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## Party Statement

Issued by the Central Executive Committee as a Result of the

# FIRST PARTY COUNCIL

Assembled in December

Three important events have closed a period in the development of the Party. These three events are the Cleveland Conference for Progressive Political action, the Chicago Railway Conference and the Second Convention of the LLP. If we draw the balance of this period, we will find that, since the Party Convention the Party has had several political victories. As a result of the correct policies laid down the CEC, the Party is a unit and is no longer isolated from the American labor movement.

There is every possibility of making our Party a powerful political factor in the United States.

If we observe the political situation with open eyes, we must confirm the fact that, despite the good policies adopted by the CEC, the Party, as a party, has not proven equal to the task. Our political ideas were good, but they were not carried into realization. In spite of all efforts of the CEC, it was not possible to mobilize the Party for any of our campaigns.

The Defense campaign was a success politically, because we could win over a large number of trade unions; but organizationally it was a failure because the Party, as an organization, participated in the campaign to but a small extent.

The Labor Party campaign was politically a big success, for the LPP won the cooperation of the Farmer Labor Party, the Chicago Federation of Labor, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and various farmer organizations; but we did not succeed in getting the Party itself into the Labor Party campaign. The worst example was set by New York, where a "mass meeting" of 600 people took place as the apex of the Labor Party campaign, and after the Cleveland Conference

only 200 people represented a "mass meeting." It must be remembered that the LPP has a membership of 3000 in New York City!

The campaign for amalgamation was politically a tremendous success. No less than eleven State federations of labor, representing about 25 per cent of organized labor of this country, declared themselves ideologically for amalgamation; organizationally, however, we had a fearful failure, for, as we could not mobilize our Party forces, we were not able to occupy all the strategic points, and there is danger that the amalgamation movement, which is growing more and more powerful from day to day, will get out of control.

In a word: in the defense, Labor Party and amalgamation campaigns, there was every possibility of good political success, but very great, even destructive failure from an organizational standpoint.

The CEC feels compelled to enlighten the Party members on these questions with perfect frankness. We declare most emphatically that organizationally our Party has been a failure, so that now we must issue the slogan: "BUILD THE PARTY."

We must analyze the reasons of this failure.

It would be a mistake to believe that our Party could not be mobilized because it is an underground party. It is a mistake to believe that an underground party cannot be mobilized, as the centrists claim. That is not true; as an analysis will show that during this time we could perform all political work openly, and that the LPP daily is functioning more and more completely as an open Communist party. Evidences of this latter fact are:

1. The entire political administration and the whole political work of the LPP are Communistic. 2. The LPP is now connected with the Communist International through fraternal representation. 3. The LPP adopted a good Communist program at its convention. 4. The LPP is regarded not only by the authorities as a Communist party, but by the workers as well. 5. Through the LPP we have had full possibilities of propagating the Communist ideology.

During this whole period, the CEC, in accordance with the Convention decision, has consciously acted on the idea, that every chance for open work should be taken advantage of. For that reason, we not only consciously aimed at making the LPP a Communist Party, but also determined that the Industrial Department of the Party should be an open institution. Before the large masses of American workers we openly stated in our Labor Day Manifesto that the underground form of Party organization is not a dogma for us, but a bitter necessity.

The real causes of the organizational failure of the Party, however, are as follows:

1. The Party apparatus is too cumbersome. This defect has had a most harmful effect on all Party actions.

2. The groups are removed too many steps from the CEC. As a result, instructions sent by the CEC at times have not reached the groups for three or four weeks. Innumerable examples could be given, but two will suffice. Instructions regarding the mobilization of the Party forces against the split threatened in the LPP by a certain federation did not reach a section organizer in District No. 2 till long after the controversy was settled. The instructions in regard to the Labor Party reached the Party membership after it had been taken up in the LPP.

3. Our groups are too small. Group meetings have degenerated, and it is a most rare event when a full meeting occurs.

4. The very often exaggerated dualism between the Party and the LPP doubles the work. Meetings of the Party units are duplicated in most instances in the LPP branch meetings. Thus, in District No. 2 a comrade of the DEC had to discuss a certain matter in a subcommittee of the Party DEC and then take it up again in the full DEC. He had to discuss the same matter in a subcommittee of the DEC of the LPP and finally in the full DEC of the LPP. In other words, the comrade had to discuss the matter four times, which represents a fearful loss of energy.

5. The Party groups are built artificially and not on the basis of the work to be done. The groups are not based on a similarity of function, but on residential qualifications. To work effectively, there must be unity of function.

6. The Party numerically is not equal to the tremendous tasks confronting it. The number of Party members is too small. The number of organizations among which we must work is so large that only a few members are available for each organization. In order to extend our work we must increase our membership.

On the basis of decisions by the CEC and the Party Council, therefore the following remedies for these are to be applied:

1. To increase the size of the Party, a big membership drive shall be conducted. We must absorb all good elements in the LPP into the Party. We must, in addition, get militant trade unionists into the Party. We wish to remove a serious obstacle to increasing our membership, by reducing the dues to 25 cents per month.

2. We intend to reduce the number of steps between the CEC and the membership.

3. We must enlarge the Party groups and allow Party branches to meet regularly as units of the Party.

4. We must convert the groups from mechanical units into working bodies, thru a division of labor, by assigning specific tasks to various groups, such as trade union, protection of foreign-born workers, defense, relief, literature distribution, confidential work.

5. We must combine the leading committees of the Party and the LPP, so as to make them identical wherever possible. (How intolerable the position of the Party is, is manifest in the fact that the LPP District Organizer of a certain district has no less than 16 Party meetings a week, aside from trade union and other meetings.)

6. At last we must seriously take up the self-protection of the Party. The present underground party is only an underground in name. We must organize various confidential and secret departments of the Party for ensuring its safety and carrying on the Party's underground work, in order to protect ourselves from future attacks.

The CEC will furnish detailed instructions on methods of achieving these improvements.

