

# Letter to Maximilian Cohen in New York from the CPA Executive Secretary Charles Dirba Notifying Him of His Expulsion, Jan. 17, 1921

Document in the Comintern Archive, RGASPI f. 515, op. 1, d. 61, ll. 24-25.  
Duplicate copy *ibid.* ll. 26-27.

Jan. 17, 1921.

Henry Allen [Maximilian Cohen]:—

I have to notify you that the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America has expelled you from itself and from the Party by a unanimous vote taken upon the report of the investigation committee yesterday, January 16, 1921.

The report of the investigation committee was as follows:

The committee elected by the CEC of the CPA to investigate charges preferred by two members of the CEC (Morris [J. Wilenkin] and Bain [Louis Shapiro]) against another member of the CEC (Allen [Cohen]), hereby submits the following report:—

Upon receiving written charges (exhibit 1) and "An Open Letter to the CEC of the CP of A," referred by the CEC to this committee (exhibit 1a) the committee instructed the Secretary of the Party [Dirba] to send notification to Comrade Allen [Cohen] (exhibit 2). Comrades Morris [Wilenkin] and Bain [Shapiro] were also notified to appear and bring with them any witnesses to appear before the committee to substantiate their charges.

The first hearing by the committee was held on Jan. 13, 1921; Allen did not appear. The committee decided to proceed with the investigation, notifying those present that they will have to appear again before the committee to give Allen [Cohen] an opportunity to ask any questions he desired.

The following comrades were questioned by the committee: B. [=???] of 2nd group, Am. [American] br. [branch] Loc. [Local] NY; K. [=???] Am. br. Loc. B—n [Brooklyn]; and Morris [Wilenkin] and Bain [Shapiro]. On Jan. 14 the committee received a statement from Comrade Allen [Cohen] (exhibit 3). In answer to this statement the

investigation committee sent Allen [Cohen] an answer (exhibit 4) dated and delivered on Jan. 14.

The second hearing by the committee was held Jan. 15. Comrade Allen [Cohen] again did not appear, but sent a letter (exhibit 5). The committee decided to proceed with the hearing in Comrade Allen's [Cohen's] absence, and the following witnesses were examined. M [=???] Am. br. Loc. B—n; Dales [=???], SD Org. NY. The following comrades were present besides: Morris [Wilenkin], Bain [Shapiro], B. [=???], and K. [=???].

Testimony. (exhibits 6, 7, 8, 9, 10).

As far as the charges against Comrade Allen are concerned, the committee states the following:— (see specification 1, exhibit 2) We find the charge fully substantiated by the testimony of Comrades B. [=???] and K. [=???], and partly by the testimony of Comrades M. [=???] and Dales [=???].

Specifications 2 and 3, exhibit 2, are fully substantiated without contradiction by all witnesses.

Specification 4, exhibit 2, is fully substantiated without contradiction by all witnesses.

Besides the charges formally preferred the committee finds the following additional evidence from

the testimony given by the witnesses:

First, Allen [Cohen] said he was not allowed to state his position on unity in the party press at the time when no such request was ever put by him before the CEC.

Second, Allen [Cohen] stated that the CEC refused his proposition that 3 members of the UCP be allowed on the CEC after unity would be consummated. No such proposal was ever made to the CEC.

Third, Allen has created the impression that the CEC did arrange caucuses in 4 districts out of 6 for the purpose of keeping out certain members as delegates to the Unity Convention to crush the UCP.

Having questioned all the witnesses in the case, and as Comrade Allen [Cohen] failed to appear before the committee after proper notification, the committee



unanimously decided to close the investigation and make the following report and recommendation:

*After a thorough examination of all the testimony and facts we find the following statements made by Comrade Allen [Cohen] as constituting a flagrant breach of party discipline and intentional misrepresentation of the activities of the CEC.*

*First: The CEC suppressing news on unity question.*

*Second: The CEC stands in the way of unity.*

*Third: The CEC arranging caucuses in 4 of the 6 districts to prevent the election of certain delegates so as to crush the UCP.*

*Fourth: The CEC having voted down his (Allen's [Cohen's]) proposition to allow the UCP 3 places out of 9 on the future CEC to be elected by the Unity Convention.*

*Fifth: The CEC hiding behind technicalities in order to prevent unity.*

*Sixth: The connection of a "blacklist" with the CEC.*

*Seventh: That he (Allen [Cohen]) was forbidden to state his views on unity in the party press of the CEC.*

*Eighth: That deadlock is created by the willful disobedience of the CECs of both sides.*

*Ninth: That he (Allen [Cohen]) asked party members to spread his opinions on unity to all party membership.*

*Tenth: That his (Allen's [Cohen's]) "Open Letter to the CEC of the CP" corroborates the charges. This letter, (exhibit 1a) was not considered by the committee as part of the evidence or the charge. It is attached as substantiating the testimony given by the witnesses appearing before this committee.*

*In view of all the facts in the case, the investigation committee unanimously recommends: That Comrade Henry Allen [Maximilian Cohen] be expelled from the CEC of the Communist Party of America as provided in the Constitution of the Communist Party (sec. 6, Art V).*

*A. Johnson [=???],*

*J. Sullivan [Alfred S. Edwards],*

*B. Baldwin [Oscar Tyverovsky],*

*Investigating Committee of the CEC.*

I must also request you to return to the Communist Party all the property of the party that you have in your possession: files, literature, typewriter, etc.

Yours for Communism,

C. Dobin [Charles Dirba], Exec. Sec.  
Communist Party of America.

***Edited by Tim Davenport.***

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