
Report on the United States of America (A confidential document prepared for the Comintern, June 1922) by James P. Cannon ¹

Two copies of report in Comintern archive,
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[Notes at top of documents: "8 English, 6 French," "Not for publication."]

The industrial depression in the United States is still continuing. According to the May [1922] figures published by the Department of Labor the number of unemployed is somewhere around 6,000,000. However, there is no great suffering apparent among the working masses. The American workers who are unemployed seem to be getting along without much hardship, which accounts for the fact that the campaign for organizing the unemployed carried on by our Party was not very successful.

The most pronounced feature of the present situation in the US is the capitalist offensive against labor unions — the "open shop" campaign. As a result of this the miners (about 600,000) of the US have been out on strike for the last two months. The textile industry is a scene of severe strikes. The railroad workers, as a result of a decision

¹ Attribution as to authorship determined by a handwritten notation at the top of the first page of one copy of the document ("Cook"). The report was apparently submitted to Mátyás Rákosi, head of the Anglo-American Department of the ECCI. Document date determined by content: Cannon states he arrived in Moscow on June 1, 1922 (*First Ten Years of American Communism*, pg. 64); some 400,000 American railroad workers went on strike over wage cuts on July 1, 1922 (*American Labor Year Book, 1923-24*, pg. 6) — an event spoken of as a *future* probability by Cannon below.

by the Labor Board to reduce wages, are preparing to resist the decision by going out on strike. A similar situation prevails in the garment industry. The trade unions in the meat-packing industry and several others have been completely destroyed by unsuccessful strikes. All along the line the attack of American capitalism upon labor is continuing with ever growing intensity.

As a result of this capitalist offensive against labor the insufficiency of the old craft form of economic organization is becoming apparent to very large masses of workers. The idea of amalgamation of craft unions of one industry into one industrial union, which is being energetically propagated by our Party, is becoming ever more popular. It can be noticed, for instance, among the railroad workers, where a number of lodges (locals) have passed resolutions favoring the amalgamation of the various craft unions into one big industrial railroad union. A resolution of this nature was recently introduced into the Chicago Federation of Labor and was accepted by a very large majority in spite of the organized opposition of all the reactionaries of that body, supported by the most influential officials of the AFL, including Sam Gompers. Another example of this very same phenomenon can be seen in the textile industry, where the proposal for the unification of all existing unions into one union, advanced by the organized Communist groups in that industry, is being received very favorably by large groups of workers.

American workers are beginning to rely more upon the strike as a weapon in the class struggle. The recent history of the American labor movement in the economic field has seen so many failures of the so-called method of "negotiating" to improve the condition of the workers that even the backward sections of the working class are beginning to see that only organized resistance by the workers themselves can prevent the success of the capitalist offensive. In connection with this we must note the growing sentiment of working class solidarity irrespective of craft or trade affiliation. An outstanding example of this will be found in the recent developments in Chicago in the building trades, where the entire labor movement of the city has come to the assistance of the workers employed in the building trades in their struggles against the attempt on the part of the capitalists to reduce wages and destroy their organizations.

Hand in hand with the capitalist offensive against labor goes the offensive of reactionary labor leaders and yellow Socialists against radical workers and Communists. Up till about six months ago the reactionary labor leaders and yellow Socialists pursued towards the radical workers and Communists a policy of ignoring them. The official leaders of the American labor movement very seldom indulged in publicly attacking their radical opponents; the work of persecution of Communists and radicals in general in the labor unions was carried on secretly and quietly. At present, however, their tactics have changed, beginning with the President of the AFL, down to the smallest official of the reactionary gang, all of whom are openly in arms against the Communists and every other organization that can, in the least degree, be suspected of sympathies either with the Communist International or with the Red Trade Union International. It would seem that the recent advances made by the Communist Party of America and its various organs in the labor movement have thrown into a panic the reactionary bureaucracy of the labor unions.

During the month of May [1922] there were a number of conventions of the unions in the needle trades, as, for instance, the International Ladies Garment Makers Union and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union. Prior to and during these conventions the reactionary labor leaders and their press kept up a constant fire against the Communists and their sympathizers. To one of these conventions, the convention of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, where the re-election of the old President, the Socialist Schlesinger, seemed doubtful because of the recent victories of the Left Bloc in a number of important locals of that union, President Gompers himself came down to the convention to plead for Schlesinger and assure his re-election.

We consider it also worthy of note that the government persecutions against the Communist Party and its activities have relaxed somewhat. Palmer and Palmerism do not seem to find much sympathy even among the capitalists of the US for the reason that the atmosphere created by these methods was resented by the liberal sections of the petty bourgeoisie and also by a number of conservative labor organizations and labor leaders. This change of policy toward the Communists can also be seen by the fact that a number of influ-

ential members of the Communist Party, who had been convicted and kept in prison for nearly eighteen months, were recently released on bail pending appeals to the Higher Courts. The case against some leading Communist arrested on May Day a year ago [1921] was dismissed finally on the ground that the arrests were made without formal warrants. None of the scores of Communists indicted in Chicago in 1920 are now in prison, although some of the cases are still pending.

In general, it may be stated that Communist propaganda, as long as it does not openly advocate armed insurrection and the destruction of the Capitalist State, can at present be safely carried on in the open. Only in one district — Pittsburgh — have any of the activities of the Workers Party been interfered with since its formation in December 1921. The May Day demonstrations were held throughout the country this year [1922] without any police interference.

The American Labor Movement.

The labor movement of America still lags far behind that of all other capitalistically developed countries. Numerically it is comparatively weak. Out of approximately 30 million wage earners not more than 5 million are organized in the trade unions. During the war the total of organized workers approximated 6 million, but the heavy offensive of the capitalists against the unions since the termination of the war has greatly reduced this figure. The bulk of the trade unions still retain the antiquated craft form of government; every trade having its separate organization and, as a rule, acting independently of the other unions in the same industry. For example there are 16 different unions in the railroad industry. Under the severe pressure of the railroad magnates within recent years various groups of these 16 unions have begun to develop the habit of acting concretely in an autonomous federated basis.

The labor movement as a whole does not yet take part in politics on an independent working class basis. The majority of the workers vote for one or the other capitalist candidates. The American workers are not yet class conscious. Although they have many times proved themselves capable of putting up heroic resistance in local or trade

disputes, they have not yet developed the habit of acting as a class. The organized labor movement as a whole is firmly controlled by a vicious and reactionary bureaucracy which is typified by Samuel Gompers, President of the AF of L, who exceeds most of the capitalist statesmen in his virulent attacks on Soviet Russia and radical policies generally.

