
Letter to Earl Browder in New York from Jim Cannon in Moscow, June 18, 1922.

Document in then Comintern Archive, RGASPI f. 515, op. 1, d. 93, l. 51-52.

RI Report No. 1, June 18th, 1922.

Dear Dixon [Browder]:—

Upon arrival here I found the following state of affairs: George [Andreychine] was away from the city at a sanitarium for his health. On the 4th of last March he had a disagreement with the other members of the Executive Bureau regarding a proposed trip to England which the majority of the Bureau did not approve. George lost his equilibrium, it seems, and resigned from the Bureau. [Heinrich] Brandler and [G.M.] Melnichansky both told me that, after ineffectual efforts to persuade George to withdraw his resignation, they accepted it, and provided him with the means to go to a sanitarium near Moscow in order to regain his health, which was in bad shape. As a consequence we have been without representation on the Bureau since March 4th [1922], so it is no wonder that we could not get any response to our communications or consideration for our requests. The people here claim that Carr [Ludwig Katterfeld] was fully informed about this state of affairs and that they have been waiting all this time for us to send another representative. But the information never leaked through to me. Even after the delegates re-

turned their reports only indicated that there was some dissatisfaction with George's work. I only learned of the actual vacancy after arriving here. This whole situation brings out sharply the necessity of having here at all times a representative for the trade union work. As long as it is left to the casual attention of party delegates we will have not real connection and our point of view and our proposals will not get the attention we expect. When you consider that our place on this bureau has been vacant for 3 months, and that prior to his resignation George had been away most of the time in Paris and Berlin, you will see what has been the matter. I have discovered this much here already: Everybody is occupied with his own work and a thousand other worries. In order to get consideration for anything there must be an active agent on the ground to keep pushing it until the desired result is obtained.

Shortly before I got here George returned to the city [Moscow] with the intention of again taking his place on the Bureau. But the other members refused to permit it. I made a strong effort to induce them to let him continue in the position, at least nominally until the next



[RILU] Congress, but they would not have it that way and insisted that I should take his place. They gave two reasons for this decision: first, that George had lost their confidence by his ill-considered action; second, that they wanted a representative who had not been so long away from America in order that the Bureau may have a more intimate connection with our movement. However, I think I will succeed in inducing the Bureau to moderate the original intention to eliminate George from the work entirely. That would be too severe a penalty for one mistake. We will have an official session of the Bureau in a few days and I will write you about it. The American situation will be taken up at length.

Lozovsky is away and will probably be absent for another month. Brandler of Germany is acting in his place. I had a session with the Bureau a few days after my arrival, making a general report of the activity in America and bringing up the question of policy which we discussed just before my departure in regard to the independent unions. I gave a general outline of our point of view and the reasons for it. They manifested great interest in the report and were greatly pleased with the work done in America. It was decided to set aside a day for a special meeting to consider the report in detail and to go thoroughly into the question of policy. This meeting had to be deferred because of the long meeting of the enlarged Executive Committee of the Comintern [2nd Plenum: June 7-11, 1922]. My impression is that you need have no concern about the policy. It appears that the objectionable propaganda was just drifting along by default for the lack of a representative here to bring up our point of view and to fight for it.

The same thing applies with regard to our failure to receive the materials promised for our work. It is my intention to find out all the inside affairs of the Bureau, its resources and relations with all other countries, and to see that our claims are not disregarded. Talks I have already had with

Melnichansky regarding this give me confidence. He is one of the big men in this work, head of the Moscow unions. He was in America for 6 years, knows the situation pretty well, and realizes what we are up against. He has been very receptive to the rather sharp criticisms I have made, in conversations with him, regarding the entire management and method of handling the Profintern. It does not have enough of the appearance of a self-operating institution, not enough attention is paid to its work, it does not have a large enough staff of experienced workers (trade union workers, I mean, not general functionaries — Christ knows there are enough of them) and it lacks the means and resources it should have for the great tasks which it has to do. Of course, these are matters of general party policy and the leaders of the Profintern should not be blamed if the party still minimizes the importance of its role, unless they should be blamed for not fighting hard enough for the things necessary to their work.

By the time that you get this letter you will probably already know that BR [Boris Reinstein] is in America. He is going for the express purpose of endeavoring, through private resources of his own, to get some substantial assistance to you. I think his prospect is a good one and favored his going.

Much concern is manifested here over the new attempt of the Syndicalists to organize an independent International. The Revolutionary CGT of France is in on the move. For this the French Party is to blame. By failing to organize Party nuclei within the wonderful amorphous "Left Bloc" and thus bring to bear the maximum strength of the Communists, they let the Anarchists run away with the new CGT. The Anarchists, of course, are running the new union into the ditch. This situation greatly menaces the Profintern. It is absolutely necessary for it to have the support of France. The dereliction of the French Party in this regard was one of the main questions before the meeting of the enlarged Executive of the CI. It is

a rather striking coincidence that our all-night discussion just before I left hinged around the same question which brought about the meeting of the enlarged Executive, that is, the role of the party in "Left Blocs," "trade union instruments," etc. The disastrous results in France and the very extensive debates on the whole question here served to strengthen and confirm the opinion that Left Wings are all right if the CP controls them.

The big question before the next Congress of the Profintern (set for November 28 [1922]) will be relations with the Syndicalists. I am inclining toward the opinion that we will have to come to some agreement with them. And make certain compromises, leaving to the Communist parties in the respective countries the duty of carrying on the ideological struggle with syndicalism and anarchism. I am inclined to favor, as the next step in the Profintern's activity, a united front with the Syndicalists and Anarchists against the

[trade union] bureaucracy. This will work out all right provided the parties are on the job. I expect we will have long discussions on these points both in the Comintern and Profintern, and I wish you would write me your views.

There is plenty of time to prepare for the next Congress, but I think we should have in mind to send as large a delegation as means will permit. The two you have already mentioned are good selections. I would like to see also a representative of the needle trades if it is possible to get a live wire.

See to it that a good-sized bundle of the magazine [*The Labor Herald*] is sent every month, also bundles of any other literature issued. This will bring out more effectively than anything else the work that is being done.

Cook [Jim Cannon].

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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