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# The Conference of Russian Branches of the American Socialist Party in Chicago: Organization, Representation, and Activities.

[events of March 24 to Aug. 9, 1919]

by Jacob Spolansky

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*Report Made by:* J. Spolansky  
*Place Where Made:* Chicago, Ill.  
*Date When Made:* August 19, 1919.  
*Period for Which Made:* Aug. 9, 1919.

*Title of Case and Offense Charged  
or Nature of Matter Under Investigation:*

**In re: Communist Party —  
Summary of Organization,  
Representation, and Activities  
of the Communist Party of America,  
taken from the Official Minutes of  
the Russian Socialist Federation.  
Bolshevik Matter.**

*Statement of Operations, Evidence Collected, Names and  
Addresses of Persons Interviewed, Places Visited, Etc.:*

## ***At Chicago.***

The first meeting of delegates of various foreign federations who share the views of the Russian Bolsheviks and the German Spartacus group was held on March 24 [1919], following a call issued by Alexander Stoklitsky. The chairman of that meeting was *Alexander Stoklitsky* and the secretary was *B. Berezovsky*. The following delegates and organizations were represented at this conference:

**1st Russian Branch — 8 delegates:**  
Sokolov, Rachkis, Kravec, Fedoruk, Miss Rowsky, Mirsky, Berezovsky, and Skocz.

**2nd Russian Branch — 17 delegates:**  
K. Bush, Zaloga, Bliznuk, Martinovich, Kaplan, Shumovich, Garfinkel, Neakovich, Lob, Stoklitsky, Repicha, Vershkov, Gubarevich, Cherepenkov, Yakushevich, Viskorka, and Somer.

**3rd Russian Branch — 3 delegates:**  
Trushinsky, Chilkov, and Penkevich.

**5th Russian Branch — 5 delegates:**  
Lapka, G. Shklar, V. Kolesnikov, and Bondar.

**10th Ukrainian Branch — 3 delegates:**  
V. Rushitsky, E. Vigok, V. Yavorsky.

**43rd Lith. Branch, Melrose Park — 1 delegate:**  
Himsha.

**7th Russian Branch — 3 delegates:**  
Gavrilovich, Tsachny, and Grigoriev.

**Lettish [Latvian] Branch — 9 delegates:**  
S. Jacobson, M. Jacobson, Z. Sungalis, I. Sungalis, Anderson, Salub, Myer, Lipo, and Elm.

At this conference it was decided to establish a Left Wing organization in the city of Chicago; and, after Stoklitsky delivered a lengthy speech, in which he emphasized the necessity of establishing a wide organization for the purpose of furthering the communistic ideas. It was decided to elect delegates to the *Chicago Communist Propaganda League*, who will in conjunction with the English comrades, pave their way for a Communist Party of America. The name of this conference, which was submitted by Stoklitsky, is the *Conference of the Russian Branches of the American Socialist Party in Chicago who share the Program of the Communist Party*. The name was adopted unanimously.

Four delegates were elected to the Communist Propaganda League, who are as follows: *Sungalis, Stoklitsky, Berezovsky, and Garfinkel*.

Alexander Stoklitsky also made a motion that on the coming 1st of May a demonstration of the followers of the Russian Bolsheviki and German Spartans should be held in the foreign populated districts of Chicago and the question should be taken up with the Cook County Socialist Party Committee, and if the said committee will not sanction this demonstration the Conference should arrange the same independently.

In view of the fact that this Conference represents every national organization of the city of Chicago, it was decided to disband the *Soviet of Russian Workingmen*, as this newly organized body fully covers the purpose and is practically a copy of the Russian Soviet.

