their wages and that they are, without exception, patient and considerate and have upon numerous occasions made loans to the National Office in emergencies.

Many of the Federation members and branches are liberal contributors to all appeals for special funds and are prompt in the payment of convention assessments. But this is equally true of many English speaking branches who also pay national dues which are not paid directly back to them as wages for their respective State Secretaries.

The committee recommends that in case the Language Federations are retained on the present basis the constitution be so amended as not to require the payment, in wages or office space, of an amount greater than their national dues.

By the act of their national convention the Finnish Federation withdrew from the party on December 31st [1920]. A large number seceded from the Federation and are affiliated directly with the party. They maintain an Organization and Propaganda Committee for the purpose of conducting propaganda among the Finnish speaking workers and by a special arrangement, are receiving 10 cents for each dues stamp sold to their branches by the State Organizations.

Reports will be submitted by the fraternal delegates from the respective Federations and the question of their form of organization and relation to the

party is before you in a proposition on the agenda.

The Headquarters' Property.

The property at 220 S. Ashland Blvd., the National Headquarters of the Party, was purchased in 1919 for \$25,000 and is now valued at from \$35,000 to \$40,000. It is encumbered with a mortgage for \$15,000 due March 3, 1923, with interest at 6 per cent payable semi-annually.

The taxes have been increased and this year amounted to \$1,175.00 and are yet unpaid.

It is impossible for the party, not being incorporated, to hold property in its name.

The title is held in trust for the party by trustees, Robert H. Howe, Adolph Germer, and Alfred Wagenknecht.

Over a year ago your committee instructed the trustees to sign a deed transferring title to the property to The Socialist Society of the United States, a corporation organized under the laws of Arkansas, for the purpose of holding property and accepting gifts and bequests for the benefit of the Socialist Party.

The papers were drawn by our attorneys and signed by two of the trustees — Robert H. Howe and Adolph Germer. The third trustee, Alfred Wagenknecht, has failed to sign them and the committee has instructed our attorneys to bring suit for the removal of Wagenknecht and the appointment of a new trustee to be designated by the committee.

With the reduced size of the National Office force and the number of Federation offices, considerable space is available, a part of which has been rented to the State and Local organizations at a monthly rental of \$195.

Financial Report.

Attached hereto are statements and tabulations taken from the report of Ernest Reckitt & Co. — Certified Public Accountants, covering the semi-annual audit of the National Office books for the period ending December 31, 1920.

This report shows assets of \$31,138.57 and liabilities of \$19,600.63, leaving a surplus of \$11,537.94.

Our assets, however, included our equity in the

headquarters property and nearly \$5,000 worth of furniture, fixtures, plates, etc., which are not available for the payment of our liabilities so long as we maintain our National Office. The same is true of our stock of literature and supplies, which is conservatively inventoried \$9,928.11. It is true that a certain amount of this stock is being sold continuously but it must be reinvested in new stock immediately. It is not practical to reduce the capital invested in literature and supplies below \$10,000 and, in fact, we should be able to increase it by \$5,000 invested in new books and pamphlets, which are badly needed.

Our liabilities are also greater than shown and should be increased by the overdraft in our cash account of \$2,111.13 — making the amount of our actual liabilities \$21,715.76. Against this we had assets consisting of accounts receivable amounting to \$8,369.92.

A statement prepared by the bookkeeper for the quarter ending March 31 [1921] and an estimated statement on June 22nd showed liabilities of \$19,115.69.

Since the first of the year the committee has attempted to stem this rising tide of indebtedness by curtailing expenses in every possible way. As reported, we have disposed of *The New Day*, abandoned the organization districts, and after this month will route no speakers or organizers under conditions which will create a deficit and add to our indebtedness.

The expenses at headquarters have also been curtailed by a reduction of the force and other economies. The present office force and other wages being paid [weekly] are as follows:

Otto Branstetter, Executive Secretary	\$ 55.00
Bertha H. White, Secretary and Assistant	40.00
Erna Lemke, Stenographer	30.00
Howard Hair, Bookkeeper	30.00
Mary Klopstein, Mimeograph & Stencil Clerk	24.00
F. Bohovec, Janitor and Watchman	28.00
<i>[sub-total]</i>	<i>\$207.00</i>
John Mill, Jewish Translator	\$ 30.00
Charles Kolarik, Bohemian Translator	28.00
G. Valenti, Italian Translator	28.00
<i>[sub-total]</i>	<i>\$ 86.00</i>
<i>Weekly Payroll</i>	<i>\$ 293.00</i>

The following is an estimate of the expense of maintaining the National Office with the present force and under present conditions:

Headquarters Expense — Monthly.

Wages	\$ 1,241.00
<i>The Socialist World</i>	350.00
Phone and Telegrams	75.00
Postage	75.00
Free Literature	25.00
NEC Meetings	100.00
Stencils, Stationery, and Supplies	30.00
Ice, Drinking Water, and Towel Service	18.00
Coal, Light, and Water	60.00
Interest, Taxes, Insurance, and Repairs	200.00
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$ 2174.00</i>

Estimated Regular Income — Monthly.

Dues from 15,000 Members	\$ 1,311.00
Rent	195.00
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$ 1,506.00</i>

Monthly Deficit \$ 668.00

This report speaks for itself. With the present office expense already reduced to a minimum, we will have a monthly deficit of nearly \$700 which must be met by profits on the sale of literature and voluntary contributions. These sources will no doubt provide sufficient funds to meet this deficit, but it will provide no income to be applied on the indebtedness of the office.

This indebtedness is of a pressing nature and means must be provided by this convention to insure sufficient income to the NEC to carry on the work of the party and to reduce the load of debt that handicaps all our efforts and lessens our efficiency in every undertaking. No more important matter can be considered by this convention than that of providing adequate financial support for the National Organization.

Fraternally submitted,

National Executive Committee.
Otto Branstetter, Secretary.

Disbursements for Speakers — July - Dec., 1920. †

O.F. Branstetter	\$ 73.19
William H. Henry	205.63
Mary McVicker	204.74
May Harris Mainland	285.18
Lilith Martin	100.00
Scott Nearing	475.45
Kate Richards O'Hare	2,859.99
Frank P. O'Hare	157.95
Seymour Stedman	544.70
Irwin St. John Tucker	1,250.74
A. Tuvim	246.00
Eugene Wood	368.10
Florence Wattles	137.50

†- This appendix extracted from the semi-annual statement of National Office Cash Receipts and Disbursements, prepared by Ernest Reckett & Co., Certified Public Accountants, Chicago. The statement was dated April 12, 1921.

Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport.

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