

5. Statement by the Delegation Chosen by the Sixth National Convention of the Communist Party of the United States of America to Present the Views of the Party Convention to the Executive Committee of the Communist International, 14 May 1929⁵

To the American Commission:

Dear Comrades,

1. The American Party under its present leadership has an unquestionable record of unbroken loyalty and devotion to the Communist International. When we were a minority, we conducted an equally vigorous struggle for the Communist International and against all its hidden and open enemies within the Party.

It is the present leadership of the Party which has worked unceasingly since the very inception of our Party, ten years ago, to enhance the prestige of the Comintern, not just among the Party masses but also in the ranks of the proletariat in general. It is the present leadership of the Party which has, in the face of the bitterest resistance from the opposition led by comrades Foster and Bittelman, fought and driven out such notorious enemies of the Communist International as [Ludwig] Lore, [Jacob] Salutsky, [Elis] Sulkanen, [Henry] Askeli, [Max] Eastman and [James] Cannon.

⁵ Typescript-carbon in Jay Lovestone Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University, Box 211, Folder 7. First published as 'Appeal to the Comintern' in a broadsheet factional newspaper in July 1929, striking the signatures of Max Bedacht, Ella Reeve Bloor, Otto Huiswoud and Alex Noral, who had subsequently recanted.

This attitude and policy of unswerving loyalty to the Comintern have been, and will continue to be, basic and axiomatic for us.

To us, loyalty to the Comintern has never been merely a matter of formal discipline or fractional expediency. Our attitude to the Comintern takes sole root in our firm Leninist conviction that the Communist International represents the collective, centralised Communist will, based on the experiences, capacities, and composite qualities of what is best in all sections, in the various Parties. The Communist International is the World Communist Party, with every one of its sections an organic part.

2. Even the new draft resolution recognises that the sixth National Convention of our Party 'was composed of the best proletarian elements of the American Communist Party, who uphold the line of the Communist International'.

It is by the express authority of this Convention that we speak here in the name of the overwhelming majority of the membership, in the name of the best and most experienced Communist forces, in the name of the most tried party cadres in the United States. *The official delegation of this Convention representing the will and desires of this Convention, takes this occasion again to declare emphatically that we unreservedly support the line of the sixth World Congress of the Comintern and the 'Open Letter' of the ECCI to our National Convention*, particularly the basic decisions of the sixth World Congress on the nature of the Third Period, the precarious character of capitalist stabilization, the sharpening of the war danger and the necessity for the intensification of the struggle against the Right danger as the main danger in the Comintern and the American Party.

It is the present leadership of our Party which has combated vigorously all reservations to the line of the sixth Congress. The present grave crisis in our Party is due primarily to the fact that in utter, flagrant violation of the decisions of the sixth World Congress, the opposition was allowed a practically free hand in making its reservations (Johnstone's declaration) to the decisions of the sixth World Congress, its platform of unprincipled factional struggle against the CEC. In emphasizing this fact, we do not for a moment seek to hide or minimise our own serious mistakes in sharpening the factional situation in our Party.

3. It is our sincere conviction that the new draft letter to our Party ['The Address of the Comintern'] is contrary to the letter and spirit of the line of the sixth World Congress and the line of the 'Open Letter' to our National Convention. This is clearly shown in the fact that the new draft letter takes a diametrically opposite attitude towards our Party, makes an estimate of our

Party's work and leadership totally at variance with the line and decisions of the sixth World Congress and the ECCI's 'Open Letter' to our Convention ...

...

Nothing has happened since the sixth World Congress, nothing has occurred since the Convention received the ECCI's 'Open Letter' to warrant any fundamental change in the estimate of our Party, its achievements and its leadership. Quite the contrary. Since the sixth National Convention our Party has only further proven that the sixth World Congress was correct in its line toward us – the campaign led by our Party in the Southern textile struggles, the mass May Day street demonstrations, the great headway made in proletarianizing our Party leadership, the substantial gains made in the establishment of factory nuclei and shop papers.

...

We repudiate and protest most emphatically against the unwarranted charge that the delegation representing the sixth National Convention of our Party is working for a split. We have always stood for the unity of the Party and will fight to maintain the unity of the Party. The present leadership has founded and built the Party. It has the confidence of the entire active Party membership that is doing the Party's work, that is bearing the Party's banner in the class struggle. At the sixth National Convention of our Party, over ninety percent of the membership expressed itself in no unclear terms for the policies of the leadership in mass activities and unity.

The Comintern acknowledged, immediately after the ninth Plenum [9–25 February 1928] and at the sixth World Congress, that under the guidance of the Central Committee there was to be noted a weakening of factionalism and a consolidation of the Party. This has been, and will continue to be, our line. Our line is the line of Communist unity. It is the unprincipled factional Foster-Bittelman opposition attacking the Party without justification that has been working – fortunately with no success – for the disruption of our Party.

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4. We have made every effort to convince the American Commission that what is needed is a calm, careful consideration of the serious difficulties and problems confronting our Party, with a view of arriving at an understanding in

Moscow among all American comrades for utilizing all forces for the Party. So far we have failed in our efforts.

We stand ready and are anxious to make every effort to achieve these ends – to secure Party unity, to wipe out factionalism and caucuses, to sharpen the fight against the Right danger, to build a powerful, organic section of the Comintern in the US – one that is equal to the tremendous historical tasks that confront a Communist Party in the country of the dominant imperialism.

The new draft letter, if accepted by us, would make it absolutely impossible for us to continue as effective workers in the Communist movement. Upon this right to give our best services and energies to the Comintern, to the Leninist proletarian revolution, we insist.

...

We beg the comrades of the Commission to consider carefully our earnest plea for Party unity and loyalty to the Comintern. The Party is in a grave crisis. The Party needs the united and strongest efforts of all Communists to save the situation, to ensure the unity of the Party, the prestige and effectiveness of the Comintern in the US.

With communist greetings,

Max Bedacht
Jay Lovestone
Ella Reeve Bloor
Benjamin Gitlow
Otto Huiswood
William Miller
Tom Myerscough
A. Noral
Edward Welsh
W.J. White
B.D. Wolfe