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# Special Report on Undercover Operations in the UCP by the Department of Justice's Bureau of Investigation at Mason City, IA. [March 4, 1921]

by Special Agent H.W. Hess

Untitled "special report" in DoJ/BoI Investigative Files, NARA M-1085, reel 922, file 202600-11-22.

*Report made by:* H.W. Hess

*Place where made:* Omaha, Nebraska.

*Date when made:* March 4, 1921.

*Period for which made:* Febr. 22-March 3.

*Title of case and offenses charged or  
nature of matter under investigation:*

**RADICAL ACTIVITIES**

Mason City, Iowa. United Communist Party.

*Statement of operations, evidence collected, names and  
addresses of persons interviewed, places visited, etc.:*

## **At Mason City, Iowa:**

Making reference to report of Agent August H. Loula of the Chicago, Illinois office under date of January 28, 1921, and of this Agent's report under date of February 15, 1921.

Agent was in touch with MR. B.C. KEELER, who agreed to cooperate fully with this Department, the understanding being, however, under no circumstances or crisis was the name of Mason City, Iowa, MR. KEELER'S plant, the Mason City Brick & Tile co., or his undercover man to be mentioned. Agent agreed to this inasmuch as MR. KEELER primarily wishes to protect the life of this undercover man and also the interests and property of his own industry and allied industries of that city and he felt that if the information was given out that a great probability of damage both to lives and property existed in that city inasmuch as the local conditions are at the present time highly agitated by labor strikes, etc.

In making this investigation Agent went over more than 2 years' reports submitted by MR. KEELER and over much radical literature, comprising newspapers, booklets, pamphlets, etc. At the present time MR. KEELER is having made up in short paragraphs the notes taken by this undercover man during the past 18 months and in which time the Communist Party has seemingly been revived and is now going strong. These typewritten notes will be secured by this office when completed and any new matter developed and not covered in this report will be incorporated in later investigations covering this field.

For the general information of the Department Agent will give a brief history of HARRY E. KEAS, around whom this information, to a large extent, centers. KEAS is a native of Iowa, having been born in the vicinity of Dubuque, Iowa, and educated in the public schools of that place. His father is said to have been rather a poor character, poor home surroundings existed until an uncle is reported to have become interested in KEAS and sent him to school with the understanding that he was to become a priest. KEAS attended a parochial college at Dubuque but did not like it and after leaving he went either to New York City or Passaic, NJ, and was there employed as a cartoonist. He later drifted into telegraphy and after learning this game became a labor organizer and battled as an organizer for the telegraphers some 3 or 4 years in the United States and Canada.

He came to Mason City, Iowa, in October of 1918 and now resides at #421 First Street SW, being employed as a night operator by the Chicago & Great-Western Railroad at Clear Lake Junction, Iowa.

This office was first attracted to KEAS' activities in 1919, when it was reported that he was connected with the distribution of radical propaganda as well as his being a contributor to radical magazines, etc., and later when an attempted investigation was made, KEAS shipped all his radical literature and other communications to JAMES M. PIERCE, who is editor of the *Iowa Homestead* and on whom we have a file. An investigation was going to be made of the Iowa Homestead Co. but for some reason or other it failed to materialize.

Up until this time KEAS had been actively connected with IWW and as the old Communist Party came to life he became affiliated with them, writing articles for the *Truth*, published by JACK CARNEY or Duluth, Minn., and drawing cartoons for eastern radical newspapers.† He has at all times been connected with the radical movement in the United States and from the developments of this investigation he is similarly considered one of the real propaganda leaders for the new United Communist Party.

Agent in making this report will offer the facts as developed in Mason City since February 1, 1920, when KEAS first was noted to have openly become active in the interests of the United Communist Party.

Under date of February 13, 1920, KEAS, in conversation with the undercover man mentioned in these reports who will, for the purpose of reference be known as "JOHN DOE," stopped him and after discussing some trouble that certain organizers for the IWW had had in Mason City, told of his efforts to have them released and also of the "new day" that was coming when the country was overthrown by the Communist Party.

Under date of February 25, 1920, KEAS in conversation with JOHN DOE at his home, showed him his dues book in the Communist Labor Party and after explaining in detail the workings of it, began to propagandize the said JOHN DOE for the purpose of making a possible member.

