
A National Organization is On Its Way!

by J. Louis Engdahl

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Active work has been started by the national Socialist Party here to interest the 3 million young men and women of the nation who have Socialist parents in the cause of Socialism.

The initial effort is being made by the Chicago Young People's Socialist League acting jointly with the Woman's Department of the Socialist Party, the work of agitating for Socialism among the young people having been assigned by the National Socialist Party organization to the National Woman's Committee.

Through the work to be accomplished within the next few months, and as the result of action expected to be taken by the meeting of the Socialist Party National Committee in May, it is expected soon to launch the National Young People's Socialist League of America.

It is estimated that there are about 200 local leagues of young people scattered over the national and at the present time working practically independent of each other. Information is now being gathered concerning their strength and resources and the outlook for Socialist agitation among the young in other cities in order that something tangible may be presented to the National Committee at its May meeting in this city.

Chief among the Young People's Socialist Leagues at this time are those at Los Angeles, with 1,200 members; Chicago, 600 members; Rochester, NY, 300 members; Rockford, Ill., 375 members; and three organizations in Milwaukee, with a total of 350 members. There are active organizations in such cities as Buffalo and Schenectady, NY; Pittsburgh, Pa.; and St. Louis, Mo. There are in fact loose organizations in every city of any size in the nation. They need only a centralized movement to put them in active operation.

State Secretary T.W. Williams, of California, is so enthusiastic over the work of the Los Angeles, Cal., Young People's Socialist League, with its big membership, that he has started a statewide movement among the young people, looking to the establishment of such leagues side by side with the locals of the Socialist Party.

The opening gun in this campaign was the sending out of a circular letter to the Socialist and labor press, the National Executive Committee, the National Committee, and the State Secretaries of the Socialist Party dwelling upon the necessity of organization among the young.

"Today we face the problem of reaching and interesting the 3 million young men and women whose parents are Socialists," declares the circular letter, which is signed by Winnie E. Branstetter, General Correspondent of the Woman's National Committee:

These young people as well as their fellow workers and associates, logically belong to the Socialist movement.

Our comrades in France, Austria, Germany, in fact in nearly all the European countries, solved this problem. We must follow their example. We must make the American Socialist movement attractive to the young people of the working class. We must organize Young People's Socialist Leagues in every town and city.

We must establish headquarters for these leagues and surround the youth of the working class with every opportunity for congenial association and for physical and mental development.

In many of our larger cities the young people in the Socialist Party, working alone and under discouraging circumstances, have laid the foundation for a National Socialist Young People's League. It is the duty of the National Socialist Party to give them greater assistance and encouragement in the future than in the past.

This circular closes with a request to all secretaries of young people's organizations and secretaries of

Socialist locals where there are possibilities of starting young people's organizations to make an immediate and complete report on the matter to the national headquarters.

The big question that is troubling those interested in starting the national organization of the young is the shape that the organization is to take. The Chicago YPSL has appointed a committee consisting of its Secretary, Charles Schuler; J. Adrian Rogers, Jr.; and Joseph Goldberg to represent it in its work.

They take the position that there should be a regularly organized National YPSL, with a National Executive Committee and a National Secretary. The proposition is to have the young people's NEC consist of 5 members, 3 to be elected by the league and the other 2 to be chosen by the Socialist Party National Committee. The selection of the National Secretary under this plan is reserved to the league. The active cooperation of the national organization is sought because financial aid will be needed for the first few years to get the national league firmly established. It is proposed to send an organizer to all the larger cities to get the leagues already started working in the right direction. It would be urged that the various State Secretar-

ies of the Socialist Party appoint State Secretaries of the league.

Opposed to this plan is the idea that the agitation among the young people should be carried along similar to the agitation for Socialism among women. This provides for a young people's department in the National Office of the Socialist Party similar to the woman's department.

According to this plan there would be no National Executive Committee of the young people for the same reason that is advanced against the existence of the Woman's National Committee — the claim that the little work it transacts does not warrant its existence. This would provide for a national young people's correspondent directing the efforts of the various local organizations. This would give the locals very little to say in the control of the national organization.

The third view, which is gradually pushed into the background but which occasionally bobs up, is that the young people's Socialist movement in this country is not yet strong enough to merit the attention that it is now being urged be given it. This view is overcome with a few figures.

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