The political development and the condition of the labor movement demand more and more work from our Party, and, we may add, ever MORE OPEN political and trade union work. Up to the present, the CEC has done everything to remove all impediments from the path to open work. With these organizational decisions, the CEC and the Party Council have sought to simplify and facilitate the open work. We must continue to study political developments most carefully. We must not fail to mention some important facts which demonstrate that, since our last Party convention, better and broader possibilities for the open existence of the Party are developing.

These new possibilities are as follows:

1. The class struggle within the bourgeoisie. The November 7th elections and the formation of the La Follette group showed that the petty bourgeoisie and the farmers are conducting an ever sharper struggle against the big bourgeoisie. In the matter of the treatment of the labor movement, there are deep conflicts between the two sections of the bourgeoisie. This cleft in the bourgeoisie makes it impossible to persecute the Communists with united forces and with a solid bourgeois public opinion behind it, as was done in the past.

2. The solidarity of the working class revealed itself in the past few months as never before. The signs of this solidarity are: a) the tremendous labor struggles; b) the idea of a general strike in the minds of the workers; c) the rapid development of the amalgamation movement; d) the growing Labor Party movement; e) greater influence of the Communists in the labor unions; f) greater sympathy for the Communists and the LPP in the labor movement, as, for instance, in the defense and the Labor Party Conference; g) to be persecuted is no longer a privilege of the Communists, for it strikes all militant elements of the working class. Therefore, persecutions no longer remain local matters but become events of national significance. h) The LPP is functioning more and more as a Communist Party, and is controlled more and more completely by the Communists.

All of these facts demonstrate clearly that the development is in the direction of an open Communist Party. Of course, it is one of the most important duties of the CEC not to attempt any dangerous experiments. We state most emphatically that the CEC would wage a pitiless struggle against any attempt to FORCE the establishment of an open Communist Party; against any attempt, not only to establish an open party before a Convention of the CP has decided, but also against any effort to propagate the idea that an open Communist Party may be established without a decision of the Party Convention. The CEC will wage a sharp fight against any attempt to make a factional controversy of this matter.

The CEC declares: We adhere to the decision of the last Party Convention. In the spirit of the Communist International, we make no more a principle of the underground form of organization than of the open form. We stand for a well equipped, large, politically mature, elastic CP, which, according to circumstances, can function openly or underground.

The question of the reorganization of the Party was taken up at the Party Council which recently took place. The matter was discussed most thoroughly, every angle being touched upon. When the vote was taken, the proposal of the CEC, upon which the above document is based, was adopted almost unanimously. No member of the Party Council was against the principle of the proposal; only a few objected to the method of carrying it out. A subsequent conference with the comrades who dissented removed all doubts so that the decision now is practically unanimous.

Central Executive Committee CPA

J. MILLER, Exec. Sec'y.

## Report of the First Sitting of the PARTY COUNCIL of the Communist Party of America

The Party Council of the C. P. of A. recently held its first meeting with highly constructive and satisfying results. As provided by the last Part Convention, which founded this new institution in the Party, the Party Council regularly meets on the call of the CEC every four months.

In the Council the following were delegates with voice and vote:

1. The fourteen members of the Central Executive Committee.
2. One delegate (as elected by the last Convention) from each District, with the exception that Districts 8 and 9 were represented by one delegate (as decided by the Convention), and the delegate of District 3 was absent.
3. One delegate from each of the former Opposition Districts Nos. 1, 2 and 4, as agreed in the terms of unity drawn up when the Opposition re-entered the Party (Opposition District 5 being absent).

With voice but no vote the following were present:

1. Several editors of Party papers, a few being absent.
2. The Secretaries of 7 Federations, other Federations Secretaries being absent.
3. Two representatives of the Industrial Department.
4. One representative of a subsidiary organization.
5. One alternate from District No. 2, who was granted permission by the Council to attend.

At the opening of the Council sitting, the CEC announced that all members of the CEC were free to express their individual opinions; that is, were released from CEC discipline while sitting in the Party Council.

A Presidium of three members was elected.

### MORNING SESSION: ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS.

The Executive Secretary reported on the present condition of the Party. He first gave as a background an account of the experience of the Party since the Convention, calling special attention to the failure of a large portion of the membership to grasp the political significance of the campaigns initiated by the CEC of the Party, and to the parasitic effect that some of our affiliated organizations have in drawing away the strength and energy of the Party. From this premise he arrived at the conclusion that the present unsatisfactory condition of the Party is largely an inheritance from the past and that immediate steps would have to be taken to improve the method of work. He expressed the opinion that the subsidiary organizations of the Party must not be conducted in a manner that saps the energy of the Party, but in a manner that will strengthen the Party and promote its work.

The latest decisions of the CEC on this subject were then quoted by the Secretary and explained.

The Secretary also pointed out the defects of the present structure of the Party machinery for purposes of quick action. The Party is compelled to devote much of its time and energy to the upkeep of the organizational machinery and can devote but little time for the work among the masses and for political campaigns. He therefore urged the simplification of the present Party machinery by eliminating some of the links that connect the CEC with the membership and by modifying the present functioning of the Party.

The report of the Executive Secretary pointed out that there is no factional division of any sort in the CEC. Furthermore, the correspondence from the outlying Districts leads him to believe that the formerly virulent factionalism does not now exist anywhere to any menacing degree. Such of it as does still exist is rapidly being cleared up. The Secretary himself, as a leader of a former faction, admitted that factions are detrimental to the growth of the Party.

The report showed the following facts and conditions in regard to the Federations:

**LITHUANIAN.** The best functioning of all our Federations.

**UKRAINIAN.** Working well, as far as the Federation itself is concerned.

**SOUTH SLAV.** The same. Its financial matters being taken care of by other organizations.

**RUSSIAN.** This Federation was completely disorganized, but with the return of FO new life has been put into it. The Federation Convention has been most successful. If the policies laid down by the CEC in regard to emigration of members are carried out, the prospects in the Russian Federation are very bright.

**JEWISH.** This Federation was also completely disorganized up to the time of the Convention, but since then is working well. A crisis was successfully solved by action of the CEC. The Federation plays an important role in the Jewish labor movement.

