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# Minutes of the Central Executive Committee, WPA: Chicago, IL — March 17-18, 1924.

A document in the Comintern Archive, f. 515, op. 1, d. 276, ll. 13-28.

Comrade Bittelman elected chairman.

Present — All members of the Committee excepting  
Comrade Engdahl.†

## Report of the Executive Secretary.

Executive Secretary [C.E. Ruthenberg] made a report on *The Daily Worker*, showing that during the two months of operation thus far, the deficit of \$600 had accrued. The deficit for March, however, is likely to be larger than for the month of February. In this connection, the question of the expenses of the editorial department had been raised and a conference has been arranged between the editors [Louis Engdahl and Bill Dunne], business manager [Moritz Loeb], and the Executive Secretary to go over this matter, which will then be reported to the Organization Committee.

Foreign Born Protection Campaign has been fairly successful throughout the country. A large number of organizations have participated in the various councils and mass meetings and resolutions, directed against the exception laws, have been adopted. However the Johnson Bill reported to Congress by the Committee on Immigration does not carry the worst features of the laws which were pending before the Committee, there being no provision for registration of foreign born workers already in this country. In view of this fact we must formulate a policy as to what is to be done with the Council for the Protection of Foreign Born.

The growth of the Party membership continues at a rate somewhat better than before the first of the

year. Charters were issued previously at the rate of at least one every day and we are now issuing more than that number. Branch reports recently secured from the various districts indicate that at least one-third of the Party membership is not paying dues regularly and that the total number of members on our rolls will run from 25 to 30 thousand. Efforts are being made to secure a complete report from all districts so that a tabulation of the entire strength of the Party can be made.

The Party financial situation is not of the best. Although our indebtedness has decreased something like \$1500 since December 1st, our financial resources are at a very low ebb and it is necessary to exercise extreme care not to increase the responsibilities of the Party at the present time. It was in anticipation of this situation that the Farmer-Labor Party Campaign Fund was undertaken. The results from this campaign are not of the best thus far, although probably not sufficient time has elapsed in order to judge the situation.

Motions submitted by Comrade Ruthenberg:

**Motion 1:** That we continue to carry on the fight against the Johnson Immigration Bill through the Council for Protection of Foreign Born.

**Motion 2:** That we hold up the danger of this bill as expressed in the provisions requiring the securing of the immigration certificate and answering questions which might include union affiliation and political affiliation of the applicants.

**Motion 3:** That we conduct a careful propaganda campaign in the Councils for Protection of Foreign

†- The Central Executive Committee elected by the Third Convention of the Workers Party of America (Dec. 30, 1923 to Jan. 2, 1924) consisted of: Alexander Bittelman\*, Earl Browder\*, Fahle Burman\*, James P. Cannon\*, William F. Dunne\*, J. Louis Engdahl, William Z. Foster\*, Benjamin Gitlow, Ludwig Lore, Jay Lovestone, John Pepper, C.E. Ruthenberg, and Martin Abern\* as representative of the Young Workers League. Foster-Cannon faction are denoted by an asterisk here. *New Yorker Volkszeitung* editor Ludwig Lore was the leader of a third faction which was in alliance with the Foster group.

Born to show the necessity of a continual struggle against such exception laws and for the formation of a Farmer-Labor Party for this purpose. Also that we endeavor to secure endorsement of the Farmer-Labor Party through these councils and sending of delegates to the June 17th convention.

*Motions were approved unanimously.*

**Motion (by Comrade Pepper):** That the Executive Secretary write an article in *The Daily Worker* and Party press generally in regard to the nonpayment of dues by one-third of the membership as a means of carrying on agitation for regular dues payment.

### **Detroit Foreign Born Protection Campaign.**

Comrade Gitlow raised the question of the Detroit Foreign Born Protection Campaign indicating that it was a bourgeois organization and not a proletarian organization which was carrying on this work and in this connection the question of the situation in the Detroit Party organization on the question of and supporting the candidacy of Herbert Baker in the Republican primaries was reported on by the Executive Secretary.

**Motion:** That the situation in Detroit in regard to the application of the United Front policy be referred to the Political Committee for investigation and for action in setting straight the Detroit organization.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Russian Branch, New York.**

The Executive Secretary presented minutes of the DEC of New York on the question of the reorganization of the Russian Branch for its anti-semitic resolution, it being proposed that the resolution be amended to say that the "resolution was interpreted or considered anti-Communist" in place of saying that it was anti-Communist.

**Motion (by Comrade Ruthenberg):** That we support the decision of the DEC and that the resolution stand as drafted and those members who vote against it be excluded from the reorganized branch.

**Amendment (by Comrade Lore):** That we rein-

roduce the compromise resolution in the branch.

Voting for the amendment: Lore. All others against. [*Amendment failed.*]

Voting for the motion: All except Lore.  
[*Motion carried.*]

### **June 17th Convention.**

Comrade Ruthenberg made a report of the negotiations in St. Paul and the caucus of our group of the Farmer-Labor Party in connection with the March 10 conference [of the Minnesota state FLP], stating that the compromise on the June 17th date was made in order to prevent a split with Mahoney and a struggle in the Farmer-Labor Federation, our information being that with the opposition of Mahoney, the Farmer-Labor Federation would be against us by a 2/3 vote.