The main body of organized labor is embraced within the AF of L. This is not a centralized organization, but a loosely federated body of autonomous trade unions. The four railroad brotherhoods comprising organizations of engineers, firemen, trainmen, and conductors exist independently of the AF of L, but their structure, methods, and philosophy are identical with it. The IWW continues to decline in influence and membership and does not offer serious opposition to the established trade unions. The only strong radical independent labor organization is the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

The United Mine Workers of America.

This is an organization of approximately 600,000 coal mines workers. It is industrial in form; that is, it embraces all the workers employed in and around the mines. It is more aggressive and militant than the average American labor union and has conducted some memorable battles. Socialistic influence in this union was, at the height of the prestige of the Socialist Party, very strong. The rank and file of the organization is pretty well permeated with class consciousness and militancy. Its officialdom, however, is bureaucratic and reactionary. At the present time there is a serious controversy going on within the ranks of the union between the bureaucracy and the radicals who are led and typified by Alexander Howat. Howat is an honest fighter, but his knowledge and intellectual power is not great. Another angle of this controversy is the war between John Lewis, National President, and [Frank] Farrington, the head of the Illinois District, which is one of the strongest units of the national body, with 90,000 members. There is no question of principle between these two, but a struggle for power. Farrington, who is himself a reactionary of the worst kind, is supporting Howat as a means of overthrowing Lewis.

The provocative acts of the controlling machine and its ruthless expulsion of Howat and his Kansas District organization, at a time when Howat himself was in jail, developed a strong possibility for a serious split in the national organization. Our Party took a determined stand against such procedure, and was largely instrumental in restraining the radical workers from following their traditional policy of leaving the organization to start a rival one. Such a split would have been very disastrous both for the general welfare of the miners, who were facing a big strike, and for the revolutionary cause generally. In harmony with the general policy which we have been carrying out, in an effort to strengthen our position in the labor movement and weaken the power of the ruling bureaucracy, we attempted to make a working agreement with Howat in waging a campaign for the reinstatement of the Kansas miners, and for a general struggle. The actual carrying out of this plan fell through, largely because of our lack of funds to enable us to move quickly in the situation. Nevertheless we have exerted a very decisive influence upon the whole course of the internal struggle by means of forming local alignments with other groups of radical workers who support Howat, and inducing them to support our policies.

In the present mine strike the full force of our Party was thrown into action. We hastily organized, throughout several of the most important districts, blocs with other groups of militant workers, quickly united them into a central caucus by means of a secret conference of delegates from the various coal fields, and succeeded in getting them all to adopt a program worked out by our Party Committee in cooperation with the Party members active in the affairs of the Miners' Union. The slogans of "No Reductions in Wages" and "No Separate Agreements by Districts" were propagated very energetically; and by this means we were able to prevent Farrington from making a separate agreement for the Illinois District and deserting the other striking miners. With these slogans for the immediate struggles we have coupled the demand for the reinstatement of Howat and the Kansas District miners.

Our activities in this strike have greatly increased the influence and prestige of the Party amongst the mine workers; and by the tactics we have followed, of forming a bloc with the other dissatisfied

sections of the rank and file, we have laid the basis for a strongly organized Left Wing in the national organization. The present strike, which was provoked by the employers in an effort to break down the organization, reduce wages, and take away the working standards long established, has developed an unexpected spirit of militancy on the part of the workers and it is not likely that the employers will succeed with their designs.

The Railroad Unions.

In this industry there are 16 different unions, all having separate autonomy. Twelve of them are affiliated to the AF of L; four of them are independent. Their leadership and philosophy is conservative, but under severe pressure they have shown themselves able to put up very determined struggles. Great unrest exists amongst them at the present time because of the repeated onslaught made against them since the close of the war. The Railroad Labor Board, a governmental body which has acted as a sort of an arbitrator in railroad labor disputes, has recently ordered another 21% reduction of wages with the result that a strike has been voted and a general strike in the railroad industry is not an improbable outcome. The weakness and insufficiency of the separate craft form of organization has been brought home to the workers in this industry and a sentiment has grown up against them, which is actively propagated by our Party and the Trade Union Educational League, for the amalgamation of all the railroad unions into one industrial union. The recent convention of the Brotherhood of Railroad Clerks endorsed this proposal, and strong support for it is developing throughout the rank and file. The tendency towards independent political actions shows greater development in the railroad unions than in the organized labor movement as a whole. The leaders of these organizations were the sponsors of the "Labor and Progressive Political Conference" held a few months ago for the purpose of considering political activity by the workers. The intense rivalry over leadership which characterizes the Miners' Union seems to be absent here, the lines of division being clearly drawn between radical and conservative policies.

The Metal Trades.

In this industry there are also a large number of separate unions, the most progressive of which is the International Association of Machinists. This is one of the most progressive amongst the trade unions affiliated to the AF of L. It is under the leadership of Johnstone, and ex-Socialist. During the war it reached a membership of about 300,000 by enrolling the mechanics engaged in shipbuilding and munitions factories. Since the close of the war, and owing to the general depression, this membership has greatly declined. A strong sentiment for industrial unionism and general radical sentiment such as sympathy for Soviet Russia, working class political action, etc. is to be found in this union. In the recently-held election for the office of National President, which was conducted by referendum vote, the candidate running on the platform of affiliation to the Red Trade Union International and endorsing its policies received 30% of the vote.

The Needle Trade Unions.

There are four unions in this industry comprising about 400,000 workers. They are predominantly Jewish unions, although Italian workers are a considerable factor here. The strongest and best organized of these unions is the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, an independent organization of approximately 150,000 workers. It has a very able leadership which is moving quite rapidly towards the Left position. In line with our general policy in the trades unions at the present time we have formed a working agreement with the administration of this union against the reactionary elements, backed by the Socialist Party and the *Jewish Daily Forward*, which were contesting its leadership. We fully appreciate the weakness and danger of alliances of this kind, especially with officials, and are fully alive to the necessity of maintaining a separate organization of our party members in the union, and keeping the Party free to work independently whenever the necessity will arise. We measure the Party's strength in this union not by the victories scored by the bloc composed of the Party and the administration, but by the strength and influence of our Party nuclei in the local unions. Our difficulty here as elsewhere in

the labor movement is lack of trained Communists who are capable of taking a leading part in the trade union struggles.