**HUNGARIAN.** There were factional difficulties, which have been settled satisfactorily. The CEC acted in the matter. Recently an important question has been raised which undoubtedly will be settled with good results. The Federation is now making steady progress.

**LETTISH.** Decided not to hold Federation Convention. The Bureau was approved by the CEC. Difficulties with branch in District 2 have been settled.

**FINNISH.** Conditions made necessary a reorganization of the Bureau. Friction is evident; and further steps are necessary to eliminate the friction. Connections are now established and new life is already shown.

**GERMAN.** This Federation is in about the same condition as the Finnish. Efforts must be made to improve the present conditions.

**ITALIAN.** The Italian Federation has been reorganized. The proportion of Party Federation is too small and must be strengthened. The fight against the Fascisti movement becomes important here.

**POLISH.** The Polish Federation is still weak and lacking in funds. There have been editorial difficulties. Some remaining friction between some of the former Opposition members in some localities and the other membership has to be settled.

**ESTHONIAN, GREEK and ARMENIAN.** These three Federations are very small. The Armenian Federation has a big field to work in, and must make use of the opportunity.

The attention of the Council was called to the fact that the National office of the Party is in possession of numerous and detailed reports from the Districts and Federations especially prepared for the Party Council. The CEC is analyzing these extremely valuable reports and will use them as a guide in its future work. Time would not permit to consider these reports at the Council meeting.

The Secretary concluded his report by pointing out that the policies of the CEC since the Party Convention were correct and urged the membership to stand solidly behind these policies and help build the Party.

Moved to accept the report of the Executive Secretary. No disagreement was expressed. Those present were then asked to make criticisms or suggestions. Questions were then asked, to which the Secretary replied.

Discussion followed, which dealt mainly with conditions in the various districts.

District Six reported friction in a matter about which the CEC is informed and is acting.

District Two reported that the RI work is sadly neglected in the District, and the delegate said that the reasons were: lack of proper direction from above; lack of a definite program; and lack of industrial reports and guidance. The

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comrade further reported that the defense work was suffering from friction between the G and the D. He claimed that this was due to a lack of a definite position on the part of the higher authority. The same comrade said that the campaign for a Labor Party had been a failure in his District because too hastily planned. In general, this delegate from District Two made criticisms but offered no suggestions for improvements.

District Twelve reported that although great factionalism had existed in that District in the period immediately after the Unity Convention, the last Convention has been followed by a period of great improvement. This District reported that the present condition of the work promises great progress.

District Four complained that there have been too many changes, too suddenly made, and too many political campaigns initiated. That the membership no sooner got accustomed to discussing a problem than instructions came to start work on a new question. The result was that each meeting had to discuss something new, before the comrades had had a chance to digest the old. It was pointed out to this delegate that the CEC had not put problems before the Party any faster than these problems are forced onto the attention of the working class by actual life, and that a Communist Party must learn to handle all vital questions that face the working class, no matter how fast they may be presented by quickly changing history.

District One reported that there are about 2000 members of the LPP in that District, of which about 1500 are of one nationality and believe more in their community life than in the Party ideology. They are satisfied to speak their own language, think in their own way and make no attempt at getting in contact with the American workers. From this example he elaborated upon the whole federation problem of our Party. He further declared that the Party is financially overburdened on account of the control method. That is, the active members are obliged to belong to about ten different organizations, paying dues in each and buying tickets in each. He made a plea for a simplification of the machinery in line with suggestions made by the Executive Secretary in his report—namely that only certain comrades shall be assigned to subsidiary organization work, and that the work in our Party generally shall be departmentalized.

The delegate from District Two spoke again, this time suggesting that the dues system shall not be changed, but a check on the expenditure shall be established. He also complained that there were entirely too many CP caucuses making it necessary for some of the members to attend 16 meetings a week.

District Five delegate declared in his opinion factionalism is not wiped out—only the phrase is, but the spirit still exists.

Another representative from District Two suggested that there is one main trouble and that is that there is no discipline in the Party, and the Party has no power to exert discipline. Recommended that the work be so divided that certain comrades would have certain assigned duties. This was in line with recommendation made by Executive Secretary.

District Seven reported that the main work in his district is the RI work. There is no difficulty in getting the comrades to do this work if only definite instructions come to them. He finds that the organization must be simplified so that at least two of the steps between the CEC and the membership will be eliminated. The dues must be reduced. Members in District Seven refuse to pay increase. The Lithuanians boldly refused to pay, others instead of refusing are dropping out of the CP. They have 12 to 14 branches of the RI, and all eager to do work. All they need is instructions.

The Secretary briefly replied to the various points raised during the discussion.

Having heard the report of the Secretary, the Party Council approved the report as read, and instructed the Presidium to incorporate into it the following suggestions:

1. The necessity of simplifying the Party apparatus.
2. The necessity of bringing closer together the English-speaking and foreign-speaking elements.
3. The necessity of carrying out in a disciplinary manner the orders of the Party and pointing out that no personal interpretation is permissible.

All three points accepted.

## AFTERNOON SESSION: POLITICAL REPORT AND DISCUSSION.

The report of the Political Committee on behalf of the CEC, crystalized before the Party Council the most weighty problems that it had to face. Of course the organizational problem exists only for the sake of the political and industrial work that has to be done. The Secretary of the Political Committee, in the name of the CEC, presented a resolution which covered the main matters to be acted upon by the Party Council. The substance of this resolution can be found in this issue of the Official Organ under the heading, "Party Statement." After reading the resolution, the reporter made a long and very important review of the political and industrial developments of the past four months and the direction which these developments are taking at the present time. It was a fundamental analysis of the problems that the Party must solve, and of the circumstances in which the Party must work. The comrade further expressed the view of the CEC, regarding the internal condition of the Party and the question of its ability to adapt itself to its task. The weaknesses that had been brought out by the Executive Secretary's report and by the reports of the delegates from the Districts, were cold-bloodedly analyzed. Constructive plans for remedying the faults were proposed in the resolution which the Party Council was asked by the CEC to approve.

