
Letter to S.J. Rutgers in Moscow from unknown New York correspondent "F." with note from Ludwig Martens in New York, March 21 & 24, 1919.

Handwritten document in the Comintern Archive, RGASPI, f. 515, op. 1, d. 4, l. 2.

March 21, 1919.

To Com. Rutgers— †

The [Socialist] Propaganda League does not exist any longer. However there has been organized a Left Wing within the [Socialist] Party. To give you a clear idea of its birth and development, I have asked the International Relations Committee of the Left Wing Section for a brief outline, which follows:—

From the time of the adoption of the St. Louis Platform [April 7-14, 1917], the leaders and spokesmen of the SP, with few exceptions, have not lived up to the expressed opinion of the revolutionary rank and file. The rank and file made a protest, which was suppressed by the party organs. Certain of these organs, notably the *NY Call*, went even further and solicited Liberty Bond ads, taking payment for same from the government, which they printed and urged comrades to buy. The NEC selected 3 delegates to go to the Berne Conference, and up to now have not repudiated the selection, in spite of the fact that the Communist Party of Russia's scathing indictment of this alleged International Socialist Congress has been printed in this country. This and other acts too numerous to mention compelled the rank and file to summon a Left Wing Convention of party members.

They met in New York on Feb. 15, 1919. Said Convention adopted a Manifesto and Program (a copy of which will reach you in due course), which Manifesto and Program places the Left Wing Socialists of America in alignment with the Communist Party of Russia, the Spartacus Group of Germany, and the Left Wing movements of all European countries. States, locals, and branches of the party are adopting this Manifesto and Program as their platform.

The regular party organization, through its leaders, spokesmen, and press, with few brilliant exceptions, are fighting the Left Wing organization tooth and nail. Intrigue, ridicule, and abuse are the weapons they employ, stating that we are paid agents to split the party, etc., etc. Debs has declared himself in agreement with the spirit and letter of the Manifesto, but up to now has not officially identified himself with the Left Wing movement. We are now demanding that a special Emergency Convention be called, the purpose of which is to decide a policy and principles in consonance with our world comrades of the left Wing movement, or if such action is not decided upon, it is inevitable that a split will take place.

Your endorsement of our Manifesto, Program, and tactics will be of great assistance in advancing our common cause.

Greetings to the Communist Party of Russia!

Greetings to the International Communist Congress!

Long Live the Revolutionary International!

It seems that you did not receive my letters to Japan. I expect to see the children tomorrow. There will be plenty of funds for their expenses. I have the bail intact. I notified the comrade's wife that he is alive and well.

So far I have been unable to locate the Holland house painter but am continuing efforts to find them.

The comrade who was editor of the League Paper [Louis C. Fraina] is now successfully editing a weekly [*The Revolutionary Age*] in the city where the League was founded [Boston]. He is doing splendid work, both as writer and speaker. Expect him here in a few days to discuss the transferring of the paper to NY.

†- The name of the recipient is scrawled in barely legible Russian.

The Soviet appointment here is gratifying. We must all work together for the establishment of economic relations.

Can you get shrimp chow mein in Moscow?

We are all anxious to see the children. All send greetings.

Credentials appointing you delegate of Left Wing Section, Socialist Party of America will reach you in due course.

3/24. P.S. I saw the boys John & William. They leave on 26 inst. [March 26, 1919]. Both are hale and hearty.

It is important that propaganda relations be established with us with the Communist Party.

The paper from Boston [*The Revolutionary Age*] is coming here [New York] in 3 weeks, as the expression of the Left Section here and about a dozen Left locals of the party. Local Boston has issued a call for a National Conference of Left Wing locals, branches, and Left groups of the party, in June. There we will form a "national" expression of the Left. We will here the 26th for Holland.

Truize [??] stayed in <illeg.> H. Beste vader en Mocder. [??] Mr. <Illeg.> is <illeg.> in San Francisco. Regards from Win. <2 words illeg.> Jan. Sen <word crossed out>. †

Greetings,

F.

[On reverse of sheet in different handwriting, with capital Ms made in the Russian style:]

Dear friend!

My wife and I are sending you both our heartiest greetings. You can imagine how <words illeg.> is my life at present. Since my appointment with all my heart and soul I am in the work.‡ Doubtless we shall have results very soon. All our comrades often remember you and send you the warmest greetings <illeg.> you and your wife.

I had the pleasure to have John and Willie for two days in my house. They are splendid and are proud of their father. I hope you received their letter.

Write us more about yourself and the work you are doing. We need all information in regard to your needs in machinery, supplies, etc. I think we will have the best chances in the world to create here a great organization which will be of greatest use for economical development of Russia.

Once more, heartiest greetings to you and your wife.

Yours,

L.M. [Ludwig Martens]

†- Everything after the word "Holland" is hastily scrawled and essentially illegible.

‡- Reference is to the Russian Soviet Government Bureau, the Soviet trade mission and de facto "Soviet embassy" headed by Martens. The first issue of the RSGB's weekly newspaper was dated March 3, 1919.

Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport.

Published by 1000 Flowers Publishing, Corvallis, OR, 2007. • Non-commercial reproduction permitted.