In the course of the operation of this working agreement with the administration of the Amalgamated, our Party has felt it advisable to pass over certain just grievances of local comrades against local officials, and to subordinate various minor issues which, in the absence of the working agreement, we would have felt obligated to press. We are beginning to call this policy into question somewhat, and are considering seriously the advisability of the Party taking now a more independent and aggressive position in regard to those with whom we have made a temporary coalition. The convention of this organization, held in May, shows the Left Wing in full control, with its entire program adopted by a large majority. Resolutions for the amalgamation of all needle trades unions into one and the introduction of the shop delegate system of organization, which were the outstanding practical demands, were carried by large majorities. For tactical reasons it was not though advisable to press the issue of outright affiliation with the Red Trade Union International, since such a move might have the tendency to set this independent organization too far ahead of the general labor movement and isolate it in such a way as to make it the victim of increased persecution. A resolution commending the efforts of the Red International to achieve the international unification of labor was passed instead. Here should also be mentioned the decision of the convention to raise a fund of \$1 million for the purpose of starting cooperative clothing factories in Russia. It can be safely counted upon that this resolution will be carried into effect, as the Amalgamated has many achievements of this kind to its credit and takes great pride in making good on its financial resolutions.

The International Ladies Garment Workers' Union has about equal strength to that of the Amalgamated, that is, about 125,000 to 150,000 members. It is dominated by the Right Wing Socialists under the influence of the *Jewish Daily Forward*. We have strong nuclei throughout the local unions, who, following our general policy, have organized Left Wing blocs together with the Anarchists and other opposition elements. The Left Wing so formed developed great strength in the recent elections and succeeded in gaining large majorities in two of the largest locals in New York City. At the last conven-

tion, held in May, Schlesinger, President of the union, felt his position imperilled by the strength of the Left Wing and was obliged to call Gompers to the convention to assist him. This collaboration of the Right Wing Socialists with the reactionary Gompers was exploited to very good advantage in our party press, and in our general propaganda, as indicative of the decline and decay of the Socialist Party and its spiritual kinship with the worst elements of the labor movement.

The Left Wing was defeated at the convention. This was partly due to the defection of some of the Anarchist groups, who were bribed by the promises of separate concessions. Once the upper hand was gained in the convention, the officialdom acted against the Communists in the most ruthless fashion. A number of qualified delegates were expelled and the Workers Party and its Jewish daily organ, the *Freiheit*, were denounced in special resolutions. A resolution was also passed demanding release of the political prisoners in Soviet Russia. The amalgamation of all the needle trades into one centralized union was opposed in favor of a loose alliance. The shop delegates system and all other progressive measures were defeated.

The Cap Makers and Furriers are two small unions in the needle industry having practically the same characteristics as the two larger unions. It is quite within the range of probability that the campaign which we are now promoting very energetically for the amalgamation of all these four unions into one, on a radical basis, can be carried out within a reasonable time, if the proper strategy is used, and it is possible for us to continue our Jewish daily organ, which is an indispensable instrument for successful work in this field. An industrial union so formed, and under our influence, would constitute an excellent basis for a strong Left Wing in the labor movement of America.

Local Federations.

All the local trade unions within a given city are bound together into a central delegated body. These bodies have but little real power since each affiliated union retains its complete autonomy; even the question of joining the central body being optional with each union. These central delegated bodies, however, have considerable moral and

political influence, and are excellent strategic points for radical agitation. Our party has started a general campaign to penetrate into these bodies, and has achieved fair success in a number of important centers, such as Chicago, Detroit, Minneapolis, and Seattle. The Detroit Federation voted an endorsement of the Red Labor Union International, and the Chicago Federation has stirred up the whole labor movement by the radical resolutions which it has recently adopted at the instigation of our Party workers. Its endorsement of the principle of industrial unionism caused special alarm to Gompers, who launched a heavy attack against the Chicago body in his official organ as well as in the capitalist press.

The Trade Union Educational League.

An outstanding feature of the Party's activity during the past year has been its campaign of agitation and propaganda carried on within the established trade unions. Most of this work has been done through the medium of the Trade Union Educational League. This body was projected by William Z. Foster two years ago, but up till last Fall it existed only on paper. Upon the return of the American delegates from the Profintern Congress, it was decided by the party committee, in consultation with them, to revitalize this organization and use it as a vehicle of the Red International in the struggle for the conquest of the labor movement. This work has been carried on with great energy and has met with a widespread response from the militants. In the month of March it commenced the publication of an excellent monthly magazine which has already attained a paid circulation of ten thousand copies.

A statement of principles and tactics was drawn up and widely circulated. It is a clearly defined program embodying the following principles and practical slogans:

1. Affiliation of the American labor movement with the Red Labor Union International.
2. Overthrow of the reactionary leadership in the unions.
3. Amalgamation of the craft unions into industrial unions.

4. Against the policy of the revolutionary workers withdrawing from the existing unions to form new ones.

Local groups of the League have been formed in 82 cities. Trade union pamphlets have been sold to the amount of 34,000 copies. Correspondence has been carried on with about 2,000 active militants throughout the labor movement. The first national conference of the organization will be held in August of this year. The campaign is being directed by William Z. Foster, and the magazine is being edited by Comrade Dixon [Earl Browder], alternate representative of the Profintern, in collaboration with Comrade Foster. All the important strategical positions in the organization are held by Party members, and the Executive Committee of the Party has the final word on all important questions affecting policy. A member of the Central Committee of the Party actively participates in all this work, and thereby the whole enterprise is closely bound to the Party.

In this work we do not confine ourselves to agitation and propaganda of a general nature. In fact, it is our opinion that the key to the success we have attained in this field of activity lies in our method of putting forward practical slogans which have a direct and concrete bearing on the situation in each union.

The method of organization is to bring together in each local union, where possible, all the revolutionary and radical workers who stand in opposition to the existing policies and leadership, regardless of their political views. As a rule many of the best militants are non-partisan workers who have no pronounced political views. Within the groups thus formed the Party organizes a nucleus of party members which always acts as one body within the wider Left Wing group, and strives to lead it. All local groups in a given industry carry on their work according to a uniform program and under the general direction of a National Committee, which usually consists of a majority of Party members. These committees, together with a representative of the Party, carefully work out practical programs for the agitation in each union and industry, according to the peculiar conditions prevailing. All the local groups then carry out the uniform program in their daily work. This system amounts to a great improvement over the

sporadic and uncoordinated methods of revolutionary agitation hitherto employed in trade union work.

The revolutionary workers in the trade unions have responded to this campaign with great spirit and energy. The practical, common-sense programs which we are submitting, and the systematic method of organization put into use, is creating a confidence in the Party's leadership never before seen. The organization of the legal party, which enabled us to work once more in the open, and the organization of the Trade Union Educational League were the two steps which started the great revival of revolutionary activity in the American labor movement. The inspiration for these movements by our Party was drawn from the Third Congress of the Communist International and the First Congress of the Red Trade Union International.

A Question of Trade Union Policy.

A difference has arisen between the Profintern and the Party on the question of policy toward the independent unions in America. The Profintern appears to be of the opinion that the Party should sponsor a movement to unite all the independent unions into a national federation in opposition to the AF of L. The Party opposes this very energetically, on the ground that such a federation would be of no practical importance, and would only tend to encourage the spirit of separation and secession, which is the traditional habit of the American revolutionary workers, and which has brought most disastrous results.

