



The District Organizers of the I. L. D. at the Convention: (First row, left to right) Sam Nessin, New York; Sarah Wand, Buffalo; Mother Bloor, Seattle; Jenny Cooper, Philadelphia; Robert Zelms, Boston; Jack Rose, Cleveland; (Second row, left to right) Carl Hacker, Pittsburgh; Clemens Forsen, Superior; Max Salzman, former Pittsburgh organizer; Steve Rubicki, Chicago; George Saul, Southern District; Arnold Ziegler, Detroit.

TOWARD A FIRMER BASIS

By A. JAKIRA

THE Fourth National Convention of the I. L. D. marked a turning point in the life of the organization both ideologically and organizationally. The composition of the delegation, coming mainly from the most important industries—steel, mining, automobile, textile—ten per cent of whom were Negro workers, was in itself symbolic of the present period of growing class battles. The convention was fully conscious of the fact that the present period makes it necessary to build the I. L. D. on an entirely new basis.

This was shown in the sharp self-criticism which marked the convention discussions, when the past errors and shortcomings were pointed out and steps taken to correct them as speedily as possible.

The Resolution on Organization, adopted by the convention, sharply criticized the past looseness in the organization structure, with its language sections functioning practically as autonomous defense organizations, with hardly any roots in the shops, factories, mines and mills. The I. L. D. District Committees, the City Central Committees, the branches, functioned, as a rule, very poorly; the dues payments being far from satisfactory.

The resolution, likewise, had to criticize our past methods of work which were confined largely to committees and a few individuals and did not involve the broad masses of workers interested in the defense activities. The failure to draw Negro

workers into the I. L. D. was especially subjected to sharp criticism.

The convention, however, did not confine itself to self-criticism alone. It laid down definite plans, which, if put into effect, will remove these shortcomings and will build the I. L. D. as a real mass organization. It adopted a new constitution in line with the needs of the present period. The mere fact that the organization question was placed as a special point on the order of business was in itself a recognition by the convention of the importance of paying more attention to organization problems than has been the case in the past. It is of utmost importance that the convention decisions be put into effect as energetically as possible. The tasks confronting us in the immediate future, in the main, are as follows:

We must get a new orientation towards the shop, factories, mines and mills. Each District, each City Central Committee, each branch, must place this question on the order of the day and take the necessary steps to begin the building of our defense machinery in the shops and factories.

The membership drive, which by convention decision, was extended to March 18th, the Anniversary of the Paris Commune, must be made a success through careful planning of the work and with the orientation towards the shops and factories.

Special attention must be paid to the persecutions and oppression of the Negro workers and large masses of Negroes must be drawn into the I. L. D. The Resolution on Organization adopted by the Convention sets as a quota at least twelve thousand Negro workers as members of the I. L. D. by March 18th. We must combat any manifestations of white chauvinism inside of our own ranks and draw Negro comrades into all the leading committees of the I. L. D.

The District Committees, the City Central Committees, and the branches must meet regularly and must draw the rank and file members into active participation in defense work. The branches must pay special attention to educational work which in the past has been completely neglected. The district, city and local organizations and the branches must develop more initiative in meeting difficult situations, which in the present period becomes a matter of vital necessity.

Immediate steps should be taken to convince the various organizations affiliated with the I. L. D. on a collective basis of the correctness of the convention decision to establish a definite dues system of one cent per member per month and a special drive should be initiated to secure more collective affiliations and to draw these collectively affiliated organizations into active participation in the I. L. D. campaigns and activities.