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# Letter to C.E. Ruthenberg in New York from Leonid Belsky in Chicago, April 30, 1920.

A document in the Hoover Institution Archives, Jay Lovestone Papers, box 195, folder 10.

April 30, 1920.

Dear Damon [Ruthenberg]:—

It seems we had good luck with the last issue of the paper, which according to my informants arrived safely everywhere. In addition to the packages sent out to the districts, I mailed smaller parcels to every available address, including 25 copies to your New York address, which I hope you have received. Have also sent 300 to Pittsburgh and 500 to Philadelphia, which I included in the NY package to be forwarded to them. The only uncertain place is Detroit. The man has left the trunks at the appointed place (store), but has not met Comrade D. [???]; later I have mailed No. 4 and also a package containing the [dues] stamps, in addition to it I wrote a couple letters, but never received any answer. [Joseph] Kowalski, who came back two days ago, tried to meet Comrade D. [???] in Detroit, but have not received an answer yet. According to your last letter the Detroit District Committee requested the District Organizer ["W.E. Allen"] to leave — does it mean he has left the city?

The Debs [open letter] leaflets are now on the press and will be distributed during the next week. Comrade W. [???] from Cleveland is asking me to have an additional 100,000 printed and shipped to his district, because the printer who had the order was arrested and he is not able to find another. I will do it, but do not think they need such a large quantity. Printing paper is so scarce that we are forced to limit our orders, so I will try to send over to Cleveland from 35,000 to 50,000 and believe that under the circumstances they will be satisfied. I would like to know whether we have to supply Detroit with these leaflets also and who shall receive them.

The next issue of the paper [*The Communist*] will go to press Tuesday [May 4, 1920], as I have informed you in one of my previous letters, and your article ["What Kind of Party?"] will be set immediately after it gets here.

Your [April 28, 1920] letter was blue. I am not convinced by the vote of any District Committee, because I believe that the membership is with us. We must go to the rank and file and explain to them the situation. They cannot understand us because they were kept ignorant about the facts in the party. We must be able to overthrow every committee supporting the majority group. Their advantage of legality will fail to help them as soon as we are able to expose this group to the membership. We must develop at once stronger activities and start an attack all along the front. The CLP group is trying to make capital out of the present situation, but we must be firm. They have no choice; they cannot join with Hourwich, they must stick to us. They are trying to find out what kind of concessions we would make in order to get their signature, but they finally will be glad to close an advantageous deal with our group and get rid of Hourwich. We certainly need their signature, but should not sacrifice anything, we must keep the old agreement. Your last letter just received, it is bringing good news.

Must leave in a few minutes, am going to St. Louis and Kansas City. I will be back Monday morning [May 3, 1920].

I would suggest that you let me go East at once in order to get Russians in New York, Pittsburgh, and Detroit with us. I can speak their language, they know me, and I never participated in their controversies before. If we get the Russians, we will get the party. Loss of Russian support means death to the majority group. There is nobody else who can accomplish it. Kasbeck

[Alex Georgian] is too passive, he is losing valuable time. I admit that he in his capacity as a member of the CEC can make a stronger impression, but I can get credentials of the Russian District Committee in Chicago and I am not afraid to go before the membership as a representative of opposition. We have strong support in our paper, which is being sent out to every Russian branch. You could give me additional credentials and I know that I would be able to change the situation in every doubtful place. Russian [Federation] will agree to pay my expenses. The elections in our district are nearly complete and there is no danger for me to leave. Selakovich will work as Sub-District Organizer in Chicago. It would be better yet if you would come immediately to Chicago and establish here the National Office, then you could possibly find better help and start arrangements for the convention. We will force the majority group to go to the convention not through negotiations, but through capturing the organization. If we get the Russians, we will also get the rest of the Slavic branches. Let us act at once. Do not delay the convention. Time was lost because we were poor in organizers. Michels wrote me a disgusting letter, in which he complains about the New York defeat, but does not suggest any action. Boston and Detroit were temporarily lost on account

of inactivity of our organizers. I just received a letter from [Detroit organizer W.A.] Davey [=???] which shows his helplessness. I will get the Russians and Germans in Detroit and possibly we will be able to reach understanding with the whole district. I do not have the time to make it clear to you and go into details. But it is the opinion of the whole of our District Committee, including Ferguson, Stankovich, and all the others.

Tuesday night [May 4, 1920] we will have a meeting. Let us know about your decision in this matter. Wire, if you cannot reach us by letter in time. We are anxious to do anything to convince the membership in other districts. We realize that nothing can be changed by only raising the banner of revolt, but we must clear up the EXISTING SENTIMENT OF REVOLT and make it conscious in the direction of support of the call for the convention, regardless of the majority group.

Please answer at once. Did not send you any of the resolutions of the D.C. [District Committee], it is not necessary. I tried to tell you about the plan of ACTION, which must be carried out without delay.

Yours for the victory,

Ed Fisher [Leonid Belsky].

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

*Second Edition, May 2007 — Identifies "Kasbeck" as Alex Georgian.*

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