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International Delegates' Report and Unity

On another page will be found a full report of our international delegates on unity and the Fraina case. Also a digest of all the steps taken, since the publication of the last issue, in regard to consummating the unity negotiations with the U. C. P. We shall deal briefly here with the six points adopted by the Executive Committee of the Communist International relative to unity upon the appeal of our delegates Comrades Andrew and Fraina.

The six points are as follows:

1) To extend the date by which complete unity is to be achieved from October 10 to January 1, 1921.

2) That pending this complete unity of our movement and the election by the party of an American representative to the Executive Committee, each shall have a representative on the Executive with the same vote.

3) That unity must (and this is mandatory) be achieved on the basis of all the decisions of the Second Congress of the International.

4) The representatives of both parties must give a pledge to abide by the decision for unity.

5) The two parties have equal rights the unification to be by means of a Congress and party for party.

6) Representation in the Unity Congress is to be decided upon the basis of dues actually paid for during the months July, August, September and October.

A word of explanation is necessary before taking up these six points. Our delegates report and the U. C. P. confirm, that the U. C. P. delegate Flynn, who arrived almost at the end of the Congress, came with instructions to protest the seating of any delegates of the Communist Party on the ground that unification had been accomplished and that the United Communist Party was the result of the merging of the C. L. P. and the vast majority of the C. P. The U. C. P. delegation then demanded the full ten votes allotted to America for itself. This the Congress overruled on the ground that, as Comrade Radek said, "only one side of the case had been heard". Comrade Fraina also protested but he states and truthfully, that he had no information of his own. (Comrade Fraina was arrested last May somewhere in Europe and we lost our connections with him). However, the Congress, which had previously allotted five votes apiece to each party now gave six votes to the U. C. P. and four votes to the C. P. because a large part of the C. P. had gone over to the U. C. P., this being the lie which Flynn brought to them.

We may assume therefore that the unity resolution passed by the Congress and by the Executive Committee on August 7th for complete unity by October 10th was based upon the lies and misrepresentations of the U. C. P.

Point (1) therefore clearly shows that when Comrade Andrew presented our side of the case, with true explanation of the facts which led to the split instead of to the achievement of unity with the C. L. P. which was pending at that time, that the Executive Committee realized that there were some fundamental differences between the two organizations which could only be settled by a unity convention. Therefore the time was extended to permit of holding such a convention.

Point (2) proves that the vote of six to four in the Second Congress was not made because the U. C. P. was considered

a "major party" in any other sense than the U. C. P. false claim of membership. The acceptance of Comrade Andrew on the Executive Committee with the same vote proves this conclusively. Unfortunately for the U. C. P., but fortunately for the Communist movement in America, the U. C. P. are not a "major party" in any sense of the term—neither in their consistency as Communists nor in their membership figures. The U. C. P. position on trade-unions as contained in their program was bitterly assailed in the Congress itself.

Point (3) specifically provides that the unity must be based upon the decisions of the Congress. All other questions, such as federations, etc., must be left to the convention itself to decide. No negotiations or agreements can be made on any question beforehand. The U. C. P. demand for the abolition of federations as one of the conditions of unity negotiations is altogether beside the mark and merely proves their insincerity. Even Comrade Flynn, their delegate informed us, that the federation question would have to be determined by the membership in this country according to the view of the Congress and the Executive Committee.

(4) Most probably refers to the pledge given by the delegates of both parties in Moscow. If so Comrade Reed, the U. C. P. representative must have given this pledge, as well as our own delegates. Will the U. C. P. dare violate this pledge?

(5) Again clearly and unequivocally states that both parties have equal rights. Therefore the U. C. P. claim for an arbitrary apportionment of delegates on the basis of six to four is sheer camouflage intended to cover up their lies and misrepresentations as made by their delegation in the Congress.

Point (6) is the most important decision and fully vindicates the position of the Communist Party both in the present negotiations and in the previous negotiations with the C. L. P.. There is no need to go into lengthy explanations to prove that this basis is the only possible basis for going into a joint convention which is to decide the future of the Communist movement in America. The proposition is so self-evident that one can only suspect the motives of those who refuse to accept this basis.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the Communist Party has accepted not only the word but the spirit of the decision of the Communist International.