As this resolution was the crux of the Party problems, a great deal of careful discussion followed from nearly all delegates, the CEC members expressing themselves as individuals. When the vote was finally taken, the CEC resolution was approved by twenty-eight votes to five, one delegate not voting. It was agreed that out of the five delegates who voted "no," the four who were for the resolution in principle but who felt obliged to vote against it in the precise form in which it was presented, would be taken into consultation later, so as to have their views considered in the final draft. This consultation has since occurred with satisfactory results, so that the substance of the resolution as it now appears in the Party Statement has practically the unanimous approval of the Party Council.

Another resolution was presented by the CEC for the censure of the entire delegation (including fraternal delegates) of the Party to the Fourth Congress of the Comintern for continuing their factionalism in Moscow. It provided further that these delegates shall not be permitted to continue the factionalism after their return. The vote showed three delegates against censuring.

## NIGHT SESSION: INDUSTRIAL REPORT.

A representative of the Industrial Department reported on its activities since the Party Convention. In this report and the discussion which followed, the delegates were forcefully reminded that the most prominent and emphatic action of the Convention was its decision that "The work in the trade unions must be increased ten-fold." It was made very plain that the Party has not yet carried out even a small fraction of the duty laid upon it by its Convention. In some particular phases the Party has done extremely well—that is, its Industrial Department has accomplished some very important successes. But on the whole the Party organization is not responding satisfactorily to the calls of the industrial field. In many Districts the establishment of the RI has been disgracefully neglected by the Party members. Our trade union press has been struggling ahead almost without any support from the membership.

Although the industrial report is of supreme importance, it is not advisable to go into the further details of it here. The comrades are reminded that practically all knowledge of our activities and progress in this field can be obtained in the other press, which they must read and support.

The industrial report was accepted. Then a motion was made and passed, to give certain help to the industrial work.

## OTHER BUSINESS.

The Party Council approved the reinstatement of Comrade Leon to full Party activity. The expulsion of another Party member for refusing to accept a Party position offered to him by his Federation was approved.

Adjourned.

# FEDERATION CONVENTIONS

Three important Federations of the Party—the Hungarian, Lithuanian and Russian—recently held their annual Conventions.

The report of the conventions show that these Federations have entered a new and healthier period of development.

All of these conventions have set two main tasks for the Federations. One is—to gain the sympathy and support of the various organizations of foreign-born workers of the respective language-groups. The second—to bring into closer contact with the American political life and the American labor movement the great masses of the foreign-born workers, especially the members of the Party Federations.

## PROTECTION OF FOREIGN-BORN WORKERS.

The Hungarian and Lithuanian conventions emphasized the fact that there are numerous and large organizations of foreign-born workers still under the control of the nationalist, bourgeois and clerical elements. These elements utilize the workers organization under their influence for the support of the counter revolution and the domination of the bourgeoisie in their native countries. At the same time they divert the attention of the workers from the class struggle in America, and mislead them into the patriotic support of American imperialism.

The conventions urge the membership to take active part in these organizations and to expose their reactionary leadership as inimical to the true interests of the workers.

The convention emphasize the urgent necessity of a campaign for merging the many fraternal, benevolent and educational societies into one organization.

This campaign has every chance for a success. The basis for the campaign is unity for the struggle against the oppressive laws aimed against the aliens, against the attempts of the capitalist class of this country to reduce the foreign-born worker to the condition of total slavery, fingerprinting him, subjecting him to continuous supervision and assuming the right of shipping him like cattle from place to place as required by the industrial needs of the ruling class.

The Hungarian convention emphasizes the fact that only in alliance of the foreign-born workers with the organized labor movement of this country, only in taking an active part in the political life of this country lies the success of the campaign of the foreign-born workers against the barbaric persecutions of the ruling class of America.

“Foreign-born workers, unite your own forces, join the revolutionary movement of the American working class, join the trade unions, enter actively the political life of the country, become citizens”—such are the slogans of the Federation conventions.

The important part which the press must play in clarifying these problems is emphasized by the decisions of the conventions. The press is to devote considerable space to the activities and problems of the organizations of the foreign-born and must propagate the above mentioned slogans.

## JOIN THE UNIONS.

The Hungarian convention points out that: “The LPP can only then fulfill its revolutionary aims if it becomes a mass party. And it can become such only if its roots are imbedded deep into the trade unions where the workers are concentrated.”

The Russian convention states: “Only then will our Party be able to influence large working masses, when all the members of the Party will become members of workers organizations and of trade unions.”

All the three conventions instruct their respective press to devote considerable space to the daily struggles of the American workers, and to the left wing movement in the trade unions.

## MASS EMIGRATION.

The Russian convention has passed a very important resolution on the question of emigration of Party members to Soviet Russia. Following is an extract from this resolution:

“The mass departure of Party members for Soviet Russia has caused in the past considerable damage to the Communist movement in America.

“The convention of the Russian Federation points out to the comrades that the interests of the communist movement demand, that they should carry on communist work in America, and not go to Russia for the purpose of saving the Russian revolution.

“The Convention of the Russian Federation instructs the incoming Bureau to begin a campaign against the mass departure of communists to Russia.

“The Convention call upon the Party also to carry through a similar campaign.”

With the attention of its language federations centered upon the task of becoming part and parcel of the American labor movement, with their now aroused interest in the political life of America, with this new realization of the importance to develop to the utmost the open work of the Party among the broad working masses—the Party can confidently face the future.

We have definitely outlived our sectarian tendencies. The Party is well on the road of becoming the important political factor in class struggle in America.

The decision of the Federation conventions are in full harmony with the decisions of the last Party Convention and with the policies of the CEC of the Party.

The Russian convention has expressed this concretely in the following resolution upon the report of the representative of the CEC of the Party:

“Having heard the report of the representative of the CEC of the Party concerning the general situation within the Party as well as of the decisions of the CEC and its plans for the future, the convention of the Russian Federation considers that in its work the CEC proceeds from the correct estimation of the labor movement of the U. S. and conforms its activities with the tactics of the Comintern in this country.

“Expressing its approval to the actions and plans of the CEC of the Party the convention deems it especially necessary to express its satisfaction with the activities of the CEC in the matter of unifying all the communist tendencies of this country into one party.”

