
Letter to Ludwig Katterfeld in Moscow from Executive Secretary Will Weinstone in New York, February 2, 1922.

A document in the Comintern Archive, f. 515, op. 1, d. 93, l. 16.

Feb. 2nd, 1922

Dear Friend,

Have received your first five reports. First of all as to the Northern firm [Communist Party of Canada], all instructions have been taken care of. We are in no position to give you information regarding the financial responsibility of **RUBENSTEIN**.† Your request for information about the other friends has been turned over to the proper local agents. The data will be forwarded to you upon receipt of the same.

We are gathering clippings regarding the quotations of your own rating in the Midwest.‡ Under separate cover we are sending you our last advertising matter [Party publications]. And last but not least from now on you will receive the weekly bulletins you ask for.

The General Situation.

By the time this letter reaches you our salesman will have reached your territory for the stockholders' conference you mentioned.§ He will acquaint you in detail with all decisions our corporation [CPA] has made since your departure [circa Oct. 15, 1921]. The situation in our concern may be summarized briefly as follows: We are in the midst of getting all our stockholders [party members] adjusted to the new line of

business [the parallel Legal Political Party, the WPA]. Our last public auction [Founding Convention of the WPA, Dec. 23-26, 1921] was successful in every sense of the word. We have undisputed control of the stock and prices [CPA firmly controls the WPA]. You need have no concern as to our firm neglecting the old line of business [the underground party]. We are making special efforts to boost the quality and quantity of our old line of goods. No one will be permitted to be a shareholder [WPA official] who does not fully recognize the fundamental need for and value of the old line. The sales agent from your office [former Rep to ECCI Robert Minor] has arrived. His quotations [documents from ECCI] have greatly advanced our stock. Advertising matter from you [a definitive ECCI statement on the factional dispute] as asked for in our last telegram would help along matters very much. You understand of course that your specifications [instructions to delay the WPA Founding Convention to February, after a convention of the CPA could be held] arrived entirely too late. We regret the incident. Had we not held our public auction [convention] then our new partners [Workers' Council group] would have formed a firm [legal party] of their own. This would have made impossible the realization of our main plan.

The T. and S. [Theses and Statutes] of last summer's auction [3rd Congress of Comintern: June 22-Aug. 12, 1921] are now in the hands of all our stockholders, and are being studied with great care and

†- Original has "fractions code": 2/6 8/3 1/14 1/3 1/4 2/3 3/4 6/2 3/3 1/4. This decrypts as "Rubenstein" using the key square for the "1921 Money Order Code" (available as a downloadable document from www.marxisthistory.org). Reference is to an earlier inquiry by Katterfeld as to the Party's financial obligations toward this individual, who appeared in Moscow.

‡- Katterfeld had somehow gotten wind that he was under indictment in Illinois for alleged violation of the state's "Criminal Syndicalism" Law and had requested relevant articles from the *Chicago Tribune*. He was ultimately convicted of this charge and sentenced to 1-5 years in prison, of which he served about a year.

§- Max Bedacht was sent by the CPA to join Katterfeld in Moscow as American delegates to the First Enlarged Plenum of ECCI, held from February 21 to March 4, 1922.

interest in accordance with plans worked out by the board of directors [CEC]. These will be forwarded to you under separate cover. Our directory is being turned into a semi-monthly. Bulletins and circulars will be issued as frequently as our funds permit. At this point I may add that the drain on our exchequer in forming the new corporation [WPA] has been very heavy. Our present account is as low as it ever was. This seriously interferes with the sale of all our goods, old and new [lack of funds hampering illegal and legal party work]. Relief in this direction can not come too soon.

The New Goods.

Things are moving rather slowly. Perhaps this is due to the newness of our stock. Specifications regarding the adjustment of old and new sales have been sent to all our shareholders. We are on the constant watch for improved methods and feel sure that we will be going at full speed shortly. You will see from the circulars sent to you that we have incorporated our firm on a sound conservative basis and in full accordance with the advice of the Main Office [ECCI].

Three of our salesmen as you know have left our firm, we are making every effort to win back as many of the misinformed shareholders as we possibly can and we are meeting with favorable results in this direction. † A letter of explanation from you regarding the hitch in the arrangements for our last public auction would help us tremendously in this direction also. ‡ The three were met by our mutual friend [Minor] and given the boss's [ECCI's] orders [to immediately rejoin the majority CPA]. They flatly refused to comply, decided to call themselves the real **C P o f A** and are

even speaking openly of buying stock in the Fourth Firm. § In the meanwhile they are actively engaged in sabotaging our old sales and our new ones; fortunately they are making no progress in this direction. As a last resort they are sending **HENRY** [ASHKENUZI] to your territory. You may expect him any day. Δ

Our Sales Campaigns.

To date we have sold [raised] over \$350,000 worth of grade "b" stock [via Friends of Soviet Russia, known as the "B" in underground lingo]. These sales have been made in territory most friendly to our firm [from party members and sympathizers]. Despite formal affiliations of central **LABOR** bodies, we have not actually touched this field. We are, however, in the midst of completing arrangements involving as stockholders many well-known representatives of this field for a campaign under the nonpartisan section of our department.

