
Letter to C.E. Ruthenberg in New York from Leonid Belsky in Chicago, May 5, 1920.

A document in the Hoover Institution Archives, Jay Lovestone Papers, box 195, folder 11.

Chicago, May 5, 1920.

Dear Damon [Ruthenberg]:—

I wrote you yesterday that the arranged place [Wolfskeel Resort, Bridgman, Michigan] will be available for us not later than June 1. This morning I had a conversation with the proprietor [Karl Wolfskeel] and he agreed to shift the date [back] to June 15. It means that both — “majority” group and CLP — can be tested in regard to the honesty of their desire of a “joint” convention, as they can be given five weeks for the elections. Last night I reported to the [Chicago] District Committee about the latest developments, regarding the possibilities of holding a convention with either group and the following is the resolution adopted by unanimous vote of 10 members of the committee and Comrade F. [Ferguson] who was also present:

1. Convention not later than May 25 [1920], regardless of participation of other groups.

2. No special agreement for representation of “majority” group of CEC at the Convention, except as they participate in the regular elections.

3. Joint Convention with CLP on basis of offer made by CEC.

This resolution is voicing the opinion of the membership of our district and also the South Slavic and Polish Federations. We will explain our position on this question to the whole membership of both parties through a statement, to be

issued by the District Committee, and do not doubt that the large majority will support us. We must not negotiate with either group of politicians and need not, because neither of them can hold a convention WITHOUT US. If they will reject the above conditions, we shall hold our convention consisting of 32 delegates, which will represent 90% of our membership, we shall organize a party, which under no circumstances can be weaker as before and our new CEC will get a mandate, giving it the power to deal with the other communist “groups,” desirous to join the party. There is no other solution to be allowed in case the two “groups,” practically without any membership, will not show more sense and honesty. We feel solid ground under our feet, our district will stay unshaken, even if the whole “majority” would come over to visit us and we are able to take good care of our nearest neighbor, Detroit, which will be in our hands before long.

According to another decision of our DC [District Committee] we will assist you in any district to which you find it necessary to call us. [Meyer] Loonin so far has not found any support, he had a complete fiasco in Milwaukee and here, he was sharply repudiated by Jewish branches and he is afraid to go elsewhere, even to the DC, to which we have invited him. All he is doing is a complete failure and we are wondering how long he will go to stay here.

Enclosed find a list of stamps sent to other districts and Federations. The next issue of the paper [*The Communist*] will be sent out tomor-

row. The Debs [open] letter is sent to Cleveland, I will take it to Detroit also this Saturday.

It is absolutely essential to have a statement of the recent negotiations with the CLP to show our membership — why a Joint Convention cannot be held.

Fraternally yours,

[Leonid Belsky]

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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