The same healthy orientation of the communist movement as expressed in the decisions of Federation conventions is also taking place throughout the Party. This is manifested by the decisions of the various district conventions which will be dealt with separately.

We are undoubtedly still faced with the difficult task of carrying into effect the plans outlined above.

It requires the full energy and inspiration of the entire membership to hasten their fulfillment, for the labor movement of America is developing rapidly and presents us with ever greater and more important political tasks. We must get ready to meet them. It is with this consciousness that the Party has to shape its organizational policies and activities in the months to come.

# A Political Letter to the Party

## From the Special Representative Sent to America by the C. I.

Dear Comrades:—

Before I leave your shores, I feel the need once more of having contact with you even if only in writing. I wish to speak to you about some general and special questions relative to the activities of our Party in the near future...

Now I wish to say a few words on several concrete points:

1. The LPP must be made a living organism. There seems to be some fear in our ranks that if the LPP becomes too active, too much alive, too strong, it will do so only at the expense of the Party. There is said to be danger of the LPP swallowing up the Party, which would mean the Party's "liquidation." The LPP is regarded as a possible rival of the Party. This is absolutely wrong. The Party must be the motive power behind the LPP, not a brake upon it. No one must be heard to say: "If the LPP does this or that, there will be nothing for the Party to do: it is its There will always remain enough for the Party to do: it is its special task to conduct and enliven the work in the LPP, in the RI. The Party must be the heart and brain of this work. I would say even more: if we do not make the LPP an active, living political party, a point of attraction and assemblage for the radical elements in the American working class, the Party itself will vegetate, and lead an anemic, crippled existence. Our entire relation to the LPP, as expressed up to the present, must be changed. There must be developed in our ranks an LPP patriotism. Our work in the LPP must be doubled and trebled IMMEDIATELY. Then in six months, the membership in the LPP will be increased fivefold, and its prestige and influence increased tenfold.

There is a serious impediment in the fact that a large part of the membership of the Party are not citizens, and we face the paradoxical situation that they feel more secure in the illegal Party than in the open LPP. Although we must take this fact into consideration in particular cases, it would be absurd to allow it to influence the policies of our Party as far as our open work is concerned.

2. The centrist or half-centrist elements in the LPP must be treated in the the same manner as similar elements in the legal Communist Parties of Europe are treated. That is to say, we must fight against their centrism on the basis of actual political questions. The more opportunity we give them to develop their initiative, the more we force them to take a position in regard to all the burning questions of the American and international labor movement, the more beneficial our struggle against their views will be from a political standpoint. But that can only be if the LPP becomes a living party.

3. Our publishing department must be developed and assume an actual political character. It is not sufficient that we reprint European Communist literature. We are in great need of several books dealing with American matters (the first... is in process and should not appear late). **We must issue at least one agitational pamphlet each month.** There are and will be a plenty of subjects to deal with... This would be a splendid opportunity to take up a whole series of most important questions in fresh, suggestive form. There are enough writers for such pamphlets once we decide what we want. Younger talents also must be drafted for the work. Our whole party apparatus would take on an entirely different character. It would become more lively, more enthusiastic, it would become more political if we would give our membership a pamphlet for mass distribution at least once a month. Financial considerations must not be the deciding factor. First of all, there is no use of keeping up an expensive party apparatus if we have no agitational material; secondly, most of the pamphlets would pay... In any case, it can and must be done.

4. A properly working book department must be organized without delay...

5. A monthly—perhaps at first a quarterly—should be started. But its issuance, both from an editorial, administrative and financial standpoint, must be well prepared...

6. The Research Bureau which you have started is a burning necessity. No political work can be done if minute and comprehensive information is not available regarding the condition of the working class, the state of the class struggle, the various economic and political groups and tendencies both of the enemy and of our friends. We must have a knowledge of topography, climatology. Systematic information is a fundamental condition for successful strategy and manoeuvring. The more we know about the conditions in which we are working, the more extensive our activity will be. It is not an exaggeration to say that a good part of the factional struggle in our Party would have been saved if we had had more and more exact information about the real conditions in America. It is astonishing how empty our Party literature is on this subject. It is fortunate that a change in this respect is about to take place.

7. One of the most important questions—perhaps the most important one—of the American labor movement and therefore of our Party, is that of the formation of an independent political party embracing the broadest masses of the organized workers of America. This is the question of a Labor Party. Of course I

do not refer to such frauds and camouflages of the idea of a Labor Party, as, for instance, that perpetrated in New York by small groups of politicians for election purposes. A real Labor Party would have to be formed by the progressive unions, and should contain at the very beginning at least 1,000,000 workers. It is clear that this would be an historical event of the first order in the development of the class struggle in America. It would represent the first step in the constitution of the American working class as a class on the political field. In comparison with the old capitalist countries of Europe, America is several decades behind. If this first big step is taken, the further steps, which would lead to a radicalization of the Labor Party, would follow in far faster tempo than elsewhere. Signs increasing from month to month, nearly from week to week, indicate that the idea of a Labor Party is making progress in the front ranks of the organized workers. Its formation is a question of a very short time, if not of the nearest future.

We must take a stand on the question of a Labor Party; we cannot evade it any longer. And this stand can only be in favor of the formation of a Labor Party containing millions of workers. Doubts that arose in our ranks were based on a misunderstanding. There was opposition to our Party being the main bearer of the idea of a Labor Party. There was the justified feeling that this would lead to a fiasco and to confusion in our own ranks. In reality the question is quite different. The idea of a large independent class party, the idea of a Labor Party, is being propagated independently of us by hundreds of labor unions of various shades. A fight on this question is going on in the labor movement. Hence it would be a very serious mistake if we should hesitate for a minute to take a clear and definite position to it. We must participate in it. When the Labor Party is formed, we must be in it. It is the duty of the CEC to educate the entire membership on this question and prepare them for the coming action. Of course this work must be done by the LPP. If the centrists show any opposition, it must be broken. It will afford a fine fight of ideas to overcome their petty-bourgeois prejudices. The whole press must work as a unit in conformity with Party decisions and instructions.