On the 15th of March, 1920, JOHN DOE had so worked his way into the confidence of this man KEAS that he was considered a welcome guest at his home. About this date KEAS opened negotiations with a county newspaper in Manley, Iowa, the purpose be-

ing to buy it and publish a radical weekly for the various union members in and around Mason City. These negotiations were carried on for some time but were finally abandoned upon the advice of MR. PIERCE of the *Iowa Homestead*, who told KEAS at the time that it would be impossible for it to be financed owing to the price of paper, etc.

About the 20th of March, 1920, KEAS secured the agency for a line of books published by CHARLES H. KERR & CO. of Chicago and also Communist Labor literature and when DOE asked him as to how he could sell these he stated that JIM PIERCE of Des Moines would protect him if there was any trouble.

Under date of March 27th [1920], upon DOE'S visit to the home of KEAS he was shown a letter with reference to the buying of a radical newspaper in this section from Communist Party in New York; they wrote at that time they would take the matter up and advise him as to what was being done; that they had one paper published at Toledo, Ohio, and another at Detroit, Michigan, but that they did not know whether they would be able to handle another paper or not.

Under date of March 30, 1920, KEAS reported to JOHN DOE that he was discouraged, inasmuch as he had received a letter from the Communist Labor Party in which they stated that the government had practically put them out of business; that they had been raided 3 times; had no headquarters and that everything looked bad.

Under date of April 12, 1920, JOHN DOE was shown letter from JACK CARNEY, editor of *Truth*, in which he was told of the terrible time they were having and that the Party was seemingly demoralized.

Under date of April 22, 1920, DOE was told by KEAS that he had a reply from the Communist Labor Party and that they were once more on the job and working, their general plan being a general strike all over the world; that the International Head Bureau of the Party was in Holland and that a member, located at Moline, Ill. was in direct communication with the Holland International Bureau. This man it was learned is known as E.W. OWENS and is chief of the Communist Party at Moline, Ill. at present time in Chicago. Prior to November 15, 1920, this man headquartered at Davenport, Iowa, but owing to changes

†- *Truth* was a publication associated with the Communist Labor Party, not the Communist Party of America.

in the city administration there he has since removed to Moline, Ill., which is now the official headquarters for the Communist Party radical group in that territory.†

After laying out various plans for the promotion of this Party, DOE was urged insistently to become affiliated and while not joining the organization at this time did agree to continue assisting in the distribution of radical literature and in that way he has from time to time secured much of this stuff.

The literature was usually received under various aliases and at fictional addresses, these being changed from time to time, and at times when KEAS would become suspicious [or when] other factors arose. The following record, however, was secured:

Package from M. KEAS, #731 North Ashland Ave., Chicago, Ill. to A.G. KEAS, containing *Toilers* and other radical literature.

Package from M. ODELLY [Elmer Allison], #3517 Fulton Road, Cleveland, O. to H.E. KEAS, #421 Third Street SW, Mason City, Ia.

Package from B. ZINIAN, #1085 No. Lincoln Ave., Chicago, Ill. to H.E. KEAS, #421 Third Street SW, Mason City, Ia.

Package from B. or Z. BANIA, #589 Ashland Ave. to H.E. KEAS, #421 Third Street SW, Mason City, Ia.

Package from B. MAGAK, #852 North Ashland Ave. to H.E. KEAS, #421 Third Street SW, Mason City, Ia.

This list is furnished in order that possible check as to the sources of distribution in Chicago. Four of these packages have been sent by the same parties as the writing is identical but each from a different point.‡ It is probable that they are all fictitious addresses but the real point of origin is in the general vicinity of these people, which centers on Ashland Avenue.

Reference is made hereto to copies of certain letters which will be attached to this report and which show the exact methods used by this particular organizer for this party. These letters will be marked "Exhibit 1" and properly numbered in their series.

Under date of May 29, 1920, DOE was informed by KEAS that all mail to the Communist Labor Party at Moline should be sent care of the *Davenport Tribune* editor and marked for Owens, the editor

personally delivering same to him.

Up to June 5, 1920, reports of this undercover man show many local developments but nothing which would be of particular interest to this Department.

Under date of June 6, 1920, JOHN DOE was asked to assist in the addressing of envelopes pertaining to radical literature which were being sent out by KEAS. In making out these addresses he secured the attached list marked "Exhibit #2." These are included merely as a check-up in case the Department wishes to do so, and represent people whom KEAS has been corresponding with in regard to radical activities.

