
Minutes of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America: New York — February 7, 1920.

Document in the Comintern Archive, RGASPI, f. 515, op. 1, d. 30, ll. 6-7.

Present: Bunte [Charles Dirba], Bernstein [Max Cohen], Brown [=???], Raphael [Alex Bittelman], [Isaac] Ferguson, Black [=???], and Damon [C.E. Ruthenberg].

The Executive Secretary [Ruthenberg] submitted a report showing the assets and liabilities and receipts and expenses to Dec. 30 [1919].

Motion carried that the Executive Secretary publish an organization report in the party organ [The Communist], giving some financial summary.

Motion: That Brown [=???] and Ferguson be appointed an auditing committee to audit the books to Dec. 30.

Carried.

[Party Press.]

Discussion of the proposed paper to be issued followed. During the discussion Comrade Ferguson submitted his resignation as acting party editor, which, however, was not acted upon.

Motion carried that the paper to be issued be the official party organ and be circulated through the party organization.

[Communist Labor Party.]

The reply of Communist Labor Party to our proposal for a joint convention was read by Comrade

Raphael [Bittelman], which was as follows:

1. We recognize that there is no fundamental difference of principle between the Communist Labor Party and the Communist Party and we agree to send out a call for a joint convention on the basis of the Communist Party manifesto and program and to elect a Convention Committee for this purpose.

2. We realize that the constitution of both parties are impossible of application under the present conditions and agree to new organization forms adapted to the circumstances.†

3. We favor immediate working unity as far as this can be affected pending the convention. For this purpose the 2 National Executive Committees and the 2 National Offices shall be merged, and propaganda and organization work as well as defense activities shall be conducted in common, but the language federations of both parties shall be allowed to continue upon their old basis until the convention.

Motion: That we accept the CLP proposition as to point #3.

Voting Yes — Ferguson and Damon [Ruthenberg].

Noting No — Bernstein [Cohen], Black [???], Brown [???], Bunte [Dirba], and Raphael [Bittelman].

Motion lost.

Motion: That we reaffirm our previous position with instructions to our committee to make such modifications in regard to the constitution as were indicated in the discussion.

†- Reference is to the climate of repression which began in November 1919 and culminated with the mass raids of January 2/3, 1920. These coordinated arrests disrupted party communications and forced both organizations to quickly adopt an "underground" structure, complete with the use of pseudonyms, secret meetings, and a structure based upon urban organizational districts and isolated small units of 5 to 10 members known as "groups."

Carried.

[Miscellaneous Business.]

Motion: That the complaint of the Boston Russian District Committee in regard to the method of handling recall referendum be investigated.

Carried.

Motion: That the Executive Secretary [Ruthenberg] furnish the Liebknecht branch [Detroit] with a statement of fact and copies of letters in regard to action in regard to branch.

Motion lost.

Motion: That the International Secretary [Fraina] be advised to proceed to Moscow.

Carried.

Motion: That no money be advanced to the International Secretary [Fraina] in addition to advances already made until an accounting is made.

Amendment: That with the consent of Jeanette Pearl we cable \$180.00 back salary due and \$120.00 additional from party funds, with statement that no further advances will be made until an accounting is made.

Amendment carried.

David Damon [C.E. Ruthenberg],
Executive Secretary.

Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport.

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