
Minutes of the WPA Organization Committee and WPA Executive Council, Meetings of January 19, 1924.

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Meeting of the Organization Committee, Jan. 19, 1924.

Present at Meeting: Cannon, Foster, Pepper, and Ruthenberg.

Absent: Abern

Comrade Cannon elected Chairman.

Party Finances.

Comrade Ruthenberg called attention to the fact that the party was running at a deficit of \$3,000 to \$4,000 monthly and requested authority to initiate a campaign for a \$15,000 fund, using the May 30th convention [of the FLP] as the vehicle for this campaign. The campaign to begin February 15th and to run to April 15th [1924].

The recommendation was unanimously approved.

Trachtenberg Meetings.

Motion carried that the National Office arrange a series of public meetings for Comrade [Alexander] Trachtenberg at which he is to speak on the labor movement in Europe.

South Slavic Federation.

The Executive Secretary reported a growing controversy in the South Slavic Federation over the expulsion of the former editors of their paper at the last convention. This editor is now issuing an opposition paper which is finding support in the party ranks.

Comrade Ruthenberg moved:

1. That a full meeting of the South Slavic Bu-

reau be called to discuss the question.

2. That this meeting call a convention of the Federation as early as possible and that a representative of the CEC attend this convention.

Seidel Credential.

Letter from Comrade [Alexander] Bittelman requested reconsideration of question of issuing a credential to Comrade Seidel, who desired to go to Russia. The credential had been refused by Comrade Ruthenberg as against the party policy and policy of the CI.

Motion to refer to CEC meeting a permit Comrade Bittelman to present arguments there carried unanimously.

Berisoff.

Letter from Comrade Berisoff, editor of *Novyi Mir*, requesting release from party work for six months on account of ill health.

Motion to grant request carried unanimously.

Ohio Valley Miners Sub-District.

Comrade Ruthenberg reported that at the District Organizers meeting a plan had been worked to create an Ohio Valley sub-district out of the branches in Belmont County, Ohio and those in the neighborhood of Wheeling in West Virginia, with Comrade Hamilton in charge. The sub-district would be attached to District #5 [Pittsburgh]. The branches in the sub-district agree to finance the work for a period of three months.

Motion carried to approve, unanimously.

Ballam Appointment.

Comrade Ruthenberg reported that the Daily Worker campaign committee would close its affairs in two weeks time, which raised the question of Comrade [John] Ballam's future assignment. It had been the understanding in the old committee that Comrade Ballam would be appointed DO at [District 1] Boston at the close of his work. In this connection a letter from Comrade Wicks in regard to the controversy in the Boston district was read and the need of a strong District Organizer pointed out.

Motion, by Ruthenberg, that Comrade Ballam be appointed DO at Boston and Comrade [William] Simons be assigned to [District 4] Buffalo.

Voting for the motion: Ruthenberg, Pepper.

Voting against the motion: Cannon and Foster.

No action.

Minor Letter.

Letter from Comrade [Robert] Minor in regard to stenographic services for him as Liberator editor read. Motion, that we cannot assume responsibility for wages of stenographer, but that the previous arrangement that payment be made for cartoons Comrade Minor furnishes be carried out and he uses these funds for payment of his stenographer.

Carried unanimously.

Letter from Comrade Minor regarding change in policy of *Liberator*, requesting authority for *Liberator* editorial board to require comrades to write articles assigned them.

Motion to approve carried unanimously.

Jakira Assignment.

Letter from Comrade [Abram] Jakira read regarding action on the question of his remaining in his present position.

Motion, by Foster, that Comrade Cannon be elected Assistant Secretary [of the WPA].

Voting Yes: Cannon and Foster.

Voting No: Ruthenberg and Pepper.

[No action.]

Shop Nuclei.

Motion, by Ruthenberg, that Foster, Abern, and Ruthenberg be appointed a committee to work out plan of carrying out convention decision.

Carried unanimously.

New York District [2] Organizer.

Motion, by Foster, that Comrade [Benjamin] Lipschitz be removed and that Comrade [Charles] Krumbein be appointed District Organizer [D2].

Voting Yes: Cannon and Foster.

Voting No: Ruthenberg and Pepper.

[No action.]

At this point Comrade Ruthenberg stated that there was no intention of holding up the plans of the majority of the CEC on account of the absence of Comrade Abern, but that he could not assume responsibility for these changes by voting for them. He suggested that the way out was to call a meeting of the Executive Council for later in the day. Comrade Pepper concurred in the statement.

The meeting was adjourned with the understanding that the Executive Council would meet at 7 pm.

**Meeting of the Executive Council.
January 19th [1924].**

Present: Browder, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, Pepper, and Ruthenberg.

Comrade Cannon elected chairman.

Assistant Secretary.

Motion, by Foster, that Comrade Cannon be appointed Assistant Secretary in place of Comrade Jakira.

Voting Yes: Browder, Cannon, Dunne, and Foster.

Voting No: Ruthenberg, Pepper.

[Motion carried.]

New York District [2] Organizer.

Motion, by Comrade Foster, that Comrade Krumbein be appointed District Organizer for District #2.

Voting Yes: Browder, Cannon, Dunne, and Foster.

Voting No: Pepper and Ruthenberg.

[Motion carried.]

Jakira Appointment.

Motion by Ruthenberg, that Jakira be appointed District Organizer in Philadelphia [District 3] and that the National Office pay wages for two months.

Carried unanimously.

Ballam Appointment.

Motion, by Ruthenberg, that Ballam be appointed District Organizer in Boston [District 1].

Amendment, by Foster, that Ballam be appointed District Organizer in Buffalo [District 4].

Amendment carried unanimously with understanding that Comrades Ruthenberg and Pepper first registered their votes in favor of the Boston motion.

Hammersmark Letter.

Letter from Retail Clerks Union to Comrade Hammersmark refusing to accept his dues because of his membership in the Communist Party.

Motion, that Comrade Hammersmark write in reply stating his membership in the WP and declaring his right to be a member of the party. Comrades Ruthenberg and Browder to pass upon letter.

Motion carried unanimously.

IWW Committee Report.

The report of the IWW committee containing the following proposals was unanimously approved:

1. That Comrade Harrison George go over the party industrial registration with view of finding out where we have members in the IWW.

2. That in places where IWW has real union and we have no members in the IWW, we assign members to join.

3. That the Red International [of Trade Unions] committee consisting of George, Nowak, and Richards, will be appointed by the Profintern.

4. That we support the IWW strike in Canada and have the Canadian Lumber Workers support it.

FSR [Friends of Soviet Russia].

Motion, by Browder, that we elect two members of the committee to replace Comrades Jakira and [Marian] Emerson.

Carried.

Comrades Abern and [Fahle] Burman nominated and elected.

Comrade Pepper thereupon submitted his resignation as a member of the FSR committee, which was accepted by a vote of Browder, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, and Pepper in favor and Ruthenberg against.

Motion, that the [FSR] committee consist of five members, *carried unanimously.*

The meeting then adjourned.

C.E. Ruthenberg,
Executive Secretary.

Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport.

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