During the month of June [1920], KEAS in a discussion with DOE told of one C.M. MILLER, #11 First Avenue, Greenville, Pa., who is a railroad man and is connected with the switchmen's union; that he has been an organizer for the United Communist Party and is at the present time organizing groups in that territory.

In October of 1919 KEAS had taken over the distribution of all the radical literature in this particular territory and claims to be in direct communication with the leaders of the United Communist Party and all other radical groups, being an official cartoonist and writer for their English paper called *The Toiler* and published in Cleveland, Ohio. His cartoons appear in many of these issues. Special reference can be made at this point to the *Toiler* under date of January 15, 1921, entitled "The Fish."

Under date of December 18, 1920, the article "The Coming Coal Miners' Convention" on page 5 is the product of KEAS' pen. The cartoon entitled "If the Workers Only Knew It" is the product of KEAS and appears in the *Toiler* of December 4, 1920. In the *Toiler* of November 13, 1920, front page cartoon, as well as page 6 and 13 and the editorial entitled "Questionable Nourishment;" under date of November 6th in the *Toiler* cartoon "Sword of Damocles" and editorial entitled "A Sociable Way to Help a Toiler," page 13, are quoted as his product.

Agent has only made these quotations in order to, in a vague way at least, show the influence and dominance in propaganda circles in the Communist

†- Edgar Owens was a member of the CLP and UCP, not the old CPA. Moline was actually part of the Chicago District (D7).

‡- It is likely that the 4 packages were sent by the Chicago District Organizer of the UCP, who in the latter part of 1920 was Charles Krumbein.

Party this man KEAS is acquiring and naturally the information which might be secured through this source is doubly valuable inasmuch as it is directly from the fount head of their propaganda sources.

In connection with the publication of *The Toiler*, Agent at this point would call attention to ARTHUR FITZ, #232 Clay St., Savanna, Illinois. He is a cartoonist and writer operating under the name of "HAM" and specimens of his work are found in *The Toiler* from time to time.

Cartoon on page 4 of *The Toiler* for January 1, 1921, is a typical piece of his work. From information learned through KEAS by DOE, this man FITZ is connected with the Burlington Railroad at Savanna and his most important work in the interests of the Communist Party is the compiling of information pertaining to the arsenals and military reservations on the Mississippi River. This information KEAS has repeatedly told DOE is rapidly whipped into shape and will be valuable at any time the Communist Party attempts to overthrow this government. FITZ incidentally is an organizer of a group in Savanna and from correspondence, etc., should be carried by this Department as a dangerous radical.

In checking over reports and all other information which has been amassed by this man it develops that the United Communist Party seemingly has control of 3 large newspapers — *The Truth*, published at Duluth, Minn.; *The Toiler*, published at Cleveland, Ohio; and *The Liberator*, published in New York City. They also have, from time to time, been bringing out the paper called *The Communist*, which for some time has been suppressed. The latest copy of this paper, in which the proceedings of the 2nd United Communist Party Convention [Dec. 24, 1920-Jan. 2, 1921] is in a general way reported, is attached hereto and marked "Exhibit No. 3."

It is also Agent's belief that the Federated Press, #155 West Washington Street, Chicago, Ill. is either controlled by or has working agreement with the United Communist Party inasmuch as KEAS refers to it constantly in his communications as "our press" and in correspondence with various members he has repeatedly done this.

The general organization of the new United Communist Party seems to be the dividing of the United States into districts; these in turn are divided

into sub-districts and groups, 10 men comprising one group. No exact knowledge as to the number of groups in the sub-district has been learned but from general conversation with KEAS it is probably 80 to 100 men who comprise a subdivision.

From records which have been secured in this territory and which are attached hereto, it would seem that up until November 1920, the United States had been divided into 11 districts, as not attached "Exhibit No. 4."

Your Agent would also call attention to the following facts pertaining to their new system of organization. Their present plans do not call for any membership cards, the group chief knows his own members and he personally calls them together at the time they are to meet. Stamps covering dues, initiations, and defense are still in existence; they are, however, not placed in any books but immediately upon being purchased are destroyed by the purchaser.

From a statement by KEAS to DOE, evidently no written records are kept, the stamps and all tangible evidence of membership are destroyed immediately upon purchase. Membership books are done away with; members' proper names are never used, they usually going by number and when a name is necessary they adopt an alias.

As the instance in the Mason City group KEAS is known under the alias of "EDWARD HI--" [*illegible*], the informant JOHN DOE under the name of "MIKE BENTON," and one HAWKINS under the name of "GEORGE HOMER."

