
Letter to Ludwig Katterfeld in Moscow from Jay Lovestone in New York, March 7, 1922.

A document in the Comintern Archive, f. 515, op. 1, d. 93, ll. 18-19.

March 7th, 1922

Dear Friend,

Things are going pretty badly. There is today not one cent in the Treasury and there is no outlook for getting a penny. The unemployment crisis is more acute than ever, in some districts 50 percent of the members are out of work. The relief drive is still draining the resources of the membership. Besides the #1 [Communist Party of America] dues have been reduced to 25¢ [per month]; those who can afford it are now being asked to pay 50¢ and a tax of 25¢ per every \$5 received in excess of the party maximum wage by workers in nonparty work has been made. Still the districts consume whatever they are ever to raise and call on the N.O. [National Office] to help in order to keep the party machinery going. Wages have been reduced and expenses have been cut down all along the line. We are today faced with a situation where there is actually no money to pay anyone wages. For some time many of the party workers have not been receiving wages in full and none are in a position to go on this way much longer. Up to now we have been able to take care of yours and M's ["Marshall" = Max Bedacht] wages regularly but as we notified the families with the last money sent from now on we cannot hope to keep up and will do the best we can to get something to them. Our funds have been consumed approximately as follows: \$2,000 for the RTU [Red Trade Union International], which were told was to be returned to us by your friends; \$3,750 loan to #2 [Workers Party of America]; \$3,800 #2 Conference [founding convention of the WPA, Dec. 1921]; \$7,000 Can. and Ag. loans [to establish Canadian CP]; \$700 to

African friends [African Blood Brotherhood]; \$700 for special Ukra. [Ukrainian] work; \$750 Thesis [to print Congress thesis of the Comintern]; \$400 Jewish work; \$750 Rus. Day; \$1,000 loan N.D. [National Defense Committee]; Miscellaneous pressing debts \$1,500; Total: \$22,850 — balance consumed in general party expenses, rent, wages, publications. The bulk of the funds which the DOs [District Organizers] are getting in are having to be used to defray the expenses of the #2 [WPA] activities since #2 [WPA] has not as yet started to be self supporting.

You must realize that we are in a transition period. We have experienced a split and our competitors [Central Caucus faction] are doing their best to spread demoralization and disruption. We are in the midst of making adjustments between the two organizations and are having grave difficulties in both. It will take some time to get things working as smoothly as they must if we are to get any results.

Unless immediate relief is secured the whole party machinery of both organizations will break down.

Under separate cover we are mailing you the agenda and call for the private stockholders conference [2nd National Convention of the unified CPA, which was postponed]. We will have to make a special assessment to defray the expenses. But we have our serious doubts as to success in this. The conference is absolutely necessary to revitalize the party.

Relief.

The "T" [Society for Technical Aid to Soviet Russia] has gotten a good start in spite of the difficulties encountered at first. In SD1 — D5 [Chicago] the Central TU body [Chicago Federation of Labor] has

voted unanimously to line up with it, has elected its own committee to be responsible for results, and is planning to get every one of its locals into full swing in this campaign. The "T" [Tech Aid] is circularizing and appealing to every local TU in the country. It is making fine connections and is planning to develop the organization of local TU committees who will themselves be responsible for the relief work in their TU fields. The value of this kind of work needs no emphasis.

The "B" [Friends of Soviet Russia] is successfully proceeding with its work. The recent collection in SD1 — D2 [New York City] netted big results in cash. There is however a slowing up of receipts.

We are informed by Jewish customers [Jewish Communist Federation] that Mr. Dch. [???], whom you recommend as salesman for special article is not fitted for the work in question; also he is unpopular with those with whom he would have to work. They recommend that you do not send him. We know nothing of the matter and are forwarding this information at the request of the Jewish customers. How about their funds?

Agrarian.

Harrow [Harold Ware] is making splendid headway in lining up a strong group of directors of the NPL [Non-Partisan League]. He has been out there in connection with relief work and will submit a complete report to you which we will send next week.

Now it is our turn to give you Hell. We have not received a line from you since the arrival of your no. 7 report weeks ago. We have been sending you all our statements and since we came into office† we have been sending weekly letter, publications, minutes, and full information regarding all our activities and you threatened to write us once a week. Why not make your threat good?‡

Fraternally yours,

L.C. Wheat [Jay Lovestone].

†- Jay Lovestone assumed the role of Executive Secretary of the Communist Party of America on February 22, 1922. He took over for Will Weinstone, who resigned for reasons of health.

‡- Handwritten marginal note on the original document: "I did. J.C. ["John Carr" = Ludwig Katterfeld]."

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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