
Letter to the Executive Committee of the Communist International in Moscow from the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America in New York, Jan. 19, 1921

Document in the Comintern Archive, RGASPI, f. 515, op. 1, d. 46, ll. 1-2.

Jan. 19, 1921. of proportional representation.

To the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

Dear Comrades:—

We sincerely regret the necessity of bringing up to you again the question of unity between the Communist Party of America and the United Communist Party of America, without being able to state that it has been accomplished, or even that it will be accomplished in the near future. In fact, it seems to us that only further definite instructions from your committee will bring it about.

The attached documents (four statements on Unity Proceedings and the statement of our July, August, September, and October [1920] dues) will show that we have maintained as an absolutely essential point, and we are firmly convinced that your committee will never recede from it, that unity between the CP and UCP can be and must be achieved only through a joint unity convention *on the basis of proportional representation*.

Unity was not achieved by the time limit set by your committee (Jan. 1, 1921) because the UCP refused, and still refuses, to abide by this condition, even though it is so clearly provided for in your decisions.

The UCP claim that the CP statement of July, August, September, and October [1920] dues is fraudulent, and under this false pretext they have refused to go into a joint unity convention on the basis

of proportional representation. Whatever books and records of our party they wanted to see, not only from our National Office, but from the Federations as well, were shown to them, and they were unable to find anything wrong with them, or that our statement was not correct according to the facts recorded in the books and records of our party.

Taking into consideration the fact that a number of our comrades have left for Russia in the course of the last 2 or 3 months, and that unemployment is also affecting dues payments for those months (which must be equally true of the UCP), our November and December [1920] dues figures (5119 and 7301, respectively), as well as the number of members ascertained through our district conventions in the middle of December (6752), have conclusively corroborated our statement from July, August, September, and October [1920]. The great difference between the figures for July and September [1920], (which latter were all in before your decision became known to us) is explained by the fact that in July we had not yet fully recovered from the [April 1920] split, and that we had our convention in that month, when all District Organizers and other active party workers were called away from their places; also by conditions in the Lithuanian Federation fully explained in our correspondence with the UCP.

As a precaution against our dues statement being proved absolutely correct, the UCP set up the additional claim that portions of our dues were collected from members who were not integral parts of our underground organization, which is absolutely false.

From the outset of the negotiations the UCP

repudiated the principle of proportional representation, demanding for them a representation [on the CEC] of 6 to 4, although they knew perfectly well that they did not have even as many members as the CP. They stood by this demand even after your decisions were authoritatively communicated to them and the exchange of statements had indicated that the membership of the CP exceeded their membership at a rate of 5 to 3. Even their last demand for equal representation is a repudiation of the principle of proportional representation.

When the direct negotiations between the CP and the UCP came to naught, we still had hopes that the coming of the delegates who had pledged to you to bring about unity on the basis of your decisions would force the UCP to agree to all the conditions laid down by you. It was very unfortunate that their coming was so greatly delayed, and that our delegate is not here yet even now.

Scott [Karlis Janson] of the UCP arrived here about Jan. 11 [1921] (according to his own statement), and we hoped that he would induce the UCP to abide by your decisions. He made a report to our CEC several days ago, and evaded direct answer to our question whether or not he will ask the UCP to accept proportional representation. Since then he has tried to shift responsibility for carrying out the pledge that he gave you to the American Agency, writing in the name of K. [Sen Katayama] and himself, although signing as an individual, because K. [Katayama] correctly maintains that the American Agency is not authorized to act on the unity question. Scott [Janson] has not yet given answer to our inquiry as to whether or not the American Agency has credentials to act on the unity question (copies of our letters to Scott [Janson] and his answers to us attached herewith).

It appears quite plainly that Scott [Janson] has already acceded to the plans of the UCP for equal representation instead of proportional representation as proposed by your committee.

In the absence of our delegate [Louis Fraina], we deem it absolutely necessary to present to you fully our side of the question also in order that you may have before you both sides when it is brought up to you for further decisions by the UCP or their delegate Scott [Janson].

We are firmly convinced that you will not re-

cede from the provision of a joint unity convention on the basis of proportional representation, as that is absolutely necessary for the complete and organic unification of both parties and for the purpose of giving to the rightful majority of the Communist elements in America due control of the united party.

Fraternally yours,

Central Executive Committee,
COMMUNIST PARTY OF AMERICA.

by C. Dobin [Charles Dirba],
Exec. Sec.

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[1.]

Copy of our letter to C.E. Scott [Janson].

Jan. 12, 1921.

Dear Comrade:—

Inasmuch as unity has not been achieved within the time limit set by the EC of the CI (Jan. 1, 1921), because the UCP has refused and still refuses to abide by the 6 conditions for unity laid down by the Executive Committee of the Communist International, the CEC of the CP addresses itself directly to you in an effort to bring the impasse to a head.

One of the 6 conditions was your own pledge to carry out the mandate of the CI.

Another of these 6 points is the provision for a joint unity convention on the basis of proportional representation according to dues paid in July, August, September, and October [1921], as appearing on official books.

The CEC of the CP categorically requests a reply from you as to the present attitude of the UCP after having considered your report; together with your own attitude toward the persistent refusal of the UCP to enter a joint convention with the CP as provided by the Communist International.

The CEC of the CP has voted to remain in session awaiting your answer, and expects to hear from you within 48 hours.

Fraternally,

[3.]

Our Letter to Scott [Janson].

*Central Executive Committee,
COMMUNIST PARTY OF AMERICA.*

Jan. 15, 1921.

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Dear Comrade:—

[2.]

Scott's [Janson's] Reply.

Jan. 14, 1921.

In your letter of the 14th, asking us for a written statement and documents on the unity question, you see, to speak in the name of the American Agency of the Communist International.

If that is the case we want to know definitely whether or not the American Agency is properly accredited to act on the question of unity.

We request an immediate answer from you to this question.

If the American Agency is so accredited, we request presentation of the credentials to that effect.

To the CEC of the CP.

Dear Comrades:—

In reply to your letter of Jan. 12th [1921] with reference to unity, I wish to state that we (Com. K. [Katayama] and myself) appeared before the CEC of the UCP with our report from Moscow.

The CEC of the UCP will give us a written statement supplemented with documents tomorrow.

We are now waiting for your written statement and documents.

After receiving both statements we will decide what steps to take in order to achieve unity.

Fraternally,

*Central Executive Committee,
COMMUNIST PARTY OF AMERICA..*

(To this letter we have not received any answer up to this date, Jan. 19 [1921].)

With Communist greetings,

Chas. Ed. Scott [Karlis Janson].

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Edited by Tim Davenport.

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