The attached sheet marked "Exhibit 5" shows 50¢ organization stamp and 50¢ class war prisoner stamp. These were purchased by DOE from KEAS. he was supposed to have destroyed these but succeeded in bringing them from the meeting unobserved by KEAS.

From information furnished by KEAS to DOE there is evidently an operating branch of the Communist Party in Kansas City, Missouri; Kansas City, Kansas; Sioux City, Iowa; Davenport, Iowa; and Mason City, Iowa. The group operating at Davenport have headquarters now at Moline, Ill., and all are operating presumably under the direct leadership of OWENS, who is, at the present time, in Chicago, Illinois.

At this point Agent would state that OWENS, alias ENGELWOOD, alias ENGLAND, is considered

chief of the Communist Party in District #7 with headquarters in Chicago.† He formerly was supposed to have been connected with the organization of branches in the various towns of Illinois and also Davenport, Iowa. His importance in this organization is paramount and under date of January 1, 1921, correspondence passed between OWENS and KEAS in which OWENS instructed KEAS to prepare leaflets and cartoons on unemployment in general, railroad men, miners and affiliated mine workers, steel workers, and also a general agitation leaflet. He stated in this connection that they were to be distributed all over the United States as well as Mexico and in other parts. KEAS was engaged in making this for more than 2 weeks and just a short time past finished and submitted them.

From the month of September 1920 on, KEAS was notified that a conference of much importance was to be held in Chicago, and during the month of November he told DOE that it had been all planned but that the leaders had been “tipped off” by their underground men that the Department of Justice knew of their intended meeting and therefore it had been temporarily postponed but would positively meet sometime in January [1921].

From the conversation of KEAS with DOE it would seem that the Communist Party of Chicago believed they had uncovered the confidential agent of this Department as KEAS boasted of their under-

ground system and pointed to this as the direct result.

From the correspondence of KEAS it was learned that he received and sent many letters to J.E. VOGEL at #3541 Wilton Avenue, Chicago, Illinois and after some trouble it was learned that this is the fictitious name for CARL ALTON, alias L.E. KATTERFELD, alias CARL ALT, etc.‡ this man your Agent understands is under indictment in the Chicago district at the present time, and during the war he was arrested at Salt Lake City.

On December 12th, 1920, JOHN DOE happened into the home of KEAS and was introduced to a man by the name of FLYNN [Edward Lindgren]. This man returned from attending the [2nd Congress of the] Third International in Moscow [July 19-Aug. 7, 1920], where he represented the United Communist Party, arriving in this country on or about October 27, 1920. He stated that he had personally helped draw the constitution of the Third International and told of meeting JOHN REED while at the convention. He also said that he and the other American were the only representatives of this country who were now living, the other having been killed while attempting to leave Russia.§

FLYNN [Lindgren] stated that the Russian government would have 5,000 agents in this country within 6 months; that the Russian Soviet Government was appropriating \$120,000 per year in the support of the United Communist Party in this country; that

†- An analysis of the report submitted Jan. 11, 1921, by undercover informant “Mike Benton” makes it clear that Edgar Owens was not Chicago DO after the August 1920 removal of Raymond Baker and prior to the assumption of the position by Charles Krumbein — who was the DO at the time of the May 1921 merger of the UCP with the old CPA to form the unified CPA. This person was “Carl Alt”/“Carl Alton,” curiously identified as Ludwig Katterfeld. Katterfeld did use the pseudonym “Tom Alden,” but to date has never previously been identified as “Carl Alton.” Katterfeld did have 5 children, as “Alton” is said to have had, and was a member of the CEC, so the identification is possible. It should, however, be noted that L.K. England was a founding member of the Communist Labor Party from Rock Island, IL, and was not the same person as Edgar Owens, a founding member of the CLP from neighboring Moline. Whether England or Owens actually used the pseudonym “Engelwood” is unknown. This illustrates how the Bureau of Investigation — even its most carefully placed, discrete, and professional undercover sources — was frequently befuddled by the changing multiple pseudonyms of the underground Communist movement. Scholars are advised to take all BoI identifications with a large grain of salt. Only careful scrutiny of archival documents allows one to produce reasonably reliable pseudonym identifications, which remain subject to testing and revision as additional documentary evidence becomes available.

