

# Report of the Finnish Federation to the National Committee of the Socialist Party of America, May 1913.

by J.W. Sarlund

First published as a typeset leaflet by the Socialist Party, undated. Specimen in Tim Davenport collection.

To the National Committee:

Dear Comrades:—

The last report of the activities of the Finnish Federation of the Socialist Party — the Finnish Socialist Organization of the United States — was submitted to the Indianapolis convention last year, which report told about the work done prior to the date of that report. In this report we intend to show some of the most important work of our organization during the year 1912.

### Membership and Locals.

In the beginning of the year 1912 our organization had 217 locals in good standing with a total of 9,139 paid-up members. During the year 18 locals disbanded, and 49 new locals were organized. Our net gain in locals was 31, and in membership 2,396. At the end of the year our organization consisted of 248 locals in good standing, scattered in 29 different states all over the United States. The average paid-up membership in these locals, according to the amount of dues they paid to the organization during the 12 months, was 11,535. This number, however, is rather low, when averaged for 12 months, while the actual membership increased considerably during the latter part of the year. At the end of April 1913, the number of locals in our organization was 260 (including the first Finnish local in Alaska, which was organized in the month of February) and the total membership, as based upon the dues paid for the first four months of the year, was 13,847.

### Finances.

To display the financial transactions of the Finnish Translator's office, I hereby submit to your consideration some exact figures:

#### *Total Receipts for the Year 1912.*

Balance on hand January 1 .....	\$ 2,406.15
Party dues stamps .....	12,259.06
Finnish agitation dues .....	6,651.80
Supplies and literature .....	1,675.95
College assessments .....	5,362.14
Convention assessments .....	1,244.05
National Socialist campaign fund ...	1,169.46
Contributions for Finland .....	964.94
May Day badges .....	279.56
Initiation fees from the locals .....	205.30
Michigan, 12th Dist., assessments ...	51.50
Miscellaneous .....	46.34
<b>TOTAL —</b>	<b>\$ 32,736.26</b>

#### *Total Expenditures for the Year 1912.*

Party dues to National Office .....	\$ 5,936.95
Party dues to State Offices .....	6,322.11
Finnish dues to district committees	3,991.08
General expenses (including wages, office supplies, Executive Com. meetings, auditor's expenses, etc.	1,475.37
Supplies and literature .....	1,389.81

To the Workers' College .....	5,362.14
Convention expenses .....	4,139.86
To National Campaign Committee	1,169.46
To Finland's Social-Dem. Party .....	964.94
Appropriations .....	350.00
Michigan State Office, 12th District, assessments .....	51.50
Miscellaneous .....	840.42
<b>TOTAL —</b>	<b>\$ 31,993.64</b>

*Balance on hand December 31* ..... \$ 742.61

#### *Receipts for First Four Months, 1913.*

Balance on hand January 1 .....	\$ 742.61
Party dues stamps .....	5,245.55
Finnish agitation stamps .....	2,769.50
Supplies and literature .....	326.86
College assessments .....	368.35
Convention assessments .....	1,128.06
Contributions for Balkan states .....	605.19
Contributions for Finland .....	35.66
Michigan, 12th Dist., assessments ..	49.30
Initiation fees from locals .....	78.00
Miscellaneous .....	75.24
<b>TOTAL —</b>	<b>\$ 11,424.32</b>

#### *Expenditures for First Four Months, 1913.*

Party dues to National Office .....	\$ 2,560.70
Party dues to State Offices .....	2,684.85
Finnish dues to district committees	2,215.60
Supplies and literature .....	238.21
General expenses .....	648.25
To the Workers' College .....	368.35
To the International for Balkan states	526.51
Michigan State Office, 12th District, assessments .....	49.30
Miscellaneous .....	284.14
<b>TOTAL —</b>	<b>\$ 9,575.91</b>

*Balance on hand December 31* ..... \$ 1,848.41

The revenues with which to maintain and carry on the work of the organization come mainly from the Finnish agitation dues, which are five cents a month per member; from the initiation fees from the locals, which are \$5 from every local when they first join our national organization; and from the profits made on supplies and literature sold through the Translator's office. Until January last the Finnish agitation dues had been divided so that 40 percent of the total of each month was retained by the Translator's office, and 60 percent distributed between the three district committees. Beginning with January 1913, these percentages were changed to be 20 and 80, respectively. Most part of the supplies sold by us have been secured and paid for by the National Office, and about \$900 worth of supplies and literature was bought from the National Campaign Committee during the presidential campaign last year. The receipts as college assessments go to the Workers' College at Smithville, Minn., and the convention assessments, 15 cents per member per year, make up a special convention fund out of which the expenses of our national conventions are paid. The miscellaneous income and expenditures result from contributions to different strike funds, campaign funds of several state organizations, and other minor items.

