
Letter to the Workers Party of America from Vasil Kolarov, General Secretary of ECCI, December 7, 1923

by Vasil Kolarov

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To the Workers Party of America.

Dear Comrades:

The Convention of the Workers Party of America is taking place at a time when world reaction is preparing another blow against the international proletariat. Gathered like ravens over the bodies of the working class of Germany, the imperialist powers of France, England, and America are making their plans to divide the spoils in Germany and reduce the working class to the position of coolies. The capitalists of Germany have established their military dictatorship and are ready to cooperate with the foreign imperialists provided they are guaranteed part of the booty.

In several states of Europe fascism holds the workers in its bloody grip. Italy, Spain, and Bulgaria are in the throes of the wildest reaction. The White Terror rules in Finland, Romania, and Hungary.

In Soviet Russia alone, the rule of the workers and peasants is unshaken despite the many attempts that have been made to destroy it. The Soviet power is consolidating itself more and more and today stands invincible to the plots and intrigues of the reactionary capitalist governments and counterrevolutionary emigrés.

American Imperialism, with its surplus of war gains wrung from the working class, is utilizing the broken down condition of Europe to make fresh conquests. In Europe, it is directing its forces once more

against Soviet Russia, in the hope of undermining the Soviet power. The path to this new attempt is over the bodies of the enslaved German workers who are to be bought with food furnished to the murderous Seeckt military dictatorship. In Asia, American Imperialism is penetrating further into the heart of China, where it is securing a stranglehold on its resources and industries. The earthquake in Japan, which has seriously weakened Japanese imperialism, is opening up the door for American encroachments, which must surely lead to war. In South and Central America and Mexico, American Imperialism is in the heyday of its expansionist policies, whose aim is the acquirement of large sources of raw material and the extension of fields of investment for Wall Street and American industrialists.

New, fearful wars menace the whole world as a result of the machinations of American Imperialism. It is the duty of the American workers to watch well the acts of their capitalists. They must prevent any interference with the struggle of the Germany workers to obtain their freedom. They must fight against attempts to embroil the American workers in new wars for the sake of capitalist profits. It will be the duty particularly of the Communists to mobilize the proletariat of the United States against the coming wars.

To perform this and the many other tasks confronting the Party, the Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party has rightfully conceived as the most important step the establishment of an *English Communist Daily* in the United States. This Daily must become the medium for reaching the widest masses of

†- As this communique was prepared for the edification of the 3rd Convention of the Workers Party of America, held in Chicago from Jan. 30, 1923 to Jan. 2, 1924, it is clear that the date on this document is in the Russian style of DD/MM/YY.

the workers and mobilizing them for militant action in protection of their rights and in securing final control of power. The struggles in the United States are among the bloodiest in the world. The power of the capitalist press is tremendous. The workers have no real expression throughout the country and hence are exposed to misrepresentation and distortion of fact, which is one of the methods that the capitalist class of America employs in order to crush the labor movement. The Communist Daily must become the organ not of the revolutionists alone, but of the **WHOLE WORKING CLASS**. Hence the whole strength of the Party must be mobilized for the establishment of the Daily, which should be the forerunner of more revolutionary dailies in other parts of the country.

To accomplish this task and to put the Daily on a sound basis, the membership must be drawn into close relationship with one another. The Language Federations are essential for propaganda among the foreign-born workers and must be retained for that purpose. Within the Party, however, there should be created international branches comprising all the membership, regardless of language. Thus members of all nationalities and Negro workers will be grouped in uniform branches and work together on the problems confronting the Party. This will produce greater mobility and lead to the inner harmony that is fundamental to all Communist action. In an industrial country like the United States, the shops and mills are the centers of activity. It is obvious, therefore, that *the shop must be the basis of all Party work*. Even though the factories are infested with spies placed there by the capitalists, thus rendering work difficult, the basic unit of the Party must be the **SHOP NUCLEUS**. This will enable us to gather the workers on the job, where they feel most keenly the capitalist and the force of the government.

The excellent work that has been done by the Communists in the Left Wing of the labor movement of the United States demonstrates that if all the comrades were members of trade unions, the work would increase many fold. We must repeat the decision of the last session of the Enlarged Executive Committee [3rd: June 12-23, 1923], to the effect that it is the duty of all Communists to join the trade unions and be active in their work. The Convention of the Workers Party must take steps to get the comrades into the

unions. This is one of its main tasks and one not to be neglected.