On March 30, 1919, a meeting of the Executive Committee of this Conference was held, of which the chairman was *Kaplan*. The following members were present: Yavorsky, Lob, Kaplan, Buch, Stoklitsky, Sokolov, Garfinkel, and Berezovsky. At this meeting it was decided that all the delegates of the Cook County Socialist Party who share the views of the Communist Party shall sit separately at the coming Cook County Convention and employ all possible means to capture this convention for the purpose of utilizing the same as a moral victory for future propaganda and the establishment of the Communist Party. The constitution of the New York Left Wing Section was adopted, and it was decided to hold the Conference of this organization in secret.

A meeting was held on April 16, 1919, at the Smolnyi Institute, 1221 Blue Island Ave., at which the final amendments to the constitution were adopted, which read as follows:

### 1. Name of the Organization.

Conference of the Russian Branches of the American Socialist Party of the City of Chicago who share the Views of the Communist Party.

### 2. Right to participate in this Conference.

Every revolutionary Socialist organization which shares the views of the Bolshevik Communist Party of Russian and which recognizes the Soviet Government of Russia in its foreign and internal politics, has the right to participate at this Conference.

### 3. Members of the Conference.

Every member of the Socialist Party who recognizes and believes in the above-mentioned principles has a right of membership in this organization.

This Conference personifies the ideas and principles of the Russian Communist Bolshevik Party and carries an active agitation in the American Socialist Party and among the rank and file of the proletariat of Chicago and vicinity by selling literature and holding lectures, at which the principles of international socialism are being shown, and also by organizing a Bureau of Educators. This Conference has also in view the coordination and harmony of the future propaganda work of the various radical organizations of the city of Chicago. The Conference acts independently and for its actions is responsible before the organizations who are represented in it.

The representation at this Conference is as follows:

5 to 25 members — 1 delegate;  
25 to 50 members — 2 delegates;  
50 to 75 members — 3 delegates; etc.

The Soviet of Russian Workers of the City of Chicago offers a donation of \$100 for future work.

The following resolution was adopted at that meeting:

Whereas, the agitation and propaganda function of the Conference of the various branches of the City of Chicago are organized into a Left Wing;

Whereas, this Conference has decided to liquidate the Soviet of Russian Workers, which has no function for its existence; and

Whereas, the Soviets have representatives from practically the same organizations which share the views of the Communist Party;

Therefore, be it resolved that

We recommend that the Soviet be disbanded and that

we take over all its economical and moral functions, also its property and funds.

This Conference also recommends that the various branches be instructed in every election of officers to vote for the following persons: Keracher, Dennis Batt, and William Bross Lloyd.

The next meeting was held on May 21, 1919, at which the following delegates were elected to the [National] Left Wing Conference [New York: June 21-24, 1919]: Stoklitsky, William Bross Lloyd, Ferguson, Stilson, and Dr. Kopnagel. At this meeting a resolution was adopted calling upon **Ludwig K. Martens** not to attend or speak at any meeting held under the auspices of the Right Wing of the Socialist Party, and requesting a statement from him in which he, as a representative of the Russian Soviet and the Communist Party of Russia, endorses the Communist movement of America.

The next meeting was held June 5, 1919, at which various committees to cover various propaganda lines were elected and instructions were given to those committees to pave the way for a Communist Party in America. At this meeting they went on record as protesting against the calling of a conference by Ludwig K. Marten of all the Russian organizations without consulting such respective body. This protest was sent to Ludwig Martens in the name of the Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, Lettish [Latvian], and Ukrainian branches of the American Socialist Party, with a request to explain without delay.

The following letter was sent to Ludwig K. Martens by this organization, dated May 15, 1919:

**Conference of Russian Branches of the  
American Socialist Party who share the  
Program of the Communist Party.**

Comrade Ludwig Martens,  
Representative of the Russian Federated  
Soviet Republic,  
New York, NY.

Respected Comrade:

In answer to the letter which you have sent, we consider it our duty to notify you that the Left Bolshevik Wing of the City of Chicago stands on its previous decision and demands of you information of all the dates which you have arranged with the Social Opportunist Wing of Chicago.

The Left Wing openly states that they will not participate in any meeting in your honor in which the elements of the 2nd International, who are absolutely anti-Bolshevik, will

participate.

