
Call to the Second Convention of the Communist Party of America.

Copy in the Comintern Archive, f. 515, op. 1, d. 30, l. 1. Probably issued early in May 1920.

To All Members of the Communist Party.
Comrades:—

The time is here for the second convention of the Communist Party of America, a convention of the Communist Party alone — not jointly with the Communist Labor Party — and of only those members and units who remained faithful to the Party as represented by its Central Executive Committee, as the only true expression and representatives of real Communist principles and tactics in this country, and who did not split off with the minority [i.e. the Ruthenberg/Ferguson group, which left the CPA on April 15, 1920.].

This call was delayed, first by negotiations with the CLP for a joint convention with them, and then by the “secession” of former Executive Secretary Damon [Ruthenberg] and his followers.

As soon as the split became known, the CLP, siding with the seceding minority, discontinued negotiations with your Central Executive Committee.

On the other hand, Damon issued a fake call of his own, still signing as the Executive Secretary of the whole Party. Afterwards he invited us to negotiations for *one* convention, but rejected our conditions to cancel his call and to comply with the demand that the call should be issued by the Central Executive Committee.

In consequence, this call is issued now, and it is issued to all those Party units which have maintained or reestablished their connection with the CEC as the only regularly constituted central

authority of the Party. Of those members, groups, or units who went with the minority and participated in their convention due to misinformation or misunderstanding, only those will be admitted to participation in the elections or to be elected to the regular Party Convention who before the date set for the beginning of our group elections repudiate their participation in the elections to the minority convention and officially reaffirm their affiliation with and allegiance to the Communist Party of America as represented by its Central Executive Committee.

Basis of Representation.

Each group shall elect one representative to its branch electors’ meeting, and furnish him with a certificate stating the number of good standing members in the group.

Each branch electors’ meeting shall elect its representatives to the sub-district electors’ meeting at the rate of one for every 40 (or major fraction) of its good standing members, each branch being entitled to at least one representative to the sub-district meeting. Branch representatives must carry credentials showing number of members in their branch.

Each sub-district electors’ meeting shall elect delegates to the District Convention at the rate of one for each 100 (or major fraction) of good standing members represented in it according to the certificates of its branch representatives. Delegates to the District Conventions must carry creden-

tials showing the total number of members represented in their respective sub-district electors' meeting.

Each District Convention shall elect delegates to the National Convention at the rate of one for every 250 (or major fraction) of good standing members represented in it according to the certificates of its delegates. Delegates to the National Convention must carry credentials showing total number of members represented in their District Conventions.

Elections.

Upon receipt of a notice from the CEC stating the time period during which all elections shall be held, all District Organizers shall proceed with arrangements for the elections in their respective districts.

Delegates to District Conventions and the National Convention may be elected from Party membership regardless of district divisions.

At all stages of the elections alternates shall be elected in the same manner and proportion as the delegates.

At all stages candidates shall be designated by their Party pseudonyms, and the results of the elections shall not be known outside of each particular electors' meeting or convention.

Instructions to the National Convention delegates as to when and where to proceed will be given through District Organizers at the proper time.†

Assessment.

To cover the expenses of the National Convention and the railroad fares of the District Conventions, each member must pay a 50¢ assessment,

which shall be brought to the branch meeting by each group representative and to the sub-district, district, and national bodies by their respective delegates; the amount to be in accordance with the number of good standing members shown on their credentials.

Agenda for the Second Communist Party Convention.

I. Reports:

- a) CEC and National Secretary.
- b) International Relations Committee.
- c) Editorial Committee.
- d) Defense Committee.

II. Current Fundamental Problems:

- a) Present World Situation.
- b) Present Situation in the United States.
- c) Communist International and Party International Relations.
- d) Our Attitude Toward Parliamentarism.
- e) Mass Action.
- f) Industrial Unionism and Syndicalism.
- g) Our Attitude Toward Economic, Educational, and Other Legal Workers' Organizations.
- h) Workers' Councils Before and After the Revolution.

III. Revision of Manifesto and Program.

IV. Organization Problems.

- a) Communist Party Centralization and Discipline.
- b) Underground Organization and Its Forms.
- c) Communist Party Units and CP Shop Committees.
- d) Functions of Language Federations in the Communist Movement of America.

†- The Second Convention of the Communist Party of America was held in New York City from July 13-18, 1920. It was attended by 24 delegates and 5 members of the Central Executive Committee and chaired by Louis Schapiro ["Lawrence Bain"], who was also elected to the new Central Executive Committee by the convention and subsequently as Executive Secretary of the Party at the CEC plenum of July 20, 1920. Schapiro replaced Acting Secretary Charles Dirba in that role.

- e) Propaganda, Agitation, and Other Forms of Communist Education.
 - 1) General Propaganda and Agitation.
 - 2) Classes for Propagandists and Other Communist Study Classes.
- f) Party Press and Literature.
 - 1) Policy.
 - 2) Literary.
 - 3) Technical.
- g) Communist Unity vs. "Socialist Unity."
- h) Defense and Relief Work.

V. Revision of Constitution.

VI. Resolutions.

VII. Election of Party Officials.

*Edited with footnote by Tim Davenport.
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