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# Letter to Ludwig Katterfeld in Moscow from Abram Jakira in New York, Oct. 23, 1922.

Document in the Comintern Archive, RGASPI, f. 515, op. 1, d. 100, l. 84.

Oct. 23, 1922.      inquire whether they did sent that cable.

Dear Comrade Carr:

This is the 4th letter that I am sending you. I have not numbered the first 3 as I was not sure whether they would reach you personally. From now all the letters will be numbered.

Your communications 1, 2, and 4 received. I had no chance to go down for letter #3. I shall get it within a day or two.

Besides my letters, there were 2 reports (of which the CEC knows) sent to the main office [ECCI] by Com. Michaelson [CI Rep Genrik Valetski] and a number of documents dealing with the policies of the CEC and with unity. Some of them were sent to Com. Davidson's [RILU Rep Boris Reinstein's] address. Please let me know whether you received all the documents sent to you.

The matter of the cable mentioned in your letter #4 is a puzzle to me. I could not make out whether the cable was sent from G [=??] here or vice-versa. It could not have been sent from here, as M [=??] was still in the states at that time. However, I brought the matter up before the committee [CEC] and it is being investigated. I believe that Lansing [Arne Swabeck] and Cook [Jim Cannon] have sent that cable from C [Comintern] asking one of the three mentioned in your letter to come and make a report on the situation. Please

As I have already reported, one more delegate (from former opposition) was added to our delegation. The delegation therefore consists of — Carr [Katterfeld], Sasha [Rose Pastor Stokes], Marshall [Max Bedacht], Billings [Otto Huiswood] (who was elected instead of Bruce [black Communist], who was unable to leave), Lansing [Swabeck], Starr [Oliver Carlson], Davis [=??], and Sullivan [Alfred S. Edwards]. All of them have left and will probably be there by the time this reaches you.

There will also be a number of delegates to Profintern, most of whom (if not all) are ~~party members~~ [x-ed out with typewriter].

There are new developments in the defense matter.† The CLP cases are coming up on Dec. 5th [1922]. All the defendants must appear in court to put up new bail. The committee [CEC] has discussed this matter and has made the following decision (use same code used by you in your letter #4):

To inform you that you 2/3 7/1 3/1 31/4 31/4 7/1 6/3 11/4 10/6 <line break in mss.> 1/6 1/5 7/4 6/5 2/3 3/11 11/4 41/7 in readiness to 3/6 3/11 3/9 7/4 3/6 3/3 <line break in mss.> 7/1 6/3 6/4 6/6 upon receipt of 2/6 3/1 48/4 48/6 21/2 from 7/4 2/3, in order that you may be able to 5/1 13/12 13/12 13/11 13/1 5/6 3/4 3/3 — 2/6 2/5 7/4 3/6 8/5 1/3 1/2 3/9 3/2 1/4 8/4. Meanwhile an attempt is being made to have the 10/6

†- Although most of this paragraph is in a variant of "fractions code" which remains to be broken, this passage clearly relates to Katterfeld's legal problems and the need to return home to avoid bail forfeiture and an escalation of subsequent bail bonds on other party members. Katterfeld had been a defendant in the July 1920 mass trial of the leadership of the CLP held in Chicago, unsuccessfully defended by Clarence Darrow. On Aug. 2, 1920, Katterfeld received a sentence of 1-5 years in prison and a \$2,000 fine. He remained free on bail pending appeal; this situation was clearly coming to an end at this juncture, however. Katterfeld hastily left Moscow for America during the first week of December 1922, turning over the position of the CPA's CI Rep provisionally to his factional ally Otto Huiswood. He served prison time at the penitentiary at Joliet, Illinois, in 1923 and was apparently released sometime in 1924.

10/5 10/2 9/1 22/6 20/1 21/3 17/2 13/12 1/5 1/2 8/4 12/1. In your 2/6 3/1 2/3 9/1 and also of 21/6 20/1 21/9 21/8 21/3 it means that you will have to choose between the following: either to 48/4 40/6 40/3 40/2 37/2 8/5 16/1 9/3 9/2 6/5 6/7 1/6 1/5 7/4 3/6 4/3 14/4 14/5 6/4 and in this way avoid 48/4 9/1 1/3 1/2 1/1 3/1 3/6 3/6 6/6 2/3 6/1 6/6 23/2 on 29/8 29/7 29/6 29/5 29/4 29/3 29/2 29/1 29/6 29/5 29/2 26/2 29/3 30/4 or you will have to put up 24/6 24/1 26/1 31/4 1/5 1/2 29/8 29/7 29/6 2/6 3/1 2/7 9/1 also and face the charges. This depends upon the conditions at that time.

Such a decision was reached by our committee for the reason that the new cases will require tremendous sums for bail and it is hard to raise it, in view of the fact that some of the IWWs have failed to show up and forfeited their bail. Special assurances must be given that all defendants for whom bail was put up will appear. The courts are also using the IWW cases as an excuse for demanding high bail. Further forfeitures of bail will have an extremely undesirable effect on the other cases.

Your recommendation on the press service came too late. Such already exists, though on a small scale. All articles must go directly to us.