8. One of the greatest defects of our Party is that in reality it is more a loose federation of Language Federations than a real party. Each Language Federation lives a life of its own. It has its particular worries and interests, and is little interested in the results of the Party work as a whole. The Party as a whole is not firmly rooted in the membership. This must be changed.

This will not be an easy task, but it is unavoidable. It will require time, patience, persistence, tact—still it must be done. How? I will make a few suggestions.

The work in the Federations must be more Americanized. Their papers must pay more attention to the struggle in America. They must more systematically acquaint their readers with American life and educate them to participate actively in this life. Systematic organizational work must be carried on in the industrial as well as the political field... In this way, the life of the Federations will not become poorer; on the contrary, it will be broadened and deepened and be of greater value for the whole Party. At the same time, the Federations must participate more extensively in the general Party work. This pertains especially to the financial undertakings of the Party.

9. I recommend that each Federation issue a questionnaire inquiring into the situation and life of the workers of each particular nationality. The questionnaire should be prepared by a special committee of the CEC. This questionnaire may be supplemented by the Bureaus of the different Federations. The material should not be procured from books but obtained directly. It should not consist of short answers, but longer descriptions, as, for instance, memoirs of some immigrants. The questionnaires and the instructions accompanying them should direct the attention of the comrades to the most important questions. The material collected in this manner may be used for various purposes. It may be edited and published. It will form the basis for a comprehensive program of action for each Federation. It will give the whole Party an orientation in its work among the working class of America, which consists to a great extent of immigrants... The press, too, should devote considerable space to it for months.

10. Finances of the Party. No assistance may be expected from abroad. The Party must help itself entirely out of its own resources. It will not be a simple task. But as far as I know the conditions, the American Party is a party which can do it. This is not a purely financial-technical question, but an eminently political question. If the CEC, if the Party begins to work intensively and actively on the political field, it will be able to procure money from its membership and from sympathetic organizations, both for special purposes and for its general activities.

Once more I greet you fraternally,

Yours,

MICHELSON

October 7, 1922.

## Communist Participation in Fraternal Organizations and the Emigration Problem

There has been no system regarding the participation of Party members in various kinds of legal organizations, such as fraternal, theatrical and similar organizations, as well as in organizations the purpose of which is to further the emigration of groups of workers to other countries, primarily Soviet Russia.

The situation has become so serious that the CEC has found it necessary to take steps to remedy the matter, especially in regard to the organizations promoting emigration to Soviet Russia.

It is impossible for the Communist Party of any country to organize into its midst the whole working class of the country. Most of the workers are unprepared for membership in a Communist Party. Up to the moment of crisis, a large part of them will resist the Party, only accepting its leadership when the need of action is inevitable. As a well disciplined organization, furthermore, it is impossible for the Party to accept every and any candidate, since most men are not made of the proper material and merely would lower the standard of the organization. At first, when the organization is small, the majority of the workers are not desirous of entering the Party; when it grows and the probability of movements for the seizure of power grows, the necessity of more rigid discipline increases, so that greater care must be exercised in selecting workers for membership in the Party.

In both stages of the work, however, there is a circle of workers forming the Party sympathizers, the size of the circle depending on the influence that the Party has. These sympathizers serve as support of the Party; they likewise act as means of reaching the broad masses, and in all cases are absolutely essential for our work. For all immediate actions, such as propaganda for strikes and for carrying out strikes, for agitation for amalgamation of craft unions, for aid to Soviet Russia, as well as for the idea of a Labor Party in America, the sympathizers are indispensable. Without them, every party would be hampered in its growth and its influence be confined to the membership of the party itself.

For a small party, such as our own, the group of sympathizers is of the highest importance. They wage a fight for the recognition of the Party and for its rights. In many cases, by their expressions and manifestations of solidarity with the Party, they save the Party members from persecution. Hence these elements must not be encouraged to leave the country. On the contrary, they must be taught that if their wish is to help Soviet Russia, they will help her best by remaining here and building up a strong revolutionary, a Communist Party in America.

What appertains to sympathizers applies in hundredfold measure to Party members. It is the duty of the CP of A to help Soviet Russia in every manner. Soviet Russia needs every kind of machinery, but only one type of men: engineers, skilled technicians, experts.

Large numbers of comrades unable to fulfil these requirements have left the country, going to various parts of Soviet Russia. These comrades were essential to Party work. They were the comrades, many of whom, because of their speaking a foreign tongue, were indispensable for carrying on the work of education, propaganda and organization among the millions of workers of foreign tongues living in this country. Many of them spoke languages not native to Soviet Russia, such as Hungarian, Finnish, German, Polish. Many of them were American comrades and sympathizers, of whom there is by far not a sufficient number in the Party.

The Party has suffered very much from the emigration of Party members and of sympathizers. We have no control over the sympathizers; the discipline of the Party nevertheless rests on all members. The CEC has decided that no Party member shall be allowed to emigrate from the country without permission of the CEC. Any one doing so will be considered a deserter. Propaganda for mass emigration must cease: the sympathetic masses must be encouraged to stay in this country, to help build up the revolution here.

Our comrades have been requested to join indiscriminately the organizations fostering the idea of emigration; they also belong to large numbers of fraternal organizations serving them but little and the Party still less. The Party membership is too small to allow of all members being in all organizations at the same time. Nor is this a revolutionary policy. On the contrary, only that number of members should be assigned to work in these organizations which is absolutely essential for directing and controlling their activities. This is imperative, since as much time as possible must be available for the fundamental work of building up the party and carrying on the work of revolutionizing the trade unions. By proper division of work, by giving to each comrade the function for which he is best fitted, the movement will grow, the Party will gain power and its influence extend to ever larger bodies of workers.

## To Make Our Party Truly a Political Party

### Relations of the Federations to the Party

A party which is one living organism responding sensitively at once to every event of social importance; a party which lives one life with the proletariat, a party which is the brain and soul of the proletariat—directing its struggles and feeling keenly the blows received by the proletariat from its oppressors; a party which is a powerful source of energy, a party in which every member is a fighter ready for self-sacrifice, burning with hatred towards the rotten and bloody capitalistic system—such must become our Party.

