
South Slavic Convention

Unanimous for CEC and Comintern

[events of Oct. 17-20, 1925]

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The convention of the South Slavic [Yugoslav] section of the party took place in Chicago during the four days — October 17, 18, 19, and 20, 1925. There were 29 delegates present who represented 1,360 members of the South Slavic section.¹

The first order of business taken up by the convention was the report of the Central Executive Committee which was given by Comrade C.E. Ruthenberg, General Secretary of the party.

Comrade Ruthenberg reviewed the world political and economic situation and showed that the partial and temporary stabilization of capitalism was only a temporary change in the curve showing the general decline of capitalism and the development of the proletarian revolution. He pointed out that it was exactly in this period of a seeming lowering of the revolutionary spirit of the working masses that it was necessary to take up the question of Bolshevization of the existing Communist parties. After having treated the general situation, he took up the situation within the Workers Party, reviewing the work of the party during the last 18 months. He emphasized that the factional conflict within the party was not to be looked upon as an evil but as an incident in the Bolshevization of the party and in the clarification of its policy, that the party followed a correct Leninist line.

Comrade Ruthenberg pointed out that the errors made by the former CEC majority [Foster group] represented a tendency to return to the sectarianism which had dominated the party during the first two years of its existence — 1919-1921. The discussion in the party on this question and the final decision of the Communist International supporting the labor party policy was a decision against the

¹ The South Slavic section included three primary nationalities — Croatsians, Slovenes, and Serbs — with the Croatsians numerically dominant.

new wave of sectarianism in the party and should make certain that the party would not again fall into this error.

Comrade Ruthenberg also pointed out that the fight within the party developed into a struggle between the right wing elements supporting sectarianism and the left which, which was following the line of the Communist International. It was the policy of the Comintern, as was shown in its decision, to separate the Communist elements from the right wing and to a Leninist line of policy.

The fact that this was not achieved in the national convention of the party [4th: Chicago — Aug. 21-30, 1925] was the basis, in the opinion of Comrade Ruthenberg, of the decision made by the Communist International, supporting the present Central Executive Committee as more loyal and closer to the views of the Communist International.

After analyzing the party situation, showing that this situation was part of the process of Bolshevization of the party, Comrade Ruthenberg took up the concrete fact of the reorganization of the party, handling in detail the plan for the organization of shop nuclei and the role of the language federations in the party after the reorganization. The speaker showed that the language fractions will be even a more effective instrument in carrying on party propaganda among the various language groups than the language federations which had previously existed.

Upon the conclusion of the speech by Comrade Ruthenberg, resolutions similar to the resolutions adopted by the various membership meetings in support of the CEC and the CI decisions were submitted and after discussion was unanimously adopted by the 29 delegates present.

CEC Statement on Federation Situation.

Comrade Ruthenberg in the name of the Central Executive Committee also presented to the convention a statement of the CEC in reference to the controversy which had been going on in the South Slavic section. The statement took up the charges made against the majority of the bureau by Comrades Fisher and Michalachky in relation to the party discussion, the policy of the bureau, and in relation to work in the fraternal organizations. The statement fully upheld the bureau on the question, and called upon the convention to take a united stand against the enemies of the party and the South Slavic

section who were endeavoring to use the discussion within the section for the purpose of a fight against the Communist movement among the South Slavic workers. The statement was unanimously accepted by the convention in connection with the report of the bureau which was submitted by Comrade Cuchovich.

The remaining two days were devoted to discussion of the question of Bolshevization, reorganization of the South Slavic section, the line of the general reorganization of the party, the question of the work in fraternal organizations, work in support of the labor party, support of the International Labor Defense, and the campaign in defense of the Soviet Union. On all these questions resolutions were adopted laying down the line of work for the South Slavic comrades among the South Slavic workers of this country.

Particular emphasis was given to the question of reorganization of the party in the South Slavic section. The convention was unanimous for the reorganization on the basis of shop nuclei and street nuclei and for the establishment of the language fractions in place of the present existing language federations.

The convention without a dissenting vote elected a new bureau of 14 members. This bureau consists of 8 comrades who will live in Chicago and who will constitute the Executive Council to direct the day to day work and 6 from the country at large. The Executive Council consists of the following comrades: C. Novak, L. Zinich, F. Boric, F. Krasich, M. Roikovic, T. Cuckovich, M. Goreta, and S. Loyen. The other members of this bureau are A. Kraznorich of Detroit, J. Vrdjuka of Pittsburgh, G. Levnaich of Canton, Ohio, V. Crnich of Christopher, Ill., Popovich of West Allis, Wis., and F. Sepic of Neffs, Ohio.

New Bureau Organizes.

The new bureau of the South Slavic fraction organized immediately after the convention by electing C. Novak as the secretary, L. Zinich as the editor of the paper with Comrades Loyen and Boric as associate editors.²

Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport

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² The South Slavic section's newspaper was *Radnik* (The Worker), published 3 times weekly in Chicago.