The American unions which remain outside of the American Federation of Labor are not a homogenous body. The large independent unions such as the Railroad Brotherhoods are conservative in character and antiquated in structure and methods. They have nothing in common with the radical independent unions such as the Food Workers, Amalgamated Metal Workers, etc. These latter are small split-off sections of radical workers which, according to our theory, should commence energetic campaigns for the right to reaffiliate to their respective national organizations. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers, which is the only large radical independent union, would only weaken its position by uniting with these small outside unions.

We wish to see it become united with the other unions in the needle trades into one industrial union. It is our opinion that the formation, or attempted formation, of a new independent federation would have the practical effect of sharpening the differences and widening the breach between the unions and render more difficult the task of bringing them together.

This is a very serious question with our Party, as it is feared that the adoption of the wrong policy will demoralize our work in the unions. The Party has instructed me to prepare an exhaustive argument on this question for the consideration of the Profintern, and it is convinced that when the whole situation is explained, and all the facts brought out clearly, the position of the Party will be sustained.

Likewise, the scheme of a new revolutionary Pan-American Federation of Labor, in opposition to the Pan-American Federation of Labor controlled by Gompers, which is being persistently propagated by Louis C. Fraina, finds no support in the Party. Such an effort would only result in paper affiliations to the Red International and would seriously cripple the work which we are doing to establish our influence within the old unions.

The IWW.

The IWW is rapidly dwindling into a destructive sect, declining in membership and prestige. Its stubborn adherence to the theory of building up entirely new unions according to a fixed program, regardless of the existence of the other unions, has brought about the inevitable result of isolating small groups of advanced workers into little propaganda unions of their own, away from the already organized unions, where they will do Gompers & Co. no harm.

In addition to this, its press is developing a decidedly counter-revolutionary character. It viciously attacks the Communists, Soviet Russia, and all that it symbolizes. It viciously attacked our Famine Relief campaign and sabotaged our work in this field in all ways possible. It has lately resorted to the practice of expelling Communists and supporters of the Red International, being the first labor union in America to adopt such tactics. George Hardy, the former General Secretary, who, in cooperation with the American representative of

the Profintern, organized a Left Wing in the IWW, was expelled, together with a number of other well-known members who were supporting the Red International.

WORKERS' POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

Socialist Party.

The decline of the Socialist Party of America is steadily continuing. Its membership has decreased to about 5,000.² It still has strength in the state of Wisconsin. Elsewhere its political influence is hardly noticeable outside of the large Jewish labor unions whose officials, excepting the Amalgamated, together with the powerful *Jewish Daily Forward*, form the main support, moral and financial, of the Socialist Party.

At the last convention of the Socialist Party, which consisted of about thirteen delegates,³ two decisions were passed, both of which are calculated to give the SP a stronger foothold in the labor movement. According to one decision, the district organizations of the SP are permitted to participate in the coming elections jointly with other labor organizations who accept the idea of independent political action. It should be noted that this decision constitutes a serious departure from the traditional SP tactics, which were based on the idea of the political fusion with other organizations. This departure would

² Cannon here severely understates the actual membership of the SPA, which had a paid monthly averages of 13,484 in 1921 and 11,019 in 1922. These were readily published figures in the widely read Rand School handbook *The American Labor Year Book* — Cannon certainly would have known the 1921 number. This is a fairly transparent attempt to assign the SPA a smaller membership figure than that of the underground CPA, a tendentious and factually incorrect assertion.

³ The annual convention of the SPA to which Cannon refers was held April 29-May 2, 1922, in Cleveland, Ohio. It was actually attended by 22 delegates from 17 states as well as 6 fraternal delegates.

show that the leaders of the SP are adopting a Labor Party orientation and are beginning to move accordingly.

The second decision is to affiliate the SP with the 2 and 1/2 International. As a countermovement, and in order to get in a position to publicly raise the question of International party relations, the CP of A have decided to request the Communist International to recognize the Workers Party as a sympathizing party and has authorized its delegate [James P. Cannon] to publicly appear under his legal name as the fraternal delegate of the Workers Party of America. Unless the Workers Party has some sort of relations with the Communist International it is not in a good position to attack the Socialist Party for its affiliation with the 2 and 1/2 International.

The Farmer-Labor Party.

The Farmer-Labor Party which was formed in Chicago in July 1920, when the national ticket of Christensen and Hays was named is, as yet, neither Farmer nor Labor. As a national organization it is very far from having established itself. It seems, however, that the leaders of this party are beginning to learn the lesson of their first failure, which is the impossibility of uniting into one organization the city workers, the rich and well-to-do farmers, and the liberal petty bourgeoisie. At the recent convention of this party, held in Chicago the last week in May, a new orientation was adopted. It was decided to attempt to transform the present party into a federated body of labor organizations on the model of the British Labour Party. The Socialist Party was represented at this convention, fraternally by [Victor] Berger, [Seymour] Stedman, and [Otto] Branstetter.

The main backing of the Farmer-Labor Party is the Illinois State Federation of Labor, whose President, John H. Walker, is also President of the Farmer-Labor Party. Outside of the state of Illinois the Farmer-Labor Party has so far received very little backing from the organized labor movement. In the East its influence is very small, the only exception being New York, where the Socialists and the labor unions are trying to bring about joint parliamentary action between the local labor bodies and the SP under the firm of the Farmer-Labor Party. Such an arrangement is at present on foot in preparation for

the coming elections. The managers of this arrangement, from the Socialist camp, have hastened to make it known that Communists will not be admitted into this combination.

The attitude of our Party toward the Farmer-Labor Party has been one of "watchful waiting." We have not as yet participated in any of its national gatherings for the reason that the entire affair, as far as the national organization is concerned, is more of a maneuver of Socialist and liberal politicians than a real labor movement for independent political action. We have, however, kept in close touch with the Farmer-Labor Party of Chicago, which has the backing of the Chicago Federation of Labor, where our Party is pretty well entrenched. This Farmer-Labor Party in Chicago has, on its own initiative, started informal negotiations with some of our influential local comrades to bring about joint participation in the coming elections on a common platform of partial demands.

Central Bodies for Independent Political Action.

Quite important, and very significant, is the decision by the central labor bodies of Minneapolis, Denver, and Seattle to participate, as such, in their local elections. Moreover, in every Central Labor Body in America the question of independent political action is becoming the problem of the day.