The true sense of the instructions given to you by the Soviet government does not allow you to interfere with the fight which is going on between the Left and Right Wing. The true sense of the instructions given to you by the Soviet government does not allow you to help in any way the Right Wingers. You must have been aware that the Left Wingers of Chicago were preparing to meet you on the proper platform, and we were waiting for an answer for our betrayed comrades.

In your participation in the meetings of the Right Wingers, the Left Wingers see a purpose to pacify and bring about an understanding between the Rights and Lefts, which does not come into the function of a Bolshevik representative. We believe in a Communist International, and, therefore, have nothing to do with the elements which the Russian Soviet Government does not recognize.

Secretary of the Conference,

**Berezovsky.**

The following several meetings were organization meetings of the now existing Communist Party of America, in which **M. Anikovich** actively participated.

The basis of the above-mentioned Communist Party is the Manifesto of the Communist International, adopted by the 1st Congress, held at Moscow, March 2-6, 1919, signed by Christian Rakovsky, Lenin, G. Zinoviev, Leo Trotsky, and Fritz Platten. This Manifesto, a copy of which is attached hereto, calls upon the workers for seizure of the political power by revolutionary mass action. It further states:

Conquest of the political power means not merely a change in the personnel of ministries, but annihilation of the enemy's apparatus of government; disarmament of the bourgeoisie or capitalist class; arming of the proletariat, the revolutionary soldiers, the Red Guard of workingmen; displacement of all bourgeois judges or capitalist judges and organization of proletarian courts; elimination of control by reactionary government officials and substitution of new organs of management of the proletariat. Victory of the proletariat consists in shattering the enemy's organization and organizing the proletarian power; in the destruction of the bourgeois and upbuilding of the proletarian state apparatus.

The proletarian state, like every state, is an organ of suppression, but it arrays itself against the enemies of the working class. It aims to break the opposition of the despoilers of labor, who are using every means in a desperate effort to stifle the revolution in blood, and to make impossible further opposition.

The dictatorship of the proletariat, which gives it the favored position in the community, is only a provisional institution, and it will gradually bring the Communist state.

This leaflet was translated by Ida Ferguson and was printed by Charles Dirba, 1217 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis, Minn. Charles Dirba is a Russian [Latvian], a personal friend of Alexander Stoklitsky, and represents the Left Wingers, or, rather, the Communist Party in Minneapolis.

The following is a list of Russian organizations all over the country, containing the names of secretaries who have adopted the program of the Communist Party:

**Russian Branch, Melrose Park, Ill.**

Secretary: A. Kedo,  
Box 655, Melrose Park, Ill.

**Russian Branch No. 4,  
(Karl Marx Branch), Chicago, Ill.**

Secretary: Ruchlis,  
2438 Haddon Ave., Chicago, Ill.

**Russian Branch No. 5,  
(Stockyards Branch), Chicago, Ill.**

Secretary: John Makarov,  
3725 S. Wentworth Ave., Chicago, Ill.

**Russian Branch No. 6, Argo, Ill.**

Secretary: O. Semenchuk,  
P.O. Box No. 526, Argo, Ill.

**Russian Branch No. 7,  
(Calumet District Branch), West Pullman, Ill.**

Secretary: A. Grigoriev,  
11940 State Street, West Pullman, Ill.

**Russian Branch, Hammond, Ind.**

Secretary: P. Kityovsky,  
1125 Columbia Ave., Hammond, Ind.

**Russian Branch, Whiting, Ind.**

Secretary: S. Porchunov,  
P.O. Box 608, Whiting, Ind.  
Literature Agent: Koslov,  
P.O. Box 608, Whiting, Ind.

**Russian Branch, Kenosha, Wis.**

Secretary: Kirpovich,  
534 Grand Ave., Kenosha, Wis.

**Russian Branch, St. Paul, Minn.**

Secretary: I. Pavliochick,  
567 Canada St., St. Paul, Minn.

