
Report of the Scandinavian Socialist Labor Federation to the 16th National Convention of the SLP, May 1924

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To the Socialist Labor Party,
National Convention 1924.

Dear Comrades:
Greetings!

Since the last convention of the SLP, events have happened in the Scandinavian SLF of a remarkable nature. The Federation has gone through a "cleaning out" process without comparison in its earlier history, and can only be compared with the happenings of 1899 in the Party. In broad lines we wish to state what has occurred, and this explanation will be the basis from which the Federation reports to this convention.

As is well known a certain element in opposition to the SLP and its principles succeeded in getting control at the last convention of the Federation in 1919. As a direct result, the Federation reelected A.H. Lyzell as editor of its official organ, the *Arbetaren*, the same Lyzell who had documented himself as a true Seidelite. At the Party convention, 1920, the reelection was overruled. Nevertheless, it required very strong action on the part of the Party, in conjunction with the loyal membership of the Federation, before the removal of said Lyzell as editor of the *Arbetaren* could be accomplished. The Federation NEC at that time consisted of a majority of renegades, with the Federation secretary in harmony. This element called an "extra" "convention" at Boston, Mass., the 3rd of July, 1920. At this assemblage plans were laid down for an attack upon the Federation and its official organ. The treachery was too evident and action was immediately taken, with the full efficiency of the loyal membership, to repudiate the attack. The SLP NEC Subcommittee took steps and made arrangements for the reorganization of the Federation and this order was carried out in conformity with instructions from the National Office. A thoroughgoing "cleaning out" was per-

formed, the Federation membership thereby brought down to the actual number of true SLP men, in figures to about 200. The former "weeds" in the Federation, the elements of anarchy, gathered together and made an attempt to launch an attack upon the Federation and thereby upon the Party. The above mentioned A.H. Lyzell and Federation Secretary Bjorkman were the souls of these "worthy" doings. A new organization was started, using our official name, thereby spreading a good deal of confusion. With the object of dealing a blow to the *Arbetaren*, a paper was started by the usurpers, using the mailing list of *Arbetaren*, which had been stolen by them before their removal from office. They also had laid their hands on all the Federation's and its organ's records and books of accounts. The Federation and the Party opened court proceedings vs. the renegades for the recovery of said property, but these were later on abandoned and we are therefore not able to show if any financial deficit was made, but the fact remains that the remnant consisted of debts alone, in other words, the financial situation was extremely dangerous. At this critical situation the Bulgarian Federation came to our assistance with a loan of \$1,000, without which it is difficult to say how things would have turned out.

Continually since this "coup" the Federation has had difficulty in solving the economic conditions, and with the very small number of members the burdens have sometimes seemed overwhelming.

In August 1920, the *Arbetaren* had to be reduced to six pages, with which size we continued until the 1st of October, 1923, when it again was published in eight

pages. The subscription number went down during and following the time of the split. This was caused just as much by the crisis in the labor market in 1920-1921 as by the open attacks we for some time had to bear. During the last eighteen months the subscription list has been steadily going up and figures today about 3,800 solid subscriptions. In connection with the enlargement of the paper in October 1923, the subscription price was raised from \$2 to \$2.50 a year, which has done considerable good for the finances. Lately, more business tactics have been applied in handling the advertising matters and we have succeeded in getting results to our satisfaction. In making it possible to enlarge the paper we had to take up a loan from among members and sympathizers, amounting to about \$1,300, to be paid back on the 31st of December, 1925, with 4 percent interest.

The Scandinavian Federation on the 31st of December, 1923 (no later reports at hand), consisted of 18 Branches. Of these, 17 reported a total membership of 232. Members-at-large in the Federation on the same date was 7, making a total membership of 239. The Branch no reporting, namely, Branch Buffalo, has later been dissolved. The above given figures can be considered as near as possible correct. Members in good standing on the 31st of December, 1923, were 200. Corresponding figures a year ago were 205 members, with 173 in good standing.

During 1923 two Branches were organized, "Framtiden" in Chicago, Ill., and the above mentioned Branch Buffalo, which functioned only a short time. Branch Boston was reorganized during 1923, as a result of its action in connection with Ingvar Paulsen's attack upon the Party.

2,021 dues stamps were sold during 1923, making an average of 168 per month. Corresponding figures for 1922 were 1,562 and 131, respectively.

During 1922 was published *Value, Price and Profit* in the Swedish language, in a 1,000 copy edition. Several other pamphlets, both new and translations, are under work, the publishing being postponed for financial reasons. Just recently we succeeded in republishing a 1,000 copy edition of *Fifteen Questions*, after the book had been out of print for nearly one year.

From publishing houses in Sweden has been bought literature for sale, among which we especially

mention *Karl Marx: The History of His Life* by Franz Mehring, translated into Swedish by Thure Nerman.

Landkaenning, yearly Christmas publication, has been published yearly, the last two years in a 4,000 copy edition each year. During 1921 and 1922 a special "First of May" publication was published, but it was found to be of more propaganda value to publish a special First of May edition of the *Arbetaren*, which was done last year and the same policy has been followed this year. During 1923 was printed 10,000 copies of the leaflet "Socialismen." "Americanization" has been translated and is ready to go to print as soon as we have the means.

Since the first of September, 1922, the Federation has had an agitator and sub-getter steadily in the field, namely, Comrade A. Person, Youngstown, Ohio. Part time has been devoted by Comrade Person for purely organization work.

The prospects for continued propaganda work among the Scandinavians is very favorable. The gains accomplished during the last years are not very remarkable but they have been won in a normal way and are, therefore, so much more valuable. If we only can reach a more favorable financial situation and therewith be given a "breathing space," we will soon be able to show better results. The financial situation is now the brightest it has been since 1920. Today we owe our Bulgarian comrades about \$600 and to the Party for printing and mailing about \$800. Outstanding accounts amount to nearly twice that sum in advertising means alone, and besides a good deal of money is, as always, outstanding in subscriptions.

To sum up, we wish to state that the Federation membership, slowly but in a fully natural way, has been growing during the last year and our paper has won a bigger circulation, at the same time gaining a bigger financial stability. We have justified reason to look forward toward bright prospects, and assure you, comrades, that nothing will, on our part, be neglected in order, with all our ability, to share the work it is our duty to perform for our common cause.

Fraternally yours,

Scandinavian Socialist Labor Federation
C.A. Forsberg, Secretary

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