In the state of Pennsylvania the reactionary bureaucrats of the local trades unions have made an attempt to capitalize and exploit for themselves the growing sentiment for independent political action by initiating a movement for a so-called Non-Partisan Labor League. The idea of this league is to utilize the organized power of the workers for the purpose of capturing the local machinery of the capitalist parties and nominating "good men" for office. Though this movement is by no means the sort of independent political action by labor that our Party considers it a duty to promote, nevertheless it is symptomatic of a healthy tendency which must be cultivated and pushed along to its logical conclusions.

The Chicago Conference.

An event of outstanding importance in the development toward the formation of a Labor Party in the United States was the Chicago Conference of Labor and Progressives called by the 16 standard railroad unions and held in the month of March 1922.⁴ The letter of invitation sent by the initiators of the conference to its prospective participants spoke of unity in the ranks of labor against the common enemy and of the necessity of labor participating in political action. This conference, which was a semi-public affair, was made up of influential labor leaders, Socialist Party men, and a few individuals of the liberal type. The results of these deliberations are of little importance when considered from the angle of real independent political action by labor in the immediate present; for the only positive result of this conference was an understanding reached by the participating groups to coordinate their efforts in a few localities in the coming elections, particularly with a view to supporting those candidates of the existing political parties that have championed in Congress the demands of the railroad unions.

This gather contained, however, a large number of so-called progressive labor leaders that believe in genuine independent political action through the formation of a Labor Party. These men are making the question of independent political action an issue in their fight against the leadership of Gompers in the AF of L. They do this in the expectation of being able to beat Gompers on this issue rather than any other. And so the participants of the Chicago conference decided to hold another one by the end of this year to discuss the advisability of a more lasting and permanent political alliance.

Our Party was not invited to this first conference. But as soon as we learned of the preparations for it, we took a very serious view of the matter. We addressed an open letter to the conference, pointing out the limitations of its objectives, and criticizing the present leadership of the organized labor movement as being responsible for that

⁴ The founding of the Conference for Progressive Political Action (CPPA), to which Cannon refers here, was actually held in Chicago on February 20 and 21, 1922. It was attended by 124 delegates from a spectrum of labor, farmer, and progressive political organizations.

disunity of labor of which the initiators of the conference complained in their letter of invitation. We explained our conception of the class struggle and of political action. In conclusion we suggested that the only way to unite labor on the political field is to call a labor congress of all labor organizations — economic and political — and have this congress frame the policy for independent political action by labor.

The Chicago Conference did not accept our suggestion. But the fact that a second conference will be held by the end of this year will give us another opportunity to continue the policy embodied in our open letter. And this time with more success, since the conditions are continually growing more favorable for the realization of the ideas advance by our party.

The Gompers Policy.

The political ideas of Gompers are still the same. That is, “Reward your friends and punish your enemies.” It is worth of note, however, that Gompers no longer dares to attack his opponents in the AF of L on the issue of independent political action. He seems to have realized that this is slippery ground for him to follow. The fact is that he has not reacted at all to the Chicago Conference and to other similar developments in the American labor movement.

Organizations Among the Negroes.

The negro population of the United States is at present passing through a period of growing resentment against the slaveholding and lynching methods of the ruling class of America. Alongside is proceeding the differentiation of the negro mass into various political groups and organizations.

Our Party has had some success during the past year in penetrating with its propaganda into the most backward sections of the negro workers. Party nuclei were established in the largest nationalist negro organization in the United States, the one led by Garvey, and, as a result, a new organization of negro workers has been formed, the Af-

rican Blood Brotherhood, which though not openly and expressly Communist is following the lead of our Party.⁵

Russian Famine Relief.

In response to the appeal of the Communist International, the Party established a special organization to which it gave the name of "The Friends of Soviet Russia." It is a unique organization, being a large network of local conferences of delegates from labor unions, Party branches, cooperatives, working class fraternal organizations, and non-partisan groups of sympathizers, all bound together and directed according to a uniform plan and system by a National Committee. By means of this organization the Party carried on a tremendous campaign to wide circles of workers, reaching hundreds of thousands with the appeal for famine relief on a class basis. A general appeal for sympathy and support of the Russian revolution was interwoven in all the propaganda of the Friends of Soviet Russia. Mass meetings, speeches before labor unions, slide lectures, motion pictures, leaflets, pamphlets, newspaper articles, paid advertising — all these means and many others were resorted to for the purpose of popularizing the famine appeal.

Up to the present time about \$750,000 in cash has been collected, and clothing and other materials to the value of \$500,000. We are now in the midst of a great campaign which will probably extend the total of cash collections up to \$1 million. A great tool-collecting [campaign] is also being organized, which promises to be very successful, as we have established friendly relations with several agrarian organizations which will help in the collection of farming implements.

This enterprise has been a rich experience for our Party, enabling it to learn, by actual practice, how to get inn touch with wide circles of sympathetic workers and mobilize them for our support. The heavy demand for famine relief work upon the funds and energies of

⁵ The African Blood Brotherhood was organized on the model of the secret society, emerging in 1919. Cannon's assurance that Communist Party nuclei developed into the ABB has the story exactly backwards; rather, the independent African Blood Brotherhood of Cyril Briggs, W.A. Domingo, and Claude McKay made organizational common-cause with the Communist movement.

the members has, to a certain extent, hampered the general activities of the Party. Its financial difficulties, on this account, have been very grave. But we have felt well repaid by the general results because we feel that they go far beyond what appears on the surface. Our propaganda and activity had much to do with forcing the hand of Hoover, and arousing the vigilance of the labor movement to his original scheme to utilize the famine situation for counterrevolutionary purposes as he did in Hungary.

Finding that the Friends of Soviet Russia was not able to reach the more conservative labor unions on account of the radical nature of its propaganda, we instigate the formation of another special organization for this purpose. It is known as "The Trade Union National Committee for Russian Famine Relief." This organization approaches the unions in a more cautious manner, and by this means we have gained access to unions which had hitherto been closed to us.

THE PARTY AND ITS IMMEDIATE TASKS

The United Front.

The immediate task of the Party, as seen by the Central Executive Committee, is to develop further, and apply to the conditions of the class struggle in the United States, the tactics of the United Front. On the industrial field, that is, in the trade unions, our Party has issued a slogan of amalgamation of all craft unions within a single industry into one centralized industrial union. To popularize this slogan our Party has mobilized all its forces in the unions to carry on an intensive campaign of agitation and education. It is because of this campaign that the question of amalgamation has become a burning issue in the American labor movement, as can be seen from the recent developments in the Chicago Federation of Labor, at the recent convention of the needle trades unions, and at the last convention of the AF of L.

