
Letter No. 7 to the Executive Committee of the Communist International in Moscow from Jakira in New York, February 20, 1923.

A document in the Comintern Archive, f. 515, op. 1, d. 180, ll. 96-97.

LETTER #7

February 20, 1923.

To the Executive Committee of the Comintern

Dear Comrades:—

American Question.

Our representative, Comrade Grove [Israel Amter], is now in Moscow. He will be able to make a detailed report of the latest developments in the American Section of the CI.

I have already informed you that your Decision on the American question has reached us and it was accepted by the CEC of the Party, unanimously.†

Comrade Carr [Ludwig E. Katterfeld] is still convinced that the Decision of the CI was wrong but he agrees to accept it as a matter of discipline. He was the only one on the Committee having this point of view. We hope that he also will soon be convinced of the correctness of the stand of the CEC of the Party and the CI and we hope that we will have no difficulties with him.

Since the acceptance of your Decision, the two Committees‡ have amalgamated, as per instructions.

Preparations are now being made for the Party Convention, which will formally accept the Decision of the CI.§ The calling of the Convention was necessary in order to avoid unnecessary complications in the Party.

Prior to the receipt of your Decision on the American question, the CEC issued a Statement to the membership based on the Decision of the Party Council which met some time ago. This Party Statement has aroused considerable discussion in the Party ranks and has prepared the minds of the membership for the next step as expressed in your Decision on the American question.

The representatives of the CEC have toured the entire country and the reports show that the overwhelming majority of the membership have accepted the Policy of the CEC and we are confident that the Policy of the CI will be endorsed by at least ninety percent of the Party membership.

Labor Party.

We have informed you some time ago that the Conference for the Labor Party, held in Cleveland, went on record against the immediate formation of a

†- Reference is to the decision of the Comintern to amalgamate the smaller, “illegal,” underground Communist Party of America and the larger, “legal political Party,” the Workers Party of America as a single “above-ground” organization. Underground functions were to be retained under the new structure, but these were to be a subsidiary function of the WPA, rather than a directing parallel structure, as was previously the case. Political, Industrial, and Editorial work of the CPA and WPA were combined by the action of the CPA’s CEC on January 26, 1923.

‡- That is, governing Executive Committees. The joint body had approximately 19 members divided in three committees (Political Committee or “PolCom,” Organization Committee or “OrgCom,” and Legal Political Party or “LPP”) and was officially guided by a three member Secretariat consisting of the heads of these committees. In practice, C.E. Ruthenberg (“J. Miller”) handled the day-to-day operations of the organization as Executive Secretary. The committees functioned, the 3 person Secretariat apparently did not.

§- The “Third National Convention” of the Communist Party of America was held in New York City on April 7, 1923. The gathering unanimously approved the thesis prepared by the Central Executive Committee liquidating the CPA.

Labor Party, but decided to allow individual states to form Labor Parties, if so desired.† Since then a number of states have taken advantage of this decision and are forming State Labor Parties. In some of the states, the Workers Party is officially represented. Other states have refused to seat the Workers Party Delegates.

Michigan Cases.

The trial of the Michigan cases is set for the early days of March. Comrade Foster will be the first one to be tried.‡ The attorney for the defense [Frank P. Walsh] is now investigating the activities of the Department of Justice in connection with their planting their men in the radical organizations. This investigation has created a sensation in America. All the capitalist newspapers have carried long articles with big headlines. This investigation has put [William J.] Burns, Head of the Department of Justice, on the defensive.

Enclosed you will find some clippings from some of the capitalist papers on the investigation.

Campaign for the Protection of the Foreign-Born.

The campaign for the protection of the foreign-born workers is well under way. Many labor organizations and labor leaders have agreed to assist in this work.

Trade Union Work.

The delegates to the Profintern have returned and reported on the decision of the Congress on the

American Question. All the delegates have reported to the CEC and after discussions the CEC accepted the decision unanimously and will carry it out both in spirit and in letter.

Naturally there are still some difficulties between those who are engaged mainly in independent unions and those who are engaged mainly in the other unions. The CEC has called a number of conferences between the representatives of the two points of view and the results up to date were very satisfactory. Another conference will be held in the near future which will adopt a final plan of action. At the present time our comrades are mainly engaged in organizing the left elements in the United Mine Workers of America. This work is being done with successful results. A detailed report of this will reach you through other channels.

Literature.

The book called *The American Government — A Strike-breaking Agency* is finally completed and is going to press within the next few days.‡ A pamphlet on the protection of foreign-born workers is now being prepared and two others, the titles of which have not yet been determined definitely.

Fraternally yours,

J. Miller [Abram Jakira]

Executive Secretary, CP of A.

†- Reference is to the Second National Conference for Progressive Political Action, held in Cleveland, Ohio, on December 11 & 12, 1922. The Workers Party's governing Administrative Council elected a four person delegation consisting of William F. Dunne, Caleb Harrison, Ludwig Lore, and C.E. Ruthenberg to attend this meeting. The WPA was refused a place in the convention by the Credentials Committee, a decision confirmed on the floor of the gathering.

‡- Published as *The Government — Strikebreaker: A Study of the Role of the Government in the Recent Industrial Crisis* by Jay Lovestone (New York: Workers Party of America, 1923). This book, listed "Workers Party Library Vol. 2," bears a May 1, 1923, publication date on its title page and actually seems to have followed Clarissa S. Ware's pamphlet, *The American Foreign-Born Workers*, into print.

Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport.

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