Full details will be forwarded to you upon completion of this deal. [Joseph] **MANLEY** of Chicago and **FRANK P. WALSH** are deeply interested and with their help we feel sure that American organized **LABOR** will be lined up on this proposition. β The "B" [FSR] is meeting with considerable success in its sales of Textiles and Leather stocks [getting donations of clothing and shoes], we have perhaps sold [received] \$250,000 of these shares [items].

Because of financial difficulties we are unable to start our daily sales campaign. At present we can afford with difficulty weekly quotation [publication]. ◇ Copies of these [*The Worker*] are being sent to you. Assure the main office [ECCI] that we are doing our

†- Reference is to the split of the Central Caucus, headed by former members of the CEC Charles Dirba, John Ballam, and George Ashkenuzi. Segments of 5 of the 6 language federations of the old CPA comprised the rank and file of the group, which styled itself as the legal Communist Party of America after holding an "Emergency Convention" in January 1922.

‡- The Comintern's instructions to delay the founding convention of the WPA until February were not received in New York until the middle of December, barely two weeks before the event. The decision was made by the CEC to go ahead with the convention despite explicit instructions to postpone the event. Weinstone is seeking a letter from ECCI approving of this decision and thus taking from the Central Caucus the issue of the majority CPA having "defied" the Communist International.

§- Original has fractions code: 2/1 4/12 2/2 10/2 10/1. Reference to "4th Firm" is probably a very oblique reference to a demand of the Central Caucus' "CPA" to representation on the board of the Friends of Soviet Russia.

Δ- Original has fractions code: 1/2 6/2 1/4 3/4 1/7. The dispatch of Ashkenuzi to Moscow has never previously been noted in the literature. It has been previously assumed that John Ballam was the sole representative of the Central Caucus to Moscow.

β- Original has fractions code: First word — 2/13 3/5 1/4 7/3 6/2 6/16. Second word — 2/17 3/2 10/1 9/3 2/15. 1/5. 1/1 2/5 6/7 8/1 8/5. Third word — 8/12 8/14 3/1 2/2 10/3, which repeats without change the code in the previous paragraph.

◇- Reference is to a plan to raise funds to initiate an English daily newspaper. Such a daily was not launched until Jan. 1924.

best to comply with its requests [to start an English daily]. Its assistance in this would naturally greatly facilitate business.

Our Jewish customers [Yiddish language federationists] are especially hard hit and unless immediate aid is received they may have a falling out with their partners in their plans for the joint daily advertising. You can not act too soon in this matter.

Mr. Harrow [Harold Ware] attended recent Agricultural Conference in Washington and made excellent connections for valuable trade. On the basis of these arrangements a big deal is likely to be completed if we are able to finance the transaction. You may tell the old man [Lenin] that active negotiations are being carried on with the North Dakota concern [the Non-Partisan League]. The board of directors of the latter company have been interested in the new line of goods [agricultural policy] by Harrow [Ware]. Were it not for the lack of funds we would already have been launched in an active sales campaign in this new field. Delay here is especially disastrous as the local market is ripe for our brand of goods.

Our Negro salesmen are making splendid headway. We now have two full time salesmen in the field. Our competitors now on the run with their leading salesman discredited.†

Your Mexican agent [Louis C. Fraina] seems to have been lost. We have wired him your plans regarding the turning over of his stock [Comintern funds] to us but he has not even acknowledged receipt of the same. We are informed that he has left for the Argen-

tine? What is the main office [ECCI] going to do about it?

A word or two about the salesman who will be with you shortly [presumably Max Bedacht]. He is the sole representative of the "B" [Friends of Soviet Russia] stock sales campaign. He was especially authorized by the Board of Directors [CEC] to receive the definite specifications [instructions] regarding the business in his field [transmission of funds for Russian Famine Relief]. No one else is authorized to handle this stock [money] in any way at all. Too much is at stake to risk any confusion on this matter as we are interested solely in getting the best results.

Because of our financial difficulties we are absolutely unable to give proper compensation to certain of our salesmen [CPA District Organizers] incapacitated by active service. The situation is at present critical. Proper medical assistance [Comintern funds] would restore to immediate service about 5 of our first grade disabled salesmen, but we can not afford such aid at present. Why don't you answer our many cables? We have not had a reply to these for almost two months. Your wife is receiving your dividends [salary] regularly.

Best regards to all. We are sending material you asked for.

G. Lewis [Will Weinstone]
Executive Secretary, CP of A.

Per Roger B. Nelson [Jay Lovestone].

†- Apparently a reference to Marcus Garvey, founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). The subject of ongoing Bureau of Investigation scrutiny, including penetration by an undercover agent, Garvey was arrested on Jan. 12, 1922 on a charge of having used the mails to defraud purchasers of \$5 shares in his "Black Star Line" steamship company. The organ of the UNIA was a publication called *The Negro World*. The Communist Party's efforts at organizing American blacks related to its close affiliation with the African Blood Brotherhood (ABB), an organization established by the Caribbean-born Cyril V. Briggs. Briggs published 40 issues of a monthly magazine called *The Crusader* from the fall of 1918 into the Spring of 1922. Briggs' group was itself penetrated and spied upon by an undercover BoI agent. For more on topic, see Theodore Kornweibel, Jr.: *"Seeing Red": Federal Campaigns Against Black Militancy, 1919-1925*. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998).

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