But how to become such a party?

That the development of such a party is a slow process, that it will be forged only slowly in the heat of the class struggle, at the cost of many a misstep, sacrifice and trial, must be well understood.

But also that process can be accelerated if our efforts towards the creation of such a party are conscious efforts, and based upon careful analysis of our past experiences, upon the dispassionate acknowledgement of our shortcomings and mistakes. Such analysis is necessary in order to show whether our party has been and is developing towards organizational and ideological unity and towards becoming a political party in the true sense of the word. It is necessary in order to show that in this development our Party has paralleled the international communist movement, and to show that the painful experiences it has undergone were inevitable, and a part of the process, and should, therefore, not cause despair or gloom. The main purpose of the analysis, however, should be to find the indispensable basis upon which must rest the life of our Party as a political organism. We must then proceed to create this basis, without which no formal orders to the membership to function as a unit and to function politically will avail.

The failure of the party to function as a political organism is a serious fact. If not overcome it spells the bankruptcy of the communist movement in this country. For how can a party which consists of disjointed parts, living each its own life and not responding to centralized guidance, serve as the directive force of the class struggle? And also, how can it lead and deepen this struggle which is political in character, without having developed to the highest degree the political consciousness of its own membership?

First let us deal with the question of organizational unity. It is easy to perceive that this problem is not peculiarly the problem of our Party, but that it is a problem of the international communist movement. Since its very inception the Comintern has waged a struggle for its organizational unity. Revolutionary discipline and democratic centralization were the organizational principles proclaimed by the Third International. They are indispensable to a fighting organization. They are in conflict with the organizational principles of the Second International—sectional autonomy, decentralization and lack of discipline. The Second International did not strive to be what the Third International is—the general staff of the world social revolution.

When we seek for the basis of the organizational principles of the Comintern we find the basis in the class struggle. The class struggle against the forces of world imperialism demands revolutionary discipline, demands centralized guidance. That these qualities are a product of organic growth, of the experiences and lessons of the class struggle, was emphasized more than once by the Comintern. It sounded a warning against interpreting centralization as bureaucracy and discipline as a process of mechanical obedience. We have stated that the Comintern has waged a struggle for its organizational unity. Yes, the socialist inheritance persisted in the newly established communist parties. Now and then there would occur breaches of discipline, objection to the "dictation of Moscow," sabotage of the decision of the C. P. These are clearly remnants of the organizational ideology of the Second International which the Comintern strives energetically to overcome.

The question of revolutionary discipline and centralization holds the centre of attention in the Comintern even now, as can be judged from the following quotations from a resolution on the report of the EC of the CI adopted at the 4th congress of the CI (translated from Russian):

"In view of the events that have transpired in some of the parties, the Fourth Congress reminds and reaffirms that in the period between the world congresses the EC of the CI is the highest authority of the world Communist movement and that the decisions of the EC of the CI are obligatory upon all affiliated parties. It follows from this particularly that the violation of the tactical decisions already adopted by the EC under the pretext of an appeal to the next congress, becomes an apparent violation of discipline, and if the CI would permit such practice to gain strength it would be equivalent to the complete breaking up of the regular and coordinated militant work of the CI.

"The Fourth Congress of the Comintern confirms once more in their entirety the 21 conditions, worked out by the Second Congress and instructs the future EC to observe in strictest manner their actual carrying into effect. In the approaching epoch more than at any other time the Comintern must remain an international proletarian organization, which is carrying on a relentless struggle against all opportunism and which is built upon the principle of strictest democratic centralization."

It is clear that the CI will solve the problem of organizational unity only in such measure as its component parties will solve it. With this we turn our attention to the organizational problem of the American Communist Party. The general principles hold good here too and we shall not repeat them.

Our Party has not passed through revolutionary struggles that would teach us revolutionary discipline and the necessity of centralization. We come to recognize their necessity through the experience of bitter internal dissensions. More than any other party of the CI, we are suffering from our socialist inheritance. A party of a dozen federations each of which lived its own life entirely independently of the life of the party; a party without a guiding centre; a party without discipline—such was the SP. (Is it a wonder it broke up so easily?) In the light of this inheritance we can explain glaring contradictions within our organization. Although having solemnly proclaimed the principle of centralization, we established the domination of federations over the Party. Having proclaimed the principle of revolutionary party discipline we established instead the discipline of internal factional caucuses. Dissensions and splits flourished on this soil with disastrous results. Have we learned from our bitter experiences?

Yes, considerably. We now have a great deal clearer conception of the necessity and real character of a centralized organization. We have a clearer conception of the true nature of party discipline.

But these are only passive acquisitions. To accept passively the central guidance of the Party and its discipline is not sufficient. We must train our membership to become active soldiers of the revolution carrying out the decisions of the Party with all the energy and zeal which they possess. This training can be acquired only in the measure in which the Party becomes a functioning political organism. The question of organizational unity proves to be interdependent with the question of developing the Party into a political party. We must now strive to define this problem.

The Comintern is striving to develop all of its Sections into political organisms such as we have described in the beginning of this article, and for a good reason. The historical mission of the Comintern is a political mission—to wrest the power from the hands of the capitalist class and to establish proletarian dictatorship. According to the communist viewpoint this can be accomplished only through revolutionary class struggle.

The struggles of the workers begin as struggles for their immediate needs. It is the task of the communist parties to take part in these struggles in order to deepen them and to hasten their inevitable development into a struggle for power. This is the expression of the insurmountable difference that separates the Comintern from the Second International. For the Second International seeks to attain the freedom of the working class not through the revolutionary class struggle but through reformism. It is clear then that a communist party which is not participating in the class struggles of the workers is communist only in name, but in substance is nearer to the Second International than to the Third. The Comintern judges the development of its Sections by the degree in which each is active in the class struggles of the workers, by the influence which they have in the trade unions, which are weapons of class struggle if under communist guidance. It is by these standards that our party will have to be judged.