‡- As mentioned above, Ludwig Katterfeld is to date not known to have used the name “Carl Alt”/“Carl Alton” or to have served as the Chicago District Organizer of the UCP in the interim period between Rudy Baker and Charles Krumbein. Nor is Katterfeld known to have used the name “J.E. Vogel.” This was likely an alternate name for John Vogelend, a defendant in the July 1920 mass trial of the Chicago CLP leaders. Vogelend was sentenced to 1 year in Cook Co. Jail on August 2, 1920.

§- The reference is unclear. According to the published list of delegates to the 2nd Congress, the representatives from the USA were Alexander Bilan [CLP], John Reed [CLP], Alexander Stoklitsky [CPA], Louis Fraina [CPA], Nathan Chabrow [IYPSL], John Jurgis [CLP], and consultative delegate “Gilday” [CLP]. Lindgren, dispatched to Moscow after the May formation of the United Communist Party, arrived in the last days of the proceedings and is not included among the list of delegates. [*The Second Congress of the Communist International: Report of Proceedings...* (Moscow: Publishing House of the Communist International, 1921), pg. 490.

this money was being sent to a large extent to the Toiler Company of Cleveland, and that they in turn would see to the printing and distribution of propaganda; that the membership of the United Communist Party would not be called upon to furnish any great amount of funds at present as the Soviet government would finance this movement.†

FLYNN [Lindgren] also stated that the big problem now was having the Russian government recognized by this country; that immediately after this was secured unlimited funds would be available for the propaganda of the United Communist Party in this country. FLYNN [Lindgren] has a rough translation of the Third International Convention [2nd Congress] and stated that he had left a copy with the Toiler Company of Cleveland, and that they were at the present time getting out the American edition, which would be available at the Chicago convention to be held in January or shortly after that time.

He claims the Communist Party has an enormous membership in Germany and expects to establish a Soviet government in that country during the coming summer or early fall of 1921. He is now making a tour of the country calling on all the locals [groups], having come from Omaha, Nebraska, and being routed from Mason City to Sioux City, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, and then east.

FLYNN [Lindgren] is described by DOE as follows: Of Swedish descent, 38 to 40 years of age [41], 5 ft. 5 in. to 5 ft. <illeg.> in. tall; about 160 to 179 pounds; has a broken nose and a scar near the right eye about 1-1/2 inches long; claims to have been born in Virginia [Chicago, IL]; is a very fast talker; smooth shaven and has 2 gold teeth on the right side lower jaw.

Later investigation by your Agent develops that this man is in reality EDWARD LINGGREN or LINDGREN, whom, I believe, the Department already has a file on.

In the middle of December correspondence was received from CARL ALTON alias VOGEL to the effect that up until October 1920 there were in the United States 7,562 United Communist Party members in good standing; 6,000 of doubtful standing, dues not paid to date; and about 9,000 who so far have failed to leave the old Communist Labor Party and affiliate with the new United Communist Party. In this correspondence ALTON also states that official notice was received to the effect that the Third International would only recommend the United Communist Party as being their representatives in this country. It was also stated in this correspondence that the Lithuanian Socialist Party had a secret conference at Detroit, Michigan, on September 21, 1920, and that 462 members of that organization had been affiliated with the United Communist Party.‡ On November 1, 1920, ALTON states there were approximately 12,000 members in good standing and that they were then negotiating to secure the membership of the old Jewish Socialist Party, which numbers approximately 30,000 members.§

KEAS stated to DOE that he had been informed by the leaders that FOSTER of the steel strike, that HAYWOOD of the IWW, and other big leaders of the other radical groups had all agreed to throw their strength with the United Communist Party when the crisis arose, and that there was no doubt consolidation of all the radical groups which were organized for the overthrow of this government would take place at that time. He placed particular emphasis on their not

†- Just about every statement in this paragraph is either fabrication or fantasy. The number of "agents" of the Comintern in 1920, reckoning the term liberally, could be counted on one hand — Mikhail Agurskii, Karlis "Charley" Janson, Louis Fraina, Sen Katayama. The CI successfully delivered approximately \$25,000 to the United Communist Party in 1920-21 (and a like sum to the Communist Party of America). These funds did not travel through *The Toiler* as a conduit. Much of the organization's printed propaganda was produced underground in small shops in New York, parallel to the Cleveland-based *Toiler* operation. The membership of the UCP through its dues paid a major part of the organization's expenses.