We understand and agree fully with the Communist International in its plan to create only one Communist Party in each country. But we also fully realized the futility of accomplishing real organic unity in this country without a mandatory decision of this effect from the Communist International itself. A joint convention between the U. C. P. and the C. P. would not have led to unity. It would have led to a split at the convention, assuming that the U. C. P. would ever have agreed to proportional representation without compulsion by the Communist International.

The differences between the two organizations from the very beginning, exist today. The leadership of the U. C. P., like the leadership of the C. L. P., are Centrists. They accept the principles of Communism in words but not in deeds. In every controversy we have made this clear. This same leadership was opposed to any mention of armed insurrection or its propagation to the masses in their last convention. Only the determined attitude of a minority of five or ten out of more than fifty delegates compelled its insertion on the threat of a split. We have not yet seen any tendency on the part of this leadership to accept this fundamental tactic. In their compromise offer to the I. W. W. they showed plainly that on the question of armed insurrection they were more in agreement with Sandgren, yellowest of yellow syndicalists, than with the Communist position.

On the question of trade unions, which is a major question, their program and their official organs take a diametrically opposite position to that of the Second Congress.

Perhaps nothing can better illustrate

their Centrist tendencies than their attitude on defense as expressed in their official organ.

As for organization problems, they have shown themselves to be a set of bureaucrats with a purely mechanical conception of centralization and discipline. The test of understanding of Communist organization in this country at the present time is the federation problem. The U. C. P. leadership have taken a position which proves them to be incapable and unfit of leading the Communist movement. The history of the U. C. P. has been a series of gradual disintegration and dissolution on this very question alone. They have driven away more than half of their foreign membership because they fail to realize their needs, both as to carrying on their Communist propaganda and agitation in their respective languages and winning new membership from the large foreign-speaking working masses into the Communist movement.

But the U. C. P. Centrist leaders are so blind and stupid as even to ignore the recommendation of the Communist International on this question. In the appeal for unity between the C. P. and the C. L. P., which arrived in this country several months late, the Communist International expressly states that the traditional form of language federations must not be destroyed at one blow. Plainly they implied that their abolition is a gradual process corresponding to the needs and conditions in this country. This is exactly the position of the Communist Party. The federation question will settle itself with time. Any arbitrary attempt to abolish or destroy them will mean, at present or in the near future, the disintegration of the Communist movement. The federations are the promulgators and the carriers of Communism in America. And so long as the English-speaking working masses are not yet attracted to the Communist movement the need of federations is self-evident to any real intelligent Communist.

Is it not apparent that the element led by the present leadership of the U. C. P. would have split away in any unity convention which took a different position on these questions than theirs? Even in the coming unity convention (assuming that the U. C. P. change their arrogant attitude and accept the mandatory decision of the Communist International) we expect some elements to split away and leave the Communist movement altogether rather than submit to decisions which they do not agree with. That was what was meant when we said last week that there was no good reason for the existence of two parties except the inability of the minority to accept the decisions of the majority. This minority, had they really accepted Communist principles in deeds as well as words, would never have created a second party...

But all this is changed. The Communist International has issued its imperative mandate. This mandate calls for unity and proportional representation. The Communist Party has signified its willingness to abide by this decision. Is the C. E. C. of the U. C. P. ready to accept this decision or is it still living in a fool's paradise? If the latter then they can only be awakened by a blow from the long arm of the Communist International.

Now that the elections are over the Socialist Party comes out with the truth that their national organization is almost completely smashed. Nineteen states have paper organizations. Seven states have no organizations worth mentioning. We are inclined to believe that this is not the whole truth as yet.

The Swiss Government has cautioned the stray remnants of the Second International not to resort to revolutionary propaganda or else they would be kicked out of that country, where they are assembled at present. The Swiss Government was only joking and we trust that Vandervelde, Branting, Scheidemann & Co. will not take it too seriously.