On the political field our Party is pursuing the same tactics of unification and concentration of all the labor forces around some immediate vital and practical demand calculated to arouse the workers to an immediate struggle in the defense of their interests. Thus, for instance, we attempted to make the last May Day demonstrations an affair of as many labor organizations — economic and political and fraternal — as we could induce to participate in the proposed action. The slogans upon which we invited the labor unions and the Socialist Party branches to join with us in the May Day demonstrations were as follows:

- 1) Immediate relief for the unemployed from the funds of military budgets; these funds to be distributed through labor unions and special councils of unemployed.
- 2) Resistance to the capitalist drive for the “open shop” and the reduction of wages.
- 3) Recognition of and resumption of trade relations with Soviet Russia.

The Socialist Party and the yellow Socialists in the trade unions refused to accept our invitation for common action and sabotaged our attempt with all means at their disposal. Nevertheless we succeeded in rallying around our slogans a considerable number of labor bodies in various parts of the country to make our last May Day demonstrations a very important affair.

This first attempt was soon followed by a second one. In the middle of May the Party addressed a manifesto to the working class of America and to its economic organizations, calling upon them to unite forces and present a united front of labor against the united front of capital. This manifesto contained a definite plan of action calculated to unite all the labor forces on a platform acceptable to every honest worker who is willing to defend his interest irrespective of his political views or affiliations. We have mobilized all our nuclei in trade unions to present this plan of action to their respective organizations. Thus we expect to bring pressure from below upon the reactionary leadership on top.

But the main and outstanding problem of the United Front tactics on the political field is our attitude towards the tendency for a Labor Party that is assuming definite shape in a number of important industrial centers in various parts of the country. This problem will be finally settled at the forthcoming convention of the party.⁶ In preparation for this convention the CEC has adopted a thesis on the question which, if accepted at the convention, will place the Party in the position of an active supporter and promoter of the idea of a Labor Party in the US. This thesis, which will reach here shortly, is built upon the following premises:

- 1) That it is the next and most important task of the Party to get the American workers to participate in political action as a class independent of and in opposition to the capitalist parties.
- 2) That at present, and for many years to come, the participation of the American workers in independent political action can be brought about only through and by the existing economic labor organizations.
- 3) That there is already manifesting itself a certain sentiment among large masses of workers in favor of a Labor Party, which sentiment is being capitalized and exploited by reactionary labor leaders.
- 4) That the formation of a strong Labor Party having the support of the organized labor movement in the United States is inevitable in the near future.

From the above premises the thesis makes the following conclusions:

- a) That it is the duty of our Party to begin immediate maneuvering for position in this movement so that we can exert the maximum of influence in the process of its formation as well as in its future development.

⁶ Reference is to the forthcoming convention slated for Bridgman, Michigan — a gathering sensationally raided by the police the morning of Tuesday, August 22, 1922.

- b) That our first move must consist in placing ourselves on record as being in favor of a real Labor Party as against a combination of labor and liberals championed by the railroad labor chiefs or the Non-Partisan Labor League idea, championed by other reactionary labor bureaucrats.
- c) That we must seek admission into and participate in every political gathering of labor to criticize the political maneuvers of the Socialist Party and labor bureaucrats and present our own conception of the independent political action by labor as well as our own conception of a Labor Party.
- d) That wherever a central labor body of a locality accepts our conception of independent political action by labor, we propose joint action in the coming elections on a common ticket and platform, reserving of course for ourselves the right to criticize the propaganda and candidates of the other parts of the combination.
- e) That in all other instances we nominate in the elections our own candidates and carry on our campaign independently of all other organizations; but in such cases where the success of a labor or Socialist candidate is possible, and our prospective vote may only bring about the defeat of the Socialist or labor candidate, we must be ready, on the eve of the elections, to withdraw our candidate in favor of either the labor or Socialist candidate with a suitable declaration giving the reasons for such a step.

This in general is the conception of the CEC of our Party of the united front tactics and their application to the US. There are, however, two comrades on the CEC of our Party that do not fully agree with the position of the CEC as described above. Comrade Carr [Ludwig E. Katterfeld], for instance, is afraid that the above attitude may lead to the disintegration of the Workers Party. Though he sees and admits that the tendency for a Labor Party is growing with increasing speed, nevertheless he believes that there may still be a

chance to forestall its formation by strengthening the Workers Party. In this view he is partially supported by another member of the committee, Comrade Duffy [Alfred Wagenknecht]. Comrade Carr [Katterfeld] is opposed to our Party participating in the elections jointly with the central labor bodies even though they accept our conception of independent political action by labor. He is also opposed to our candidates withdrawing in favor of labor or Socialist candidates under conditions as described above. With the exception of Carr [Katterfeld] and Duffy [Wagenknecht], the above is a correct statement of the position of the CEC on the United Front tactics in America.

The Legal Party.

The formation of the Workers Party marked the beginning of a great revival of all the phases of Communist activities. It also served as the prime cause for the offensive against us started by the reactionary labor bureaucrats and yellow Socialists. To this offensive we referred in the first section of this report dealing with the general situation in the USA. The Workers Party is by this time already pretty well organized. It consists of a membership of about 25,000 organized in about 400 branches.⁷ In spite of all opposition it is forging ahead quite rapidly. The control of the general party machinery is in the hands of the Communist Party, nationally as well as locally. Almost all the national, district, and local officials are members of the CP. The only exception to this rule are the following two language sections of the Workers Party — the Jewish Federation and the German Federation.⁸

⁷ Here again Cannon presents demonstrably false membership statistics. According to the WPA's own figures, dues stamps sold for the quarter April-June 1922 averaged 8,339 per month — almost exactly 1/3 of the membership figure alleged by Cannon. Even allowing for a certain percentage of dues-exempt unemployed members and members in arrears, the membership figure cited by Cannon is farcically high and obviously tendentious. For WPA membership statistics see Comintern Archive f. 515, op. 1, d. 146, l. 194. There is an arithmetical error in the document, which reads "8,319" instead of the correct figure — 8,339.

⁸ Technically the Workers Party of America did not have "Federations" but rather less autonomous "Language Sections."

In the Jewish Federation the governing bodies of bodies of the organization are only about 50 percent in our hands. The other half is in the hands of the Jewish group that formerly belonged to the Workers' Council. This group is still manifesting strong tendencies of a centrist nature and is opposing with all its might the control of the CP in the WP. The relations between the Communists and the others in the governing bodies of the Jewish Federation are rather strained, which makes cooperation in one organization at times very difficult. However it is the belief of the CEC that the time is not yet ripe for a decisive battle against the few influential centrist leaders in the Jewish Federation. We believe that the present arrangements must be maintained until such time as the Communist ideas have taken a stronger hold upon the advanced section of the Jewish workers, when we shall ourselves be in a position to successfully lead the fight of this organization against the reactionary and yellow gang in the Jewish labor movement. In passing we would like to remark that because of the radical sympathies of the rank and file in the Jewish unions the latter are becoming the battleground for our present contest with the SP and the labor bureaucracy. On account of the strong Jewish labor movement, the CEC of our Party considers the Jewish work of the greatest importance and request therefore the EC of the Communist International to pay very careful attention to the report of its special delegate on the Jewish press.