‡- According to official UCP statistics appearing in a document seized in a successful April 1921 raid on the UCP's New York headquarters, there were only 7 out of 673 UCP groups making use of the Lithuanian language as of December 1920, casting severe doubt on this claim of 462 new Lithuanian UCP adherents after September.

§- According to archival documents, the paid membership of the UCP for Oct. 1920 was 5,661. [Comintern Archive, RGASPI, f. 515, op. 1, d. 28, ll. 25-26.] This figure fell substantially in November. The claim of 30,000 for the Jewish Socialist Federation is preposterous, the size of that organization having peaked at just over 5,000 in 1915. When the JSF finally split from the Socialist Party in Sept. 1921, its remaining membership was reckoned in the general vicinity of 500.

affiliating openly and stated that the government would naturally prevent their organization but by organizing in different units and simply having a working agreement with the leaders, they could, at a prearranged time, throw all their strength to the United Communist Party and that the natural tendency of the men would be to follow their leaders and they in that way would secure the strength of the other organizations.†

About December 20, 1920, KEAS received the first positive report of the probable date of convention to be held in Chicago. The fact that it was to be held "underground" and that he would be expected to be there as an official delegate and also as a tentative member of the new Communist Party Executive Committee.

It was also officially reported at this time that the latest membership showed 11,066 members in good standing.‡

On January 7, 1921, KEAS received telegram as follows:

1-6-21. Chicago, Ill.

H.M. Keas.  
Mason City, Ia.

Come to Chicago as quick as possible. Meet me at #301 Center Street 10 am January 9th.

Owens.

KEAS also received letter from J.B. FLYNN, alias LINDGREN, in which he was instructed to prepare to become personally affiliated with editor and execu-

tive staff of *The Toiler*; which was to be removed in the very near future from its Cleveland headquarters to New York City. This permanent connection with KEAS with *The Toiler* has been long contemplated and negotiations have been going on for several months. KEAS is to take charge of the cartoonist work as well as taking over the position of Assistant General Editor for *The Toiler*. He is also to serve on the United Communist Party's [Central] Executive Committee.§

Through the close affiliation of undercover man DOE with KEAS, DOE was asked to attend this convention and did so.Δ At this point your Agent is incorporating DOE'S report covering this convention verbatim. This report is being marked "Exhibit 6."

Since the return of DOE from the convention great efforts have been made by all concerned to secure the names of the other leaders who were present at that time. It has been positively learned that L.K. ENGLISH, alias EDGAR OWENS, etc. was the man from Moline who sponsored for DOE at the convention; FLYNN has been positively identified as EDWARD LINDGREN; CARL ALTON also known under the name of L.E. KATTERFELD (Agent believes this man was indicted in Kansas.) CHARLES ASHLEY [=??] acting as Secretary of the United Communist Party.β

During the convention CARL CHAPIN [=??], who was at the convention representing District #5 [Cleveland], which is supposed to be a part of the Illinois district.◇ FRED E. CRAMER [=??] of New York City, who is supposed to be one of the CEC's old Ex-

†- There is neither documentary nor memoir evidence of any such formal agreement between the UCP and prominent working class leaders, although both Haywood and Foster later joined the Communist Party.

‡- According to official archival documents, dues actually paid for the UCP tailed to 2,973 in December 1920 before gradually rising to 5,927 at the time of the May 1921 Woodstock Unity Convention, held at the Overlook Mountain House hotel.

§- The composition of the CEC of the United Communist Party was changed by the 2nd Convention, held at a farm near Kingston, NY, from about Dec. 24, 1920 to Jan. 2, 1921. This would correspond with a flurry of communications with Keas during the first week of January 1921, but it is not known whether Keas was actually elected to the CEC by that body. *The Toiler* was only moved to New York City from Cleveland at the end of September 1921. It was later merged with *The Workers Council* and renamed *The Worker* in 1922, expanded in frequency to become *The Daily Worker* in 1924.

Δ- The nature of this convention in question is unclear. The Bureau of Investigation believed it to be a national convention, but that was held at Kingston, NY. The gathering seems likely to have been a Chicago district convention, albeit one of unprecedented size for the underground period.

β- As indicated in a previous footnote, L.K. England and Edgar Owens were two distinct people from the same area of Illinois, both founding members of the CLP; Ludwig Katterfeld is not definitely known to have been the Chicago UCP District Organizer using the name "Carl Alton." The pseudonym "Charles Ashley" has never been observed by the editor in any internal document of the UCP. It seems that Alfred Wagenknecht and Ludwig Katterfeld were essentially joint leaders of the UCP in 1921, with Wagenknecht holding the formal title and using the pseudonym "Paul Holt."