We have seen how the very nature of the class struggle demands organizational unity of the Comintern and revolutionary discipline within its ranks. It demands also ideological unity. The revolutionary army of the world proletariat must carry on its struggle not only as a solid organizational unit, under centralized guidance, but also cemented by unity of purpose, by agreement upon the program and tactics of the struggle—then it becomes invincible. Fully conscious of this, the Comintern is forging the ideological unity of its ranks painstakingly and tirelessly.

The first and comparatively easy step was to draw a sharp dividing line between the communist and socialist viewpoints—to make it clear that the workers cannot attain their freedom through collaboration with the bourgeoisie, through reformism, but only through revolutionary class struggle. But it requires time to transform the social-reformist, anarchist, syndicalist and centrist ideology into communist ideology; and it requires time to overcome the sectarian tendencies of the "pure" communists. It is more difficult to reach unanimity on the questions of tactics and secure the conscientious carrying out of the tactics adopted.

However there is a firm foundation upon which the ideological unity of the communist movement is being erected and which assures the success of the effort—this foundation is the class struggle of the workers and the critical, fearless analysis of the experiences of this struggle. It is the experience of the class struggle that clarifies to the anarchist elements the necessity of proletarian dictatorship and the necessity of parliamentary struggle as the communists understand it. It is the experience of the class struggle that clarifies to the syndicalist the role of a revolutionary party of the proletariat and the proper relationship between this party and the labor unions. It is the participation in the class struggle that offers the cure for sectarian tendencies, and again the class struggle that supplies the acid test for the correctness of the tactics.

The Comintern has made gigantic strides towards the attainment of the ideological unity within its ranks. Such questions as the question of the proletarian dictatorship, of parliamentarism, of the work within even the reactionary labor unions, of the relation of the Communist Party to the trade unions, and other questions, have been thoroughly clarified. The Comintern is developing gradually into a fighting army with ever stronger organizational and ideological unity—an invincible army of the world social revolution.

Let us see now what the condition of our Party is in regard to its participation in the class struggles of the American workers and to its ideological unity. Of all the socialist parties of the world the Socialist Party of America had the least contact with the actual class struggles of the workers. It never forced its membership to join the trade unions, and with its reformism it combined so much apathy that although it laid the most stress upon electoral campaigns it never made it obligatory before the split occurred for its members to become citizens, and the greatest bulk of its membership consisted of non-citizens. Such was the inheritance of the communist movement in this country.

What influence did that inherited isolation from the living class struggle of the workers produce upon the Communist Party?

The Party could not live politically. It was helpless to carry out any political campaign. It became stagnant, it developed strong sectarian tendencies, and this in combination with its underground existence has further accentuated its isolation from the American working class. What a painful process it had to be, for the Party in its underground condition, to overcome sectarian tendencies, to adopt a correct position towards the American labor movement! It has finally adopted a correct attitude, but what a twisted road it has traveled towards this attitude from a program of unification of the American labor movement to a program of destruction of the A. F. of L. in favor of the IWW and back again! The present position of the party is as follows:

"The work in the trade unions must be increased tenfold... It is not only the question of the life and death of the Party, but it is also the best means to overcome the sterile inner struggles of the Party and to concentrate the interests of the membership on the great questions of the struggle of the American proletariat."

"The road to the American revolution leads over the defeat and elimination of the power of the reactionary bureaucracy which now dominates the largest group of organizations of the working class in this country, the American Federation of Labor. Therefore the most important labor union work is the work within the A. F. of L..."

This is a healthy orientation. But we must clearly understand that is only the orientation of the "tops" of the Party and of its English speaking elements. To make it the orientation of the entire membership is now the task of the Party.

There are great obstacles in the way. The present condition is as follows. The bulk of the membership is foreign speaking and is not in the trade unions. It has only scant knowledge of American history, of the current political issues, and of the history and problems of the American labor movement. Only a few are citizens.

Yet this membership is not of poor quality. It consists overwhelmingly of workers who possess a revolutionary instinct, who understand the necessity of the struggle of the proletariat for power. Being isolated from the political life of America and from its organized labor movement they find an outlet for their political inclinations in reactions upon the political events of their native countries. These reactions would be of certain value if they were related to similar phases of the American class struggle, but without this they bear little fruit. The isolation from American political life and from the organized labor movement creates a dangerous psychology in our foreign-born comrades. They begin to consider themselves as accidental, temporary elements in the American class struggle, as guests that may leave this struggle at any time to return to their native country.

We must declare war upon such psychology, we must make a heroic, concerted effort to direct our membership into the channels of American political life, of the American labor movement. This must be done under the guidance and most effective help of the Party. The Federations alone will not be able to achieve rapid progress.

The left wing within the American labor movement must be made to give more attention to the foreign elements of this movement. The position of the foreign-born workers in the basic industries of America entitles them to this attention. Very little has been done by the left wing of the American labor movement to reach the foreign-born workers through the language press. The foreign language press reflects this condition. It shows no signs of being connected with the class struggle of the American working class. It is therefore not a political press in its character. This must be changed. The foreign-language press must be utilized. Within the Party as without we must strive to bring the foreign born membership closer together with the American trade unionists. The Americans in the Party should strive to understand the psychology of their foreign-born comrades and the difficulties they face even if they sincerely desire to become part and parcel of the American labor movement. The American comrades must make it easier for their foreign-born comrades to make this transition from almost complete isolation from the political life and from the organized labor movement of America, to a condition of complete contact with both.

The foreign-born members are in a receptive mood towards the instruction of the Party that they must join the trade unions and must become citizens. To those who have not yet grasped the importance of this step the Party must take pains to explain that it is a question of life and death of the Party. The next few months must be occupied with a persistent, well organized campaign for getting our membership into the trade unions. The party that establishes its roots in the American labor movement and connects itself with the class struggles of the American workers, will become a truly political party. It will in this manner establish the basis for its ideological unity and it will cease to be a loose organizational structure with political interests peculiar to each of its component language sections but separate and remote from the American class struggle. This is the only means of building a truly revolutionary political party of the American proletariat.