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# Decision of the National Executive Committee on the Finnish Controversy.

Adopted at the December 12-13, 1914 meeting of the National Executive Committee.  
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At the last meeting of the National Executive Committee in September 1914, the strife in the ranks of the Finnish Federation was formally considered. One whole day was spent in a hearing of the charges and countercharges made by representatives of the regular organization and of the *Sosialisti* or radical group.

At the hearing we were informed that a convention of the Finnish Federation was to be held in the near future. We therefore passed a series of resolutions looking toward the abatement of the antagonisms for the time being until the convention should meet. A special committee was appointed to attend this convention as investigators and mediators. The committee consisted of Comrades [Victor] Berger, [James] Maurer, and [Adolph] Germer. Circumstance prevented Germer and Maurer from attending, and Comrades [Oscar] Ameringer and [Walter] Lanfersiek were appointed in their stead.

This committee attended the sessions of the Finnish convention and called a special all-day session of investigation, attended by seven representatives from each faction.

Another hearing was offered the opposing representatives at the regular meeting of the National Executive Committee December 12th and 13th, 1914, at which time documents were presented by both factions; demands and counter-demands were presented in writing, so that practically three hearings have been given to the whole matter and exhaustive verbal presentations have been heard from both sides and now extensive documentary matter is in our hands.

After this most careful and painstaking investigation, in which every opportunity has been afforded each side for a statement of its case, the National Ex-

ecutive Committee arrives unanimously at the following decision in the matter:

1. That we concur with the findings and recommendations of our Special Committee on the Finnish controversy.

2. That the Finnish Federation of the Socialist Party of America receives the unqualified support of the National Organization of the Socialist Party in its efforts to enforce discipline and prevent disruption and disorganization of the Federation.

3. That the National Socialist Party supports the Finnish Federation in their efforts to control their papers and protect their properties.

The Language Federations should alone perform and be held responsible for the party propaganda in each respective language. When any Language Federation takes an unsocialistic or unconstitutional attitude, it is then our duty to withdraw our recognition and sever the affiliation. In the present controversy, we express our confidence in the said Finnish Federation — a constitutional socialist organization. Rival foreign-speaking organizations cannot be tolerated under our constitution.

4. That the matter of readmission of the locals and members that have been expelled shall be left in the hands of the Finnish Federation.

5. That the decision of the Finnish Federation as to expulsion of locals or members shall be accepted by state, county, and local organizations as final. According to our constitution the Language Federations have full charge and jurisdiction in our organization of the language locals, and of all propaganda in the particular language. In all these respects the Language Federations act as the recognized agents of the Na-

†- The meeting of the National Executive Committee was held September 19-21, 1914 in Chicago.

tional Socialist Party, subject to the constitutional provisions pertaining to controversies.

Since it has appeared that one of the grave sources of the controversy is the form of economic organization, we again urge upon all our Finnish comrades the absolute necessity of working out the question of the form of the labor union in accordance with the accepted policy of the Socialist Party as expressed in the resolution of the National Convention, 1912, on labor organizations and their relation to the Party, namely:

“That the party has neither the right nor the desire to interfere in any controversies which may exist within the labor union movement over questions of form of organization or technical method of action in the industrial struggle, but trusts to the labor organizations themselves to solve these questions.”

In conclusion, we regret, more deeply than we can express, this bitter controversy in the ranks of our Finnish comrades. They have been an example to us and to all other federations of solidarity and wisdom, efficient in propaganda and in maintaining publications and gathering properties.

We most deeply regret that able comrades, men who would be a tower of strength to our movement,

are now in the ranks of what we must term disrupters of the Finnish Federation. We, therefore, urge most sincerely upon every Finnish comrade the necessity of standing by the Federation and working out the changes as may be deemed wise within your own ranks and by constitutional means.

Finally, in such an hour as this, when the International has been torn asunder by the horrors and tragedies of war, when the plutocracy of America is seeking to exploit a world's dire extremity as a bulwark of their power over the bread and life of the workers, it is our highest duty to close up our ranks in America and seek the greatest unity and solidarity of our comrades of all nations in this land, and absolutely prevent the development of any tactics that directly or indirectly disrupts or discourages us. To this end we pledge the unequivocal support of the National Socialist Party organization to the National Finnish Federation in their effort to maintain unity.

Victor L. Berger,  
James A. Maurer,  
Adolph Germer,  
J. Stitt Wilson,  
Lewis J. Duncan.

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

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