
Letter to C.E. Ruthenberg in New York from I.E. Ferguson in Chicago, May 4, 1920.

A document in the Hoover Institution Archives, Jay Lovestone Papers, box 195, folder 11.

(Note my new 'phone number: DRexel 4878)

May 4, 1920.

Dear C.E.:—

Your answer to the CEC statement is in the printer's hands, and should be in print tomorrow. I took some liberties with the composition, and particularly added some things which I had already prepared by way of answer, rather than have two articles. But I think you will find I did no violence to your article either in its substance or basic style. Your article is a splendid contrast to the cheap demagogism of the Hourwichites. My only real criticism would be that it is too decent toward them, because I have come to realize that these schemers who suddenly discovered after November 1917 that they were Russians and Bolsheviks have done our work a tremendous lot of harm. There isn't a real Russian among them, much less a real Bolshevik. They are typical East Side politicians who happen to swing revolutionary lingo, and to them need only be added those who fell for the nationalistic jingo stuff, like [Charles] Dirba, and the ridiculous sentimentalists, like [Max] Cohen and [Rose Pastor] Stokes, who can be only the limit of something, be it Wilsonism or Bolshevism.

The CLP — again, the effects of the “control” psychology introduced by these tricksters — the CLP wants to do a lot of bragging and play for some new prizes? It would seem that they

would have sensed the crucial advantage to us of unconditional acceptance of the existing offer of the CEC. But, I say it reluctantly but with absolute conviction, there must be unity between us and the CLP, no matter how petty they are about it. We face the same proposition which we had last Summer when we made the unity agreement with the Federationists. Let the CLP brag, as did last Summer's “Minority Group” — it is up to us to achieve this one decisive thing of eliminating a counter-Communist Party and the division in the Communist ranks between aliens and natives. A separate party of Hourwichites is an altogether different matter. It will be an anarchist sect, that is all, impelled by its own logic to spill — on paper — buckets of blood to efface a hopeless record. The CLP had no record, and on the whole has done so little — neither party has done much — that there is nothing about its performances which discredit it as a party.

My anxiety is about the convention arrangements. I hope there is not postponement for any reason, and I hope the CLP is with us. I would burn up the wires to avoid delay, because the confusion will only end with a convention, though it may require a delay to make terms with the CLP bargainers. Queer game, isn't it, for a bunch of revolutionists who are about to save society from its social vices?

I took the initiative, after much hesitation, to hand Schedel \$50 in currency for his personal or family use. He was practically without funds and there was the prospect that you could not

make an connection with him before he left for Europe. I felt badly about not being able to make a show of effort to prevent his deportation by court action, but I am satisfied that this was the right course. Either there will be a few hundred deportations, or we must get some court ruling which means that none of the orders are valid. In the latter case, and there is no reason to try this out under unfavorable circumstances, the few already sent over would be free to return. This is cheaper than court action, so far as expense is concerned, and the hard case does no injury to the easier ones.

I ran across enclosed receipt to me for a loan to *The Revolutionary Ages*, made by me as dated. I had forgotten about this transaction, as you may guess, because the money was not mine. However, in the present state of party affairs, I think you ought to pay this amount over to me. I think the propaganda of Communism will lose nothing by the transaction. The money is due to me, as the records plainly show, and what may be done about it afterward is a personal matter.

I might also suggest, if it has not been done, that the \$200 be paid on the F. [Fraina] trip account. I think it would be OK to pay this to me as trustee, and I will get the proper receipt; at the same time will see that the money finally goes into

defense, which was promised. I have already written about the indebtedness of the party in Chicago, and my idea that some deposit should be made to cover at least part of these loans.

E.F. [Leonid Belsky] told me this morning that he suggested your coming here while he makes an Eastern trip. Excepting it interferes with arrangements with the CLP, this seems offhand to me a good proposition. F. [Fraina] speaks the foreign languages; he is not dispirited by this sort of mess; he has the factional controversial spirit. You could ease up a little here, and above all we would have an excellent chance to do some real preparatory work for the convention, which is of the highest importance.

You can come here. [You] are a secret person here, no name in any book. Ida is going to the farm to stay indefinitely. I hope to go for the weekend, as my only chance to get at the [Walter] Gabriel record, but this will mean Saturday to Monday or Tuesday only.

Ed. [I.E. Ferguson]

[P.S.] Perhaps your wife can come for a while? Welcome, always.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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