The propaganda that the Workers Party has conducted during the past year has been most effective. As a result, the ideas of Communism and the Communist movement are the center of discussion both among the workers and the capitalists. Despite the savage attempts of the American bourgeoisie to instill fear in the minds of American workers at the suggestion of communism, and to point to the achievements of American democracy as the highest that mankind can aspire to the *actions* of the American capitalist class and the capitalist government, the past 2 years have opened the eyes of the workers. The strikes of 1922 taught them the *true* meaning of capitalist democracy; it also taught them that the Communists are feared and persecuted by the capitalist class merely because they are the most powerful spokesmen of the working class and the most valiant fighters in their interests.

The vast sentiment for Communism that the Workers Party has aroused must be organized. Your Central Executive Committee acted right in inaugurating a campaign for membership. This campaign must be a matter of discipline. Each member of the Party must be pledged to secure one or more new members of the Party. The Workers Party must increase its membership several times before it will become a factor in the proletarian movement in the United States that the Communists are destined to become.

The Workers Party has applied Communist tactics correctly in seeking a United Front of all forces to fight the capitalist system in the United States. It has sought a United Front not only on the economic, but particularly on the political field. That Gompers and the reactionary trade union officialdom oppose it because of their antiquated, treacherous policy of "rewarding the friends and punishing the enemies of labor" in the capitalist parties; that the Socialists, having renounced every revolutionary idea and lined up with the reactionary forces of the country, also oppose it; and that a few so-called "progressive" trade unions leaders of the Middle West have betrayed the workers and gone over to Gompers, that they denounce the ideas they once stood for and therefore also oppose the United Front — is creating the best basis for the United Front policy. This treachery has been and will

remain one of the chief reasons why the workers of America still are the prey of the capitalist parties of America. This treachery, however, will show the workers so much the more clearly the necessity of the United Front. It will also demonstrate to them that *the Communists, who are the only militant exponents of the United Front, are not only their best friends, but the only ones in the United States who understand the political needs of the working class.*

The organization of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party was an achievement of primary importance. The coming together of the militant farmers and workers for the attainment of political power against the control of the capitalist parties, revealed an awakening consciousness and a rising spirit no longer to tolerate political domination by the bourgeoisie. In the Federated Farmer-Labor Party are organized only a small portion of the militant workers and farmers. *The United Front of all proletarian and farmers' parties and organizations for the fight against capitalism is the demand of the hour.* The Communists must spare no effort to bring this about.

This is all the more necessary in view of the Presidential elections of 1924. The labor parties and farmer-labor parties that have been formed in 29 states must be consolidated into a United Front; they must put up joint proletarian candidates. They must fight as a united body against the reaction that is bound to set in after the elections. They must be prepared to support the United Front with their economic power. The chaos in the working class movement must be ended. This is the task of the Communists, a task they are performing with great effort.

There is one problem to which the American Communists have not applied themselves with sufficient energy, viz., that of American Imperialism. The huge profits from the war and the exploitation of foreign markets have enabled the American bourgeoisie to penetrate deeper into the Latin American countries. The recent declaration of Secretary of State Hughes to the effect that the interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine must be left exclusively to the discretion of America, is already bearing fruit. The recognition of

Mexico is merely a trick to give American capitalists greater control over the resources of Mexico and, in case of "trouble," afford the American government an excuse for intervention "in protection of American property and interests." The conflict in Cuba, which will also probably end with an intervention, the continued military occupation of Haiti and Santo Domingo, the muzzling of Nicaragua, Panama, and Colombia, the loans to the numerous South American states, and the rising revolt in the Philippines, indicate that American Imperialism intends to conquer the western hemisphere and force the colonies under complete control.

This is a problem of *vital* importance to the American working class. Fearful imperialist wars face the country. The bourgeoisie is making ready. The government is perfecting its military machinery; General Pershing is demanding *a larger army.* *The Communists must sound the alarm and prepare the workers for resistance to these bloody schemes.* The Communists must point out that the illegal organizations of the capitalist class, the spies, and especially the Ku Klux Klan and American Legion, are a product of the foresight of the capitalists and are openly sponsored by the government of the United States. *The capitalists are prepared to crush any attempt to interfere with their plans.*

These, Comrades, are the vital problems that confront the Party. To propagate them and organize the workers for action will demand the concentrated strength of the whole Party membership.

We greet the 3rd Convention of the Workers Party and have confidence that the Party will line up the workers of America with the revolutionary workers of the world in a struggle against capitalism and for the establishment of a Workers' and Farmers' Government.

With Communist Greetings,

Executive Committee of
the Communist International.

V. Kolarov, General Secretary.

*Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport.
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