The editorial and political committee are not ready to submit a draft of the program as was originally intended. The time was too short to prepare all the material necessary for a real program. The matter of the program for the American section, therefore, will have to be laid over for the time being. The matter of relief has been discussed here time and time again. The relief work has not been making any headway until now. However, we hope that the work will be started again with full vigor. They are now busy arranging the sale and disposition of the 9/9 1/5 1/6 2/3.

I regret to hear that you have failed to get the expected 41/7 32/3 32/3 32/4 32/2 29/6 23/5 24/3 [relates to CI subsidy]. I have already written you on the urgency of this matter in a previous letter and hope you will act accordingly. The prospects for the future are bright. What we need now is to have some means to carry us through this critical period and to cover previous deficits.

I have mailed you a copy of the minutes of our committee [CEC]. You will find there all the decisions on the matter of the delegates and also of Cook [Cannon].† The books have reached us, however it is to be regretted that they are not in the English language.

Comrade Michaelson [Valetski] will be able to make a detailed report on the progress of the work of the organization. I may say that, for the time being, the work of the committee [CEC] is encouraging.

The G [Labor Defense Council] has been launched in all important centers. We hope to make it an extensive mass organization. It has a big task to perform, too. It is now definitely established that out of the 75 persons wanted by the DJ [Dept. of Justice, for attending the Bridgman Convention], at least 6/8 10/12 5/1 5/6 6/6 45/6 45/5 45/4 42/2 42/1 42/3 42/6 3/3 3/1 1/4 3/11 3/10 45/5 45/6 42/8 42/7 42/2 42/7 40/3 40/1 4/3 3/11 3/10.

All the reactionary forces are now forming a united front against the radicals. The KKK has organized a campaign against the reds. One of the Boston capitalist papers is publishing a series of articles dealing with the reds in America with a view of arousing the patriotic feelings of the Americans.

The Workmen's Circle, as you probably already know, decided to establish a hospital in Soviet Russia at a cost of about \$25,000. The Executive Board of the WC, at its last meeting, elected two of its members to go to Russia to make arrangements on the

†- Upon winning control of the apparatus of the underground CPA at the August 1922 Bridgman Convention, the Jakira-led CEC almost immediately sought the recall of their arch-opponent Jim Cannon from Moscow, where he was serving as American delegate to the RILU Bureau and ECCI. The CEC issued instructions that Arne Swabeck was to take over on the RILU Bureau, sent their close ally Katterfeld back to Moscow to resume the position of American delegate to ECCI, and ordered Cannon home. In a Sept. 17, 1922 letter to Moscow, Jakira relayed this information to ECCI, writing that "Com. Cook [Cannon] is requested to return at once, as conditions in the Party require his services here. Most of our active comrades are for the present unable to appear in public and the L [legal] work is greatly hampered on account of this." However, with the 4th World Congress of the Comintern in the offing, Cannon was able to rally supporters in the Comintern apparatus and countermand the American party's directive to return home; instead Cannon remained in Moscow as a delegate to the Congress, where he worked in the American Commission for the complete opening of the work of the American Communist movement.

matter of the hospital. The names of the two are Weinberg and Guskin, both watchdogs of Abe Cahan and Max Pine. Both are outspoken opponents of Soviet Russia and were the initiators of the resolution passed by WC convention demanding the release of Social-Rev.† It may be expected that those two yellows will, upon return from Russia, conduct a campaign against the Soviet Republic, as was the case with Max Pine and [Benjamin] Schlessinger. Upon a request of the JF [Jewish Federation] of the Party, the CEC decided to ask the Soviet Government... *<lines deleted>*

There are such men in the Executive Committee of the WC. A cable was sent to you to this effect through *<words deleted>*. You will take this into consideration and do all you can to see to it that the decision of the CEC is acted upon favorably. At any rate, do not fail to call the attention of the RC [??] to this matter.

The CEC, at its last session, adopted a resolu-

tion endorsing the formation of an LP [Labor Party] and decided to conduct agitation in favor of its formation by bona fide labor organizations. The resolution and the detailed report on this matter will be sent to you separately. A draft of the resolution, which has to be improved in style, is herewith enclosed. The vote on this matter was practically unanimous. Comrade Smith [Edward Lindgren] was the only one who voted against it, not from the point of view of principle but from the point of view of expediency. You will take this decision of the Executive into consideration (if it reaches you in time) when you are making decisions on this matter at the Congress.

More news to follow.

Fraternally yours,

*[Abram Jakira,]*

Exec. Sec.

†- Reference is to the 1922 show trial in which leading members of the neo-populist Socialist Revolutionary Party (PSR) were put on trial for their lives for having purportedly engaged in a terrorist conspiracy aimed at the counterrevolutionary overthrow of Soviet Russia. While the sensational trial of the PSR leaders was not the first such political show trial (see, for example, the Trial of the "Tactical Center" in 1920) it was the first truly prominent case, generating an immense public reaction that was particularly vehement among the non-Communist Left. The trial of the PSR leaders was a precursor to other spectacular cases, such as the Savinkov Trial (1924), the Shakhty Affair (1928), the Academic Affair (1929), the Trial of the 48 (1930), the Industrial Party Trial (1930), the Menshevik Trial (1931), Metro-Vickers (1933), the 3 Great Show Trials of 1936-38, etc. These show trials and the emerging police state behind them went far in discrediting the Bolshevik Revolution and served to isolate and marginalize the Communist movement.

***Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport.***

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