
Minutes of the National Council of the Left Wing Section: New York City — August 4, 1919.

Document in the Comintern Archive, RGASPI, f. 515, op. 1, d. 3, ll. 1-2.

Present: Cohen, Ferguson, Gitlow, Larkin; also MacAlpine (ex-officio). Absent: Ballam, Ruthenberg, Wolfe.
Chairman: Gitlow.

Larkin called for letter of Ferguson to Ballam and Ruthenberg on motion in answer to Federation resolution, and made various commentaries thereon.

Larkin called for copy of letter sent out by Russian Federation to its branches which had been transmitted to Secretary from Martens' office [the Russian Soviet Government Bureau], this letter being a condemnation of Martens' office and urging boycotting of this office. This letter had been transmitted with inquiry as to whether approved by Left Wing, and answer had been given that Council had absolutely no knowledge of such letter.

Motion by Larkin: That Committee of 2 be instructed to confer with Martens and make public answer to this letter, particularly pointing out untruthful statements and wrongful use of Left Wing. (Explanation: by Committee of 2 is meant the two non-Federation members of a New York City Committee appointed to confer with Martens before National Council came into existence, these two being Larkin and Reed).

Ferguson made the point of order that this was no Committee of the Council with any status to represent us. The Chairman ruled the point of order not well taken, and on appeal was sustained by vote of Cohen, Gitlow, Larkin.

Larkin called for previous minutes in which reference was made to this New York Committee.

Ferguson moved that we proceed without further search of minutes, since the Chairman had already ruled. **Motion defeated** by votes of Cohen, Gitlow, Larkin.

Ferguson moved that this matter be recommitted to

New York Left Wing, as not coming within work of Council. Same vote: *motion lost*.

Ferguson moved that nothing be done in this matter until there has been time for all members of the Council to go on record. **Motion carried**.

On Larkin motion — Yes: Cohen, Gitlow, Larkin; **No:** Ferguson. [*Motion carried.*]

At this point of the meeting there was held an inquisition of the Secretary [Ferguson] by MacAlpine and Larkin as to alleged statements before a membership meeting of the Jewish Left Wing. The Secretary responded that he had made a proper interpretation of the Council action in publicly stating that an organized Left Wing group, outside the party, might just as well elect its delegates to Chicago directly upon the basis of the Convention to start the Communist Party; that the Emergency Convention could only have the purpose now of providing delegates to the September 1st Convention from states where there is no organized Left Wing, but where the whole state is under Left Wing control as a result of the elections of delegates.

Motion by Larkin: That in our opinion the carrying of the Wolfe-Ferguson resolution carries with it abrogation of the National Council; that it is unnecessary to function further; that having by the above resolution handed over to Russian Federations and Michigan faction the calling of the Communist Party September 1st, 1919, we therefore declare the dissolution of the National Council as such.

Motion to table — Yes: Cohen, Ferguson; **No:** Gitlow, Larkin.

Vote on motion: same.

MacAlpine asks to be recorded as in favor of Larkin motion.

Motion made and carried to appropriate \$225 to labor paper [*Voice of Labor*]. Ferguson, in explanation of his vote, stated that this meant nothing as to future of such a paper, since it ended Council treasury at this time, and that the paper would have to continue on its own funds.

Motion that Gitlow and Larkin be given space in *Revolutionary Age* to publish statement on behalf of their position. *Carried.*

Motion that Ballam and Ruthenberg be asked to come to meeting dealing with Joint Call for September 1st Convention. Ferguson stated that the Council could not finance these members in making such a trip. Agreed that invitation should be based on local contribution for each trip.

Cohen asked to be put on record as favoring Joint Call for Convention only if base on 1 to 500 representation, with fractional vote for smaller groups.

I.E. Ferguson,
Secretary.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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