

OUR LANGUAGE FEDERATIONS AND INDUSTRIAL WORK

By JOSEPH ZSACK.

(Continued from recent issue.)

The average member of a language branch is in a very unreceptive frame of mind. He has been accustomed for so many years in the Socialist Party, to consider his branch, as a place to meet pals of his own country, to have songs and dances from home, a sort of social club. Once in a while, that is during elections the S. P. called on them for contributions and that was about the sum total of general party activity, they ever heard of.

As far as industrial activity goes, they were taught for decades that the American Unions, are no good at all, their officials crooked, capitalistic, and there was no use for a clean class conscious rebel to associate with such dirty business. A new set of ut was the only thing and those among the foreign language militants that were active at all in the industrial field were mostly ardent I. W. W.

Learning From Experience.

Out of that element the I. W. W. developed some fine militant language industrial federations, which goes only to prove again that efficient industrial work is possible amongst the various nationalities in the industries. Eliminating the mistaken dual union policies of the I. W. W. we learn a lot from their experience in this field; in fact most of the leading members formerly active in this work in the I. W. W. have recognized the superiority of the party industrial policy and are in our ranks, and as soon as we start this work in earnest they will be the most valuable element to do it with.

Coupled with the bewilderment created by years of miseducation, and confusion and not yet being sufficiently impressed with our new industrial policies, there lay the causes that in my opinion, are ever more responsible than any thing else for our Federations' inactivity in the industries; that is the average Federation member expects to go to his home country soon; he doesn't expect to stay here any length of time. As soon as he gets a chance he'll go, why should he really become interested in the problems of labor here, a thing essential if he is to be active in the struggle, he is here only for a while; that's his idea.

And the radical foreign worker disgusted with the labor movement, more sensitive to abuse and exploitation, is obsessed with this philosophy even more than the average worker. The average worker will be found in mass in the A. F. of L. unions; not so the radical. Now I believe that this is the most propitious time to disabuse him of this frame of mind. The European situation certainly is not such as to encourage going there from hardly any point of view. There are plenty rebels there, and capitalism is decaying and during its period of decay imposes its ill, upon the exploited more than ever. There is no relief in going there; no way of escaping exploitation here for something more comforting or slightly better any where else, and once the revolution occurs there, which may take years or may not, there will hardly be a way of going there even if desired, and furthermore there will not be too much to go round until the wreck of capitalism has been cleared away and the machine of production gets going on a new basis.

Must Fight Here.

Mechanics and professionals there are in plenty in the industrial countries of Europe. Radicals from this country will not be welcomed in any event, in fact they are expected to do the work right here, and not to run away from the fight. It is time for our foreign comrades to realize that if they want to better their lot, improve their conditions of living, they must do it right here, there is no running away from it, and they must become active, organizing the workers in the industries to accomplish this end. Once they realize that they must live here and battle here until the system is overthrown, with their theoretical training they will be our very best militants in the labor movement. No doubt they would become also interested in mastering the language of the country, for their activity and interest in the struggle would require it. What chance would the present fat, salary-driving backboneless swivel-chair outfit of Sammy Gompers have against such men? None whatsoever, they would be cleared out in no time.

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Our Language Federations and the Industrial Work

(Continued from page 3.)

The first job of the party then is to educate these members to take an active interest in the struggles of labor right here in this country and make them acquainted with the problems of labor. This could be done by articles in the language press, and by transferring that press into one that mainly deals with labor problems right here, instead of being U. S. editions of papers in Europe. W. Z. Foster's pamphlets translated in various languages would be a great deal to acquaint them with American labor problems.

Building a Machine.

Once the federations are actively engaged in activities in the ranks of organized labor, with their dozen dailies and weeklies and monthlies, their halls, their comparatively good organization amongst the various nationalities, the party will be a real party; that is a party of influence and power amongst the masses of workers, our industrial work will be on a solid foundation financially and in many other ways. We will be able to revitalize the labor movement with a machine like this in the industries. The process of amalgamation and of driving out the reactionary officials will be tremendously ac-

celerated. Above all it will be possible with a mighty machine of this sort to organize the workers in the unorganized industries. And what does a party amount to that cannot do these things? A party that has all this machinery and membership within its grasp and can't mold and mobilize it for the struggle!

Like many others I have drawn inspiration from the progress made by the party with its new policies and I have confidence that it can also tackle this real big internal job. Of course the whole party machine would have to be somewhat changed, once we really concentrate on work in the industries; the present machine would have to function so as to allow most of the time of our comrades being spent among the masses organized and unorganized in the industries instead of 80 per cent of it being spent

SEATTLE.—The 2,500 union carpenters of this city received a \$1 daily increase here beginning April 1 in common with other branches of the building trades. The new building scale is:

Carpenters, \$8 a day; asbestos workers, \$9; masons, \$9; building laborers, \$5; structural iron workers, \$9; cement finishers, \$8; floor layers, \$10; hoisting engineers, \$9; lathers, \$9; painters, \$8; plasterers, \$10; pile drivers, \$8; plumbers, \$9; sheet metal workers, \$8.

as at present in innumerable branch and committee meetings of a purely routine and nonproductive nature, but that could be done easily enough without in any way changing the present structure of the party.

P. S. In justice to some Federations, I would say that this applies in the main to the Russian, Ukr., Lithuanian, Finnish, etc. etc. The Jewish Fed. and some others to a smaller extent have made quite some progress along the lines above indicated.

Labor Defense Demonstration

For the Defense of the Michigan Defendants

SPEAKERS:

W. Z. FOSTER

The Man the Steel Trust Tried to "Get"

The Man the Packing Trust Tried to "Get"