#### **The Press.**

Our press in the United States now consists of three dailies, one weekly woman's paper, one literary monthly magazine, one agricultural monthly, and one humorous semi-monthly. The total number of subscribers for all of these papers combined has been estimated to be about 40,000. The youngest of these as a daily is *Toveri*, published at Astoria, Ore., which was changed from tri-weekly to daily on July 1 of last year. *Työmies*, our oldest paper, will have the tenth anniversary of its existence celebrated by the Finnish Socialists in July the next.

We are delighted to report that all of these papers are on sure foundation financially and otherwise. They were built up with our organization, and determined efforts have been needed to overcome the many hardships, the lack of finances, and the bitter attacks by the reactionary press (some of which are still lingering). All is not yet won, but the way is clear and the future seems hopeful. The organization and its indi-

vidual members are maintaining and supporting the press, and the press are the leading torches of the organization and the movement. This is and has been the secret of our success.

### National Convention.

The third National Convention of the National Finnish Socialist Organization was held on June 1-5, 7-10, 1912, at the Workers' College building at Smithville, Minn. The convention was composed of 58 delegates from different parts of the country. The most important topics of discussion and decisions of the convention were the following: The relation of the Workers' College to our national organization, which was made in many ways closer than it had been before; criticism of national officers and adoption of plans for their future work; criticism of the papers and subjecting them more than before under the control of the organization; proposition to do away with the three district agitation committees was defeated; a proposition to take the three stock companies by whom the Finnish Socialist papers in this country are published into direct ownership of the organization and forming a "Socialist trust" for publishing these newspapers, was adopted in the theory but its realization as a fact was left under development for the coming years and to be put into practice in the nearest possible future; some revisions were made in the constitution, and the next convention was decided to be held in the same year that the National Convention of the Socialist Party will be held.

### Activities of the Organization in General.

The agitation and organization work, routing and supervision of speakers and lecturers, and control of the work of the locals in their respective districts is in the hands of the three district committees, namely, the Eastern, the Central, and the Western district committees. Each of these committees is composed of seven members elected by the membership in their districts. Charge of the affairs of the organization in general is vested in a National Executive Committee of seven members elected by referendum vote of the general membership.

In each of the agitation districts there has been a

permanent organizer working all the time, and occasionally some temporary speakers and lecturers working two or three months at a time. A lecturer was temporarily employed only by the National Executive Committee during two months last summer.

Last year the following leaflets were translated and published by the Translator's office: *The Socialist Party and Woman Suffrage*, *To Wives of Toilers*, and the *Wimmin Ain't Got No Kick*, a lot of 25,000 of each; 40,000 copies of the National Platform adopted at the Indianapolis convention, and *The Children of the Poor* and a new edition of *Why Socialists Pay Dues*, in lots of 25,000 copies each. A great portion of all these leaflets was sold and distributed during the year, especially during the fall campaign. Several leaflets and booklets have been published and sold also by our publishing houses.

As shown by the above published financial statement, nearly \$1,200 was collected to the national campaign fund through the Translator's office, besides the amount spent for campaign supplies and literature. Besides, many of our locals sent their contributions and orders direct to the campaign committee, and of the amount of such contributions we have no exact figures. Our organizations and publications and the Translator's office tried to do their part in making the campaign a success to the best of their ability, and as could be done by "foreigners." On this occasion I wish to quote the following part of a letter of October 30 [1912] from the national campaign manager:

"In concluding this letter I want to say that though I did not have exact figures, yet having kept fairly close track of the financial transactions of this committee as to the income and expenditures, I risk an estimate as follows: That though the Finnish organization comprises about one-tenth of the total membership of the Socialist Party of America, I believe it is a conservative statement to say that from the locals and members affiliated with the national Finnish organization at least one-fifth of the total receipts of this committee have been secured.

"If time will permit I shall be more than pleased to give you and the Finnish comrades the exact data, but whether I have such opportunity or not, I want you and your Executive Board to understand that the assistance above referred to is appreciated by this committee, and by myself in particular, beyond the power of mine to express in words.

"Feeling as I do on the subject, I also want you to understand that I do not take this either as a compliment to the committee or to myself, but it is a distinct compliment to the sense of the organization which is widespread among the Finnish comrades, and which I hope will be an example

to organizations of other nationalities, and I wish to add that the lesson is much needed by that portion of our movement made up of native Americans.”

Lately great stress has been put on getting the members of our organization, as well as sympathizers, to become American citizens. The matter has been given a considerable amount of publicity, and most of our locals now have a permanent naturalization committee working for this purpose. As to the success of this work we have no statistics at this time, but we have some reports to the effect that in the locals where two or three years ago there were one or two American citizens there are now tens of them, and only in a few locals now have no citizens at all.

Progress in every respect is the thing that we have had an opportunity to report ever since our organization was formed. To some extent this possibility is due to the liberal and due provisions in the national constitution regarding the foreign-speaking federations. The present conditions indicate that nothing can stop us from going forward — still progressing — in the work for the good of the Socialist movement.

Fraternally submitted,

J.W. Sarlund  
Translator-Secretary

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

*Published by 1000 Flowers Publishing, Corvallis, OR, 2005. • Free reproduction permitted.*