
Open Letter to Every “Minority” Member, from the Central Executive Committee, CPA. [circa May 1, 1922]

A document from the Herbert Romerstein collection. Probable author of this document, in the judgement of the editor, was Executive Secretary of the CPA Jay Lovestone.

Comrade:—

The CEC of the CPA, Section of the CI, has accepted without any reservations or qualifications the decisions of the Executive Committee of the CI regarding the Party situation in America. It has unanimously approved by roll call vote the motions of its representative Carr [Ludwig Katterfeld] in Moscow. The CEC will not merely follow the letter of these decisions, but will apply them in a spirit of Communist Comradeship.

In harmony with these decisions we extend to you, to every member and to every group and branch that has in any way at all become separated from the organization because of the controversy over the launching of a legal political party, a hearty invitation to return to good standing in the Party and join in the Party's work.

The acceptance of the decisions of the CI is binding upon every unit of the party. This means that the party units have no power to accept without discrimination all old members, groups, and branches that are ready to place themselves in good standing. We feel sure that every party unit will welcome these return members, but should there be any difficulty in any section the CEC stands pledged to see to it that this decision of the CI is lived up to, and that you are restored to full membership rights without prejudice.

The CI has sent a special plenipotentiary representative whose duty it will be to help adjust any difficulties that might possibly arise in this connection. Every minority member may therefore feel assured that upon returning to the Party he will be amply protected in the full exercise of all membership rights.

If you place yourself in good standing from the time that the decision of the CI was transmitted to the groups by the CEC, that is BEFORE JUNE 28th, you will be able to participate in the election of delegates to the coming party convention.

We urge you not to wait till this time limit expires, but to act AT ONCE. There is nothing more to wait for. The CI has made its final decision. It tells you in fraternal language, but none the less firmly, that if you do not act in accord with this decision by that time you are definitely expelled from the CI. Comrade, you know that the fight against the CI is today more than ever a crime against the proletarian revolution. Not one of you wants to strengthen the counter-revolutionist and the bourgeois reactionaries that are trying to undermine Soviet Russia. Yet that is in effect what it means to oppose the decisions of the CI.

You are now at the fork of the road. On the one road you will be guided by the carping criticism of the KAPD of Germany [the left oppositionist Communist Workers Party of Germany], the Williams faction of the IWW, the Gompers machine of the AF of L, and the Goldman faction of the anarchists. On the other road you will be guided by the Theses on Legal Activities in America sent to us by the EC of the CI. This road wisely avoids the rocks of leftist sectarianism as well as the swamps of centrism and liquidation. It is the road chosen by the CEC of the CP of A and upon this road you will have the inspiring company of the over forty Communist Parties that compose the Third International, the vanguard of the world proletariat.

You must decide *for yourself* which road you will take. No committee can decide this for you. It cannot

be done by majority vote. The responsibilities of this decision rests upon each individual member. It rests upon YOU. If possible bring your federation with you. If possible bring your branch. If possible bring your group. But whether others come with you or not it is your supreme and solemn duty to the revolution to choose the right road for YOURSELF, the road upon which YOU can best serve the cause of COMMUNISM in America, the cause of the world revolution.

Comrade, we appreciate fully what this may mean to you in the way of severing old friendships and associations, and shall make it as easy as possible for you to decide right. In accord with the decision of the CI, we shall “let the dead past bury the dead.” We invite you to face with us the issues of today and the unsolved problems of the future. We ask you to join our ranks and help us solve these problems. We urge you to take your rightful place shoulder to shoulder with the rest of us in the CP of A, Section of the CI — the International of LENIN, the International of the Bolshevick Party of Russia, the International feared by the bourgeoisie the world over, the International vilified by the betrayers of the working-class, the International which stands as the beacon light for all the world’s oppressed, the International in which every proletarian revolution must be enrolled.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

Published by 1000 Flowers Publishing, Corvallis, OR, 2005. • Free reproduction permitted.