Comrade Dunne reported on the convention of the Farmer-Labor Federation and the St. Cloud convention of the Farmer-Labor Party [March 10, 1924], at both of which the call for the June 17th convention was unanimously endorsed.

Comrade Ruthenberg thereupon submitted a series of motions in regard to the June 17th convention.

Comrade Foster also submitted a motion with three points, which it was found were not in contradiction to those submitted by Comrade Ruthenberg.

**Motion (by Comrade Pepper):** That the Ruthenberg motions be amended to insert in the statement that "our fight for the May 30th convention in Minnesota secured our victory against the July 4th."

It was proposed to combine the motions and after a conference between Comrades Ruthenberg and Foster, **the following joint motion was reported:**

1. We have won an important victory in holding the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Montana, and Washington for a separate convention from the July 4th convention, in which the Federated Farmer-Labor Party and the Workers Party will participate. Our stand for May 30th and our maneuvering Mahoney into fighting for June 20th defeated the July 4th proposal. The compromise on the June 17th date was necessary

under the circumstances the committee faced and we approve of the action of the steering committee.

2. The reports received by the committee on arrangements in St. Paul show that the Third Party, non-class party elements are turning away from the [June 17] St. Paul convention and going to the July 4th convention. This is shown by letters and telegrams received by William Mahoney from the Idaho Progressive Party, the Colorado Farmer-Labor Party, the California organizing committee, and from 6 or 8 other organizations. The absence from the St. Paul conference of J.A.H. Hopkins, Platt of Wisconsin, and other similar elements is another indication of the same character. On the basis of these developments it appears that the June 17th convention will not have a large admixture of Third Party elements but will consist mainly of the class Farmer-Labor Party elements.

3. Our immediate task is to carry on a widespread campaign of propaganda and organization in support of the June 17th convention. We must fight to keep out of the July 4th convention the Farmer-Labor Party elements and must organize these elements wherever possible in support of June 17th.

4. That our connections everywhere be instructed to begin a campaign to secure delegates' credentials to the June 17th convention from labor unions, labor fraternal societies, farmers' organizations, cooperatives, local labor parties, and workers' political societies.

5. Our organizing campaign should consist of an effort to establish state and local Farmer-Labor Parties in all those states where we can secure sufficient support to form an organization of a substantial character. Immediate work along this line must be begun in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas. The work underway in Oklahoma and California must be pushed aggressively. Utah may also offer the possibility of organization.

6. In organizing these state parties, we shall apply the provisions stated in the Convention theses, organizing them as Federated branches if this can be done on the basis of the conditions laid down in the thesis.

7. That we prepare a program of agricultural cooperatives to present to the June 17th convention delegates for the purpose of developing an economic organization of the farmers to serve as a basis for political activities. To this end the Research Department is instructed to make a study of the question of agricultural cooperatives, especially with regard to the stand and experience of the Communist International on this matter, and to publish the results of its studies in our press. The Research Department is also instructed to keep in close touch with the Western Progressive Farmers in making this study and in working out a program of agricultural cooperatives.

*The combined motion was adopted unanimously.*

### **Delegation to the Communist International.**

The Executive Secretary presented cablegrams to the effect that the Enlarged Executive [of the CI] meeting would not be held and that the Congress would probably be held in June or July. Also a cablegram giving permission for either Comrades Foster or Ruthenberg and one opponent of the Third Party position to come to Moscow at once.†

Comrade Foster thereupon moved

**Motion (by Comrade Foster):** That owing to the critical Party situation and the absolute necessity of getting an immediate decision on the Third Party question, that Comrades Olgin, Pepper, and Foster be the delegation to the CI and that they leave immediately.

**Amendment (by Comrade Pepper):** That Comrade Ruthenberg be added to the delegation.

**Amendment (by Comrade Lore):** That Comrade Cannon be added to the delegation.

**Amendment (by Comrade Pepper):** That the great campaign which we must carry on in support of the June 17th Farmer-Labor Party convention makes it impossible for Comrade Ruthenberg to go to Moscow immediately and since the presence of Comrade Ruthenberg is necessary in order that a decision of the Party question can be made, the sending of the del-

†- The previous month's session of the CEC (held in Chicago Feb. 15-16) voted to send a delegation of four "immediately" to Moscow to plead their cases on Farmer-Labor Party policy — including the four main leaders of the two factions, Foster, Cannon, Pepper, and Ruthenberg. Temporary replacements for the four delegates on the CEC were agreed upon. Apparently this decision was countermanded by the CI, which "gave permission" for an immediate delegation of two, on top of that treating the two main factions in bitter contention as one group ("either Comrades Foster or Ruthenberg").

egation to the CI be postponed until the Congress in June or July.

Comrade Pepper also amended

**Amendment (by Comrade Pepper):** That Comrade Lore be sent in place of Comrade Olgin.

Comrade Ruthenberg stated his position in regard to the matter as follows:

“Unquestionably I have occupied a distinct position in regard to the Party situation and I believe the presentation of that position is necessary in order that all phases of the Party situation come before the CI and I do not believe that a final decision could be made without my position being presented. However, I do not feel justified, in view of the fact that we are in the midst of what will be one of the greatest and most important campaigns of our Party, that is, the campaign in relation to the June 17th convention, to leave the country at the present time and I therefore do not feel that I can go to Moscow immediately. I believe the proper solution would be to postpone sending the delegation to the Congress of the CI, which would be after the June 