In the German Federation where the control is also divided about equally between the Communists and the group formerly belonging to the Workers' Council, the relations between the two are much less strained for the reason that the leaders of the non-Communist group are less hostile to the control of the CP than is the case in the Jewish Federation.

The Illegal Party.

Our underground organization consists at the present time of a membership of about 6,000.⁹ Its function is primarily as a controlling caucus within the Workers Party and other legal organs of the Party as, for instance, the Friends of Soviet Russia and the Trade Union Educational League. The underground organization appears publicly under its own name, *Communist Party of America*, only in emergencies when the nature of the work to be done precludes its being carried out through the legal organs of the Party. As a general rule the Party resorts to underground methods only in those cases where it seems to be more advantageous to the work on hand. Consequently the center of our activities has been gradually shifted from the underground organization to the overground.

This transfer of functions from the illegal party to the legal party has given rise in our Party of a tendency favoring the immediate transfer of the seat of Party authority from the illegal to the legal party, with the underground organizations as an auxiliary to, and under the control, of the legal party.

The CEC takes the position that the seat of Party authority can be transferred from the illegal to the legal party only after the latter has become a Communist Party in the full sense of the word — if its program, contents of propaganda, international affiliation, and name are those of a Communist Party. But this is not now the case. The Workers Party is not yet a Communist Party in the accepted sense of that term. Moreover, we do not consider it advisable under the present circumstances, while our forces are yet very weak, for the Work-

⁹ Here Cannon underestimates the size of the illegal organization. According to statistics cited in an April 14 report by Executive Secretary Jay Lovestone to the CEC — to which Cannon would have been privy — District Organizers for each of the Party's 12 Districts reported an average paid membership of 6,851 for January and February 1922. [RGASPI f. 515, op. 1, d. 94, ll. 25-27.] Over the course of the next year the size of the legal Workers Party would grow substantially and the underground CPA would wither, but at the time of this report the two organizations were of a vaguely similar size, the WPA being by roughly 20% the larger of the two, in contrast to Cannon's assertion that the WPA was over four times as large as its underground counterpart. Cannon was, of course, one of the most committed adherents of the legal organization, regarded by those on the CPA's Left as an arch "liquidator" and a quasi-social democratic "centrist."

ers Party to assume the name, program, and international affiliation of a Communist Party, running the danger of being crushed by the capitalist state. Therefore the seat of the Party authority must continue to be lodged with the illegal party until such a time as the legal party will be powerful enough, and sufficiently established in the labor movement to challenge the capitalist state and make an attempt to function openly as a Communist Party. The problem, therefore, consists in developing the legal party and in strengthening it, building up within it the Communist ideology and habit of discipline, thus preparing it to adopt the Communist name and program and openly affiliate with the Communist International.

It goes, of course, without saying that we always retain an illegal organization, fully realizing that until the working class has succeeded in capturing the power of the state there will always be a need for underground work, and therefore a need for an underground organization. But this underground organization, provided the open organization can function as a Communist Party, will only be an auxiliary and subject to the control of the legal Communist Party. For the present, as already remarked, the seat of Party authority remains with the underground organization, which is the Communist Party of America, Section of the Communist International.

This is, in general terms, the conception of the CEC of our Party, of the role of the Workers Party, and of the mutual relations between our underground and overground organizations.

On this point, also, there are a few comrades on the CEC of our Party that do not subscribe to the views outlined above. To these comrades belongs Comrade Carr [Katterfeld], who takes the position that the Communist Party of America must by its very nature remain an underground organization; that the underground existence as a Communist Party is a matter of principle with the Communist International. He therefore considers that the idea of transferring the seat of Party authority from the illegal to the legal party is equivalent to "liquidation" of the Communist Party of America. According to his views the legal party is to be nothing more than a makeshift to enable the CP of A, that is, the underground organization, to fulfill some of its function, but that the legal party is never to become the Communist Party of America. In this view he is partly supported by Comrade

Ballister [Robert Minor] and Comrade Duffy [Wagenknecht]. Comrade Ballister [Minor] does admit the future possibility for the CP of A to exist and function in the open. However his conception of the process that will bring this about is rather peculiar. He imagines the underground organization growing in numbers, influence, and power to such an extent as to enable it — the underground organization — to defy the capitalist state and begin an open existence.

Both Carr [Katterfeld] and Ballister [Minor], though not in complete agreement on details, take the position that the Workers Party is not to become the Communist Party of America. We wish to impress upon the Executive Committee of the Communist International the fact that the difference of opinion between the majority of the CEC and Comrades Carr [Katterfeld], Ballister [Minor], and Duffy [Wagenknecht] are not merely theoretical. On the contrary, they bear a very important practical relation to the immediate activities of the Party. For instance the majority of the [Central Executive] Committee holds the view that the Workers Party must have its own industrial department and that its entire membership must be organized in industrial nuclei in the trade unions and other workers organizations, the same as the membership of the underground organization. The minority is opposed to this on the ground that it will unduly strengthen the legal party and jeopardize the hegemony of the illegal party, which according to their theory must always, as a matter of principle, be the controlling organization. The majority in the CEC take a directly opposite view. We hold it our duty to organize Workers Party members into trade union nuclei in order first to mobilize our full strength of organization and second, in order to fasten upon the Workers Party membership the habit of disciplined action. From this it can be easily seen that this seemingly theoretical difference of opinion is resulting in concrete and practical difference of conception as to how the Workers Party is to be operated. Is it to take on as many Communist functions as can be safely carried on in the open, and thus be gradually developed into a real Communist Party? Or is it to remain only the “fake” party, as Comrade Ballister [Minor] calls it, to cover the underground activities of the Communists? It is because of these differences of opinion that the problem of the future of the Workers Party, which seems to be a theoretical one at the present

time, assumes a concrete practical aspect. It is the intention of the CEC of our Party to gradually strengthen the program of the Workers Party so as to bring it in closer accord with the Communist program; also to transfer to it all the functions of the underground that can be done in the open, as well as to establish closer relations between it and the CI, with the ultimate purpose of having it take the name Communist Party and affiliate directly with the CI. The first step in this direction was already taken by empowering Comrade Cook [Cannon] to go to the Communist International under his legal name, as the fraternal delegate of the Workers Party.