◇- Cleveland, headquarters city of District 5, and Chicago, headquarters city of District 7, were never joined in the UCP.

ecutive Committee, was also present at the convention and is reported to have taken a very active part.

MRS. ELLA R. BLOOR, is very active in this party and her particular work at this time is traveling around the country to different locals [groups] and giving them instructions from the CEC. MRS. BLOOR'S latest connection within this matter being that under date of January 18, 1921, EDGAR OWENS wired for KEAS to come to Chicago at once. KEAS in turn wired that he was not financially able and asked for further instructions. OWENS then wired to the effect that MRS. BLOOR had been given his instructions and that she would be in Mason City shortly to deliver them personally. MRS. BLOOR has just returned from a long western trip in which she was agitating for the former servicemen. The United Communist Party has at the present time plans for assisting in the origination of an ex-servicemen organization to compete with the American Legion. It, however, is to be based on partisan labor and radical lines and will probably be a further development of the World War Veterans or some other organization of like kind. From letters and other correspondence during the month of January [1921] and to date, KEAS will probably be ordered east within a very short time, as E.T. ALLISON of *The Toiler*, published at Cleveland, Ohio, stated that they were about ready to move and will expect him to leave at the same time they do.

For what information it may be for the Department, a letter was received by KEAS from a man traveling under the name of D. DICKSON [Earl Browder] at Seattle, Wash. He stated to DOE that this man was a member of the CEC and was coming east for a big conference and intended to stop at Mason City to become acquainted. These plans were later changed, the man continuing east through Minneapolis and advised KEAS that he would see him in New York. Evidently the new organization is working in close harmony as DICKSON [Browder], who wrote from Seattle, stated in his letter that MRS. BLOOR would be in Mason

City in about 10 days or 2 weeks and that she would have "the dope" for you. Taking into consideration this with the fact that OWENS and the eastern crowd had ordered this procedure, they evidently have found a source of keeping each other in close touch with the various movements of their district leaders.

Your Agent was also able to secure a copy of the resolutions which were passed by the general convention in Chicago; they are attached herewith and marked "Exhibit 7." Your agent also secured [District Executive] Committee minutes for District #7 [Chicago] on 3 different occasions and also the first District minutes for District #13 [Milwaukee], of which Mason City, Iowa, is now a part and which was organized within the last 30 days, the first official act being on or about the 15th of January. These are attached and marked "Exhibit #8."

It will be noted in the financial reports which have been submitted that the Districts have numbered up to 11 until 12 and 13 were organized. Your Agent was unable to learn anything definite with reference to #12 but from information the District will probably be headquartered in Duluth, Minn. District #12, or Detroit, Michigan. †

FREDERICK MAYER [=??] of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who is a member of the Communist Party's Executive Committee, is now supposed to be head of District #13, headquartered at Minneapolis, Minn. He was delegated by the General [Central] Executive Committee to take over and organize this particular District. The method whereby you can reach the official agent of this District is through one [ALEX] "GEORGIAN," who is employed at the MODERN BOOK STORE, #127 Fourth Street S, Minneapolis, Minnesota. In order to reach this man it would be necessary to call at this place of business and specifically ask for this code-named man, and, if properly identified, he in turn would furnish you the information needed to locate your party. ‡

ALTON [=??] was in Minneapolis for some time

†- In this document Hess repeatedly and wrongly identifies the headquarters city of District 13, that being Milwaukee, not Minneapolis. District 12 was headquartered in Minneapolis; its territory extended northward to include "all of Canada." There was also a District 14, based in Syracuse, NY, and including Erie, PA, and all of upstate NY north of Poughkeepsie. Detroit was already the headquarters city of UCP District 6.

‡- "Frederick Mayer" was the District Organizer of D13 [Milwaukee]. Although as yet unidentified, he was not a member of the CEC. The DO for D12 [Minneapolis, including Canada] was "A. Grey," perhaps an alternate pseudonym of Karlis "Charley" Janson. Alexei "Alex" Georgian was the real, overground name of the owner of the Modern Book Store in Minneapolis. Georgian's underground party-name was "J. Kasbeck," a garbled version of which is mentioned but not identified by Hess in the next paragraph of the report.



after the convention, presumably getting District #13 [sic.] in working order and his address was "MARCIA C. TAYLOR," #722 North 42nd Avenue, Minneapolis, Minn. There is also one KARBECK or KABECK, very prominently connected...

