
1923 Annual Report of the Bulgarian Socialist Labor Federation, January 14, 1924

by Theodore Baeff

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Granite City, Ill.
January 14, 1924

Arnold Petersen, National Secretary.

income for the year, \$21,370.02; total outgo \$20,042.45.

Dear Comrade:

The following is my annual report for the year ending Dec. 14, 1923:

Rabotnicheska Prosveta.

Membership.

As reported last year, we conclude the year of 1922 with 24 Branches, with a membership of 521, and members-at-large 51, or a total of 572 members. The year of 1923 we closed with same 24 Branches, with a membership of 490, and members-at-large 30, or a total of 528 members, of whom 478 are in good standing — a decrease of 44. New members taken in during the year were 89, dropped 75, expelled 13, left the organization 9, left for old country 9, and died 1.

As reported, the year 1922 the paper closed with 1,516 prepaid subscribers. The year of 1923, however, we closed with 1,754 prepaid subs — an increase of 238. The paper is distributed in 2,100 copies.

Books Printed.

During the year three new pamphlets have been printed, namely: *Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials* by DeLeon — 2,000 copies; *Revolutionary Act* — 2,000 copies; *Yearly Almanac* — 3,000 copies. Also a Song Book was reprinted — 1,500 copies.

Activity of the Branches.

During the year the Branches have held a total of 304 business meetings, 191 agitation meetings, 333 class meetings, and 114 entertainments. Sold literature for \$1,064.99, procured subscriptions for *Rabotnicheska Prosveta* 990, for other Party organs 258, and collected donations for various funds \$7,505.84.

As to the financial standing of the Federation, I am enclosing herewith a copy of the report of the public accountants, who audited the books. I think I reported last year that it was decided by the convention that the books be audited at the close of the year by public accountants.

Cash Book Balance, Dec. 15, 1923.

Financial Standing of the Branches.

Money on hand at the end of the year, \$4,071.73; in stock (books, etc. for sale) \$1,623.64; In Furniture, Etc., \$1,933.62; total, \$7,628.99. Total

On deposit, Granite City Bank, \$1,038.90; on deposit National Bank of Commerce, \$4,967.20; on deposit South Slavonian headquarters in re matter of attempted deportation of South Slavonian comrade (Vojnovich), \$500; cash in office, \$645.93. Total, \$7,152.03.

As you will notice in the report of the public accountants, we have collected some money for the "Bulgarian Exiles." This may surprise you. Therefore, some explanation would be in order. You are familiar with the attempted revolution in Bulgaria last September. As a result, about 20,000 were slaughtered and about 10,000 crossed the border, seeking refuge in nearby countries. Many of these were here before and most of them had either friends or relatives here. They at once started communicating with their friends and relatives here, depicting to them the awful plight they are in and begging for help. Thus a very strong feeling was created among our members and sympathizers that the Federation should take a hand in helping these people. Our intention was, at first, to resist. But just about that time all those who were thrown out of the organization in the last few years, together with the other soreheads and muddleheads, having joined the Workers Party, were getting in shape to start a paper. It was plain to us that as sure as day follows night these people will come out with an appeal for funds in the very first issue of their sheet. In that case, if we resisted to the end, all our sympathizers and, probably, some of our members would find themselves compelled to send their donations through this bunch, and thus help them to make a bigger showing, acquire greater influence from the start by reaching more people, and last but not least, be giving them the opportunity to play upon the ignorance of our sympathizers and others, slandering and accusing us of being against the so-called Bulgarian revolution, and thus antagonize them against us. In fact, they had already started a campaign of lies and slander against us with regard to the "Bulgarian Revolution." So we were placed in a peculiar position. To resist collecting funds for the Bulgarians would be just the thing the bunch of soreheads and muddleheads, the most bitter enemy of the Federation, would like us to do, since it would result in a great help to them. Besides, I intended to touch upon the so-called Bulgarian Revolution in my lecture on the United Front in the convention, pointing to the shortcomings of the tactics of the Communist Party of Bulgaria and linking the cause of its recent catastro-

phe with the so-called new tactics of the 3rd International. But this would have been considered an attack on the revolutionists in Bulgaria and the lesson would have been lost if we did not at least try to help the suffering revolutionists, since the Workers Party crowd would have played upon the ignorance of the masses and would have antagonized them against us. We had to take all this under consideration and finally the Executive Committee decided to issue a call for contributions, which was done the first part of December. Now it is plain to us that the EC acted wisely; much more harm would have been done if the EC acted otherwise.

So far we have collected a little more than \$2,000; the collection may reach about \$2,500 at most. This fund will be closed in a few weeks, as soon as we hear from all the Branches. So far it has not been decided how and to whom the money should be sent, since there is hardly anything left from the party in Bulgaria. They had started issuing the party organ in Berlin, and I wrote to the comrades there for advice but have received no answer yet.

I do not think this would have any effect on the campaign. With regard to the latter, wish to say that a couple of months ago the Branches were urged to arrange for an entertainment on New Year's Eve for the purpose, and I expect the proceeds to reach \$1,000. As soon as the stamps and the lists for this fund come out, collection for any other fund will be stopped and all the energy will be bent on collecting for the campaign fund. I am preparing a circular letter now, which shall be sent out by the end of next week, and if you let me know how soon the stamps and lists will be out, will say something in the circular and have the membership prepared to start at once.

I think this is all I am to report. If anything else comes to my mind I shall write you again.

Fraternally yours,

Theo. Baeff
Secretary-Treasurer

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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