**Russian Branch, Minneapolis, Minn.**

Secretary: J. Munczko,  
927 Chicago Ave., Minneapolis.  
Organizer: H. Shumik,  
25 Main Street, Minneapolis.

**Russian Branch, Los Angeles, Cal.**

Secretary: A. Rasumov,  
2121 E 1st. St., Los Angeles.

I reference to *A. Rasumov*, Employee wishes to state that he is also a traveling agitator for Mexico and part of his time he spends in traveling through Mexico agitating Bolshevism and establishing branches of the Communist Party. He is a man of considerable ability, and is in constant correspondence with Alexander Stoklitsky. In one of his letters he stated that the Left Wingers of the Communist Party have "captured" the state of California and that his work in Mexico is being carried on very successfully.

**Russian Branch, East Chicago, Ind.**

Secretary: A. Rorka,  
4852 Wegg Ave., East Chicago, Ind.

**Russian Branch, South River, NJ.**

Secretary: M. Mikhailovsky,  
Box No. 207, South River, NJ.

**Russian Branch, Denver, Colo.**

Secretary: M. Jankhovsky,  
4683 Logan St., Denver, Colo.

**Russian Branch, Indiana Harbor, Ind.**

Secretary: F. Chervakov,  
3815 Butternut St., Indiana Harbor, Ind.

**Russian Branch, Gary, Ind.**

Secretary: D. Gluchov,  
1712 Madison St., Gary, Ind.  
Literature Agent: Sam Jakumuk,  
19 W 17th Ave., Gary, Ind.

**Russian Branch, Rockford, Ill.**

Secretary: M. Shinkaranko,  
Box No. 31, Route No. 4, Rockford, Ill.  
Literature Agent: G. Berko,  
219 Catherine Ave., Rockford, Ill.

**Russian Branch, Moline, Ill.**

Secretary: D. Doblinsky,  
1104 N 35th St., Moline, Ill.

**Russian Branch, Cleveland, Ohio.**

Secretary: M. Batoshkin,  
2650 E 65th St., Cleveland, Ohio.  
Literature Agent: A. Patuk,  
4940 Wellesley Ave., Cleveland, Ohio.

**Russian Branch, Kansas City, Kas.**

Secretary: M. Bondar,  
724 Central Ave., Kansas City, Kas.

**Russian Branch, South Bend, Ind.**

Secretary: A. Barbach,  
726 S Warren St., South Bend, Ind.  
Literature Agent: J. Shemet,  
423 S Scott St., South Bend, Ind.

**Russian Branch, Milwaukee, Wis.**

Secretary: A. Nikov,  
3027 Highbridge Ave., Milwaukee, Wis.  
Literature Agent: M. Klemchuk,  
957 2nd St., Milwaukee, Wis.

**Russian Branch, Cudahy, Wis.**

Secretary: N. Melnichuk,  
627 Holmes Ave., Cudahy, Wis.

**Russian Branch, Racine, Wis.**

Secretary: J. Menich,  
1614 Center St., Racine.  
Literature Agent: J. Vashkovsky,  
1610 Center St., Racine.

The above-named secretaries are considered by Employee the leading spirits of the Communist Propaganda League among the Russians in the respective cities.

The Regional Committee which supervises the propaganda work in the entire Northwestern territory is in Chicago. *J. Kaplan*, 813 S Marshfield Ave., Chicago, Ill., is the secretary and the director; *J. Miller*, of Detroit; *J. Onocky*, of Chicago; *Alexander Stoklitsky*, of Chicago; *Dr. Kopnagel*, of Chicago; and a newly arrived Russian known as "*Victor*," are traveling agitators in this territory.

Employee will check up on the citizenship of the local Communist leaders and investigate their activities, and separate reports on each and every one will follow.

*M. Anikovich*, paid secretary and agitator in Chicago, has opened up a checking account at the West Side Trust & Savings Bank and deposited \$500.

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

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