\* \* \*  
<one page missing>  
\* \* \*

...the Theses and Statutes of the Third (Communist) International. This is the "Theses and Statutes" which were adopted at this secret convention which was held in Chicago and which was received in this section on March 1, 1921. This office has copies of much literature of this character, some of it being *Communism and the Family*, by Alexandra Kollontay; *An Appeal to the Young*, by P. Kropotkin; *The Capitalist World and the Communist International*; *Think or Surrender*, by George Kirkpatrick; *Russia and the League of Nations*; and *The State and Revolution*, by Lenin. And many others which, to the knowledge of this office, the Department already has a record of, inasmuch as they have been seized from time to time by this district. This office also has some 30 or 40 copies of *The Toiler* that will be held at this office and at any time needed can be secured if the Department should care to complete their files or use them in any other way.

Under date of February 28, 1921, a confidential communication was received by KEAS about as follows:

To each District, sub-district, and group.

Exceedingly strong efforts should be expended in getting United Communist Party members into government offices. Any member who is able to secure a government job should secure one and be in different Departments. This covers the post office, ammunition plants, arsenals, armories, army and navy administration offices, and other confidential jobs with capitalists. Everybody should do this and then notify the Party through his group and District channels. The party will also attempt to get members into or in touch with the Department of Justice so that in case of a crisis we will be in a better position to control underground channels.

The letter was marked to be destroyed immediately after reading and was signed "C.A." for "CEC." DOE was unable to secure this letter as KEAS immediately destroyed it after letting DOE read it. He at-

tempted to secure the envelope but this also was destroyed by KEAS and he was unable to learn whether or not it had been sent from Chicago or some other point further east.

Under date of February 25, 1921, correspondence was carried on between KEAS and the editor of *The Toiler* [Elmer Allison] in which the *Toiler* people were instructed to get in touch with BEN LEGERE, Post Office Box 284, Altoona, Pa. This man wishes to organize the railroad workers there under the banner of "United Communist Party." He is at the present time connected with railroad work in that territory. This man, Agent believes, the Department already has information about and it is reported he was connected with the IWW crowd in 1917.

The following have been in constant touch with KEAS and no doubt are affiliated with the radical activities:

B. Klimo, c/o Chicago & NW RR, Bricelyn, Minn.  
E.P. LaMouret, c/o Northern Pa. RR, Ponderay, Idaho.  
J.A. Phillips, #133 A Shamut Place, St. Louis, Mo.  
J.D. Williams, #3 Elsie St., Malden, Mass.  
George T. Clardy, #223 Gregory Ave., Passaic, NJ.  
T.L. Walsh, Clarion, Iowa.  
Wade Shurtleff, #1613 Kinsman Road, Cleveland, O.

The last-named party was connected with the Brotherhood of Railroad and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, and Station Employees. He was prominent in the recent outlaw railroad strike and is supposed to be at present engaged in organizing the United Communist Party.

In a recent conversation with DOE, KEAS mentions the fact that the younger generation is being educated towards the Communist Party and stated that they even have women connected with the public schools and playgrounds in the large cities who were back of the junior organization and that Communism was being taught by these people.

In the Mason City [sub-]District FRANK H. HUCKINS, #524 First St. SW; GEORGE KAMENIOFF; JOHN DOE, the informant; and HARRY KEAS are the only active members. There is an effort on at the present time to organize a Bulgarian group but so far it has failed to materialize.

Definite information regarding groups in Sioux City and other places in this District, your Agent was unable to secure. He did definitely learn, however, that

there was a Jew in active charge at Sioux City and steps will be taken to trace out the organization at that place.

Arrangements have been made for securing valuable information, possibly from KEAS through the use of the informant DOE. This office will have on its files all the tabulated information learned and as new material is developed it will be promptly reported to Washington. Arrangements have also been made whereby it would be possible to work undercover men into the Communist organization through the man JOHN DOE and KEAS. These in turn could be transferred to eastern points if the Department so desired.

This report is reduced to its minimum by your Agent but contains practically all the information of real importance which has been developed.

The "Exhibits" which are being furnished will, upon study, properly disclose in much greater detail the actual activities of this organization and the rapidity with which it is being revived.

*Investigation continued.*

***Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport.***

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