The Opposition.¹⁰

The CEC of our Party has consistently maintained towards the opposition which split away from the Party a friendly and comradely attitude. Not for a moment did we forget that we were dealing with sincere and devoted revolutionary workers. In spite of the vicious campaign of denunciation against the Communist Party and its legal organs, carried on by the leaders of the opposition, the CEC of our Party refuses to treat the opposition otherwise than as Communists who are in error on important problems of Communist tactics. In accordance with this attitude the CEC has, on a number of occasions, issued invitations to the membership of the opposition to come back to the Party, where they will be received and reinstated with full rights. The full strength of the opposition never exceeded 2000-2500 members. Quite a number of members of the opposition have come back, but the leading group is still holding out. The latest decision of the EC of the Communist International regarding the opposition, which was embodied in the agreement signed by Comrade Carr [Kat-

¹⁰ Reference here is to the "Central Caucus" faction headed by Charles Dirba, John Ballam, and George Ashkenuzi. The Central Caucus faction may be conceived of as a group of Language Federations of the old CPA, who bolted the unified Party in November and December 1921 in response to former members of the UCP winning a working majority on the Central Executive Committee and embarking on a policy to restructure the Federations and establish a Legal Political Party (the WPA), in which all Party members were to participate. Fear of this prospect and loathing of the UCP's "centrist" ideology was melded with a healthy dollop of careerism in bringing about this bitter split, a division which was not completely liquidated until the Bridgman Convention of August 1922.

terfeld] for the CP of A and Comrade Moore [John Ballam] for the opposition, has not moved the leaders of that group to change their attitude a single iota.¹¹ They have declared Moore [Ballam] a traitor to their faction, and have refused to have any dealings with him. They are now waiting for the arrival of the representative of the CI [Genrik Valetskii], with whom they say they will negotiate on the basis of unity between them and the CP of A.

The CEC of our Party learned the details of the latest decision of the CI regarding the opposition from the reports of Comrades Carr [Katterfeld] and Marshall [Max Bedacht]. It was gratified to find that its own policy toward the opposition, the spirit of its attitude, was in complete accord with the one taken by the EC of the CI. The decision or agreement was unanimously approved. However, quite a few members of the CEC felt apprehensive of the effect that the sending of a special delegate by the CI to the US to effect unity might have on the leaders of the opposition; and Comrade Carr [Katterfeld] was criticized for failing to take this into account. Among those who expressed this apprehension were Comrades Wheat [Jay Lovestone], Cook [Cannon], and Raphael [Alexander Bittelman]. These comrades felt that the decision to send a representative to settle the conflict between the CP of A and the opposition might give the leaders of the opposition another loophole to avoid immediate complete compliance with the command of the CI that the opposition immediately liquidate their organization and rejoin the party. It took only a few days for this apprehension to become justified, for as soon as Comrade Moore [Ballam] presented his report to the leading body of the opposition and requested compliance with this decision, the only an-

¹¹ This agreement, signed March 29, 1922, in Moscow by Representatives to the CI Katterfeld (CPA) and Ballam (Central Caucus) detailed the process for reunification, including a halt to issuance of printed propaganda by the Central Caucus faction, members to rejoin the regular party without discrimination within 60 days, all of the Central Caucus faction's property and records to be turned over to the CPA majority group. The agreement was bitterly rejected by the Central Caucus's "Communist Party" organization, which sought to appeal the decision to the next Congress of the Communist International. When finally informed that they would not have standing in said Congress and presented with an additional deadline, many Central Caucus dissidents — but by no means all — returned to the ranks of the CPA, with the process of reunification being crowned at the Bridgman convention in August.

swer he refused was a flat refusal. The attitude that the leading body of the opposition took was that neither Moore [Ballam] nor Carr [Katterfeld], nor the CEC of the CP of A, have the right to put into effect the decision of the CI, and that only the representative of the Communist International, upon his arrival, would have the authority to carry out this decision. Thus have the leaders of the opposition found another excuse for avoiding compliance with the decisions of the CI and protracting the final liquidation of their organization. However the CEC is confident that the major part of the members of the opposition, who, in spite of the leaders, are still loyal to the CI, will return to the Party within a very short time.

The Party Press.

The press of our Party is growing in importance. We publish two weeklies in English [*The Worker, Voice of Labor*] which have a joint circulation of about 25,000. It is the intention of the Party to transform one of these weeklies first into a semi-weekly and then into a daily as soon as the funds will permit. Since the organization of the legal party we have started a Jewish daily paper. The Party also owns and controls a large number of foreign language publications in Russian, Italian, Ukrainian, Polish, Lithuanian, Hungarian, German, Yugoslavian, Czechoslovakian, and Finnish. Of our legal foreign language press the German, Hungarian, and Jewish are the most important organs.¹² These are all daily organs with very substantial circulations. But the most important of all, just at this particular juncture of affairs is the legal daily Jewish organ [*Freiheit*]. It derives its importance from the fact already mentioned above, that the reactionaries and yellow Socialists in the trade unions, with the organ of the *For-*

¹² These CP owned or controlled newspapers included *Novyi Mir* (Russian), *Il Lavoratore* (Italian), *Ukrainian Daily News* (Ukrainian), *Trybuna Robotnicza* (Polish), *Laisve* and *Vilnis* (Lithuanian), *Uj Elore* (Hungarian), *New Yorker Volkszeitung* and *Vorwaerts* (German), *Radnik* (Yugoslav), *Spravedlnost, Obrana*, and *Delnik* (Czechoslovak), *Tyomies* and *Toveri* (Finnish), and *Freiheit* (Yiddish). Other papers beyond the nationalities mentioned by Cannon include *Eteenpain* and *Uus Ilm* (Estonian), *Empros* (Greek), and *Proletar* (Armenian). In addition to the two main English language weeklies mentioned above were also a couple additional papers of note that were closely linked to the WPA, including *Truth* [Duluth] and *The World* [Oakland].

ward, are at present centering their main attack on the Communists and their sympathizers in the strong Jewish labor movement. It is no exaggeration to say that they are trying to crush the growing Communist movement among the Jewish workers of America while it is not yet too late, since our recent advances in that field were of considerable magnitude. We consider winning this fight in the Jewish movement an absolute condition for the further development of our influence among other sections of the organized working class, for to be beaten in this fight may mean complete extermination of our forces from the Jewish labor unions which will undoubtedly diminish our chances of progress in the other labor unions. We therefore devote great attention to this particular field and consider the maintenance and support of our Jewish daily as one of the prime requisites for the success of the present contest.

The Federated Press.

The situation here is continually improving. Though officially the governing body is not entirely in our hands, but only about 50%, we can easily manage, because the other half consists partly of our sympathizers, to direct the activities of the Federated Press along lines of our policy. We feel, however, that if we will not be in a position to supply the necessary funds for the maintenance of this very important institution it will either disintegrate or else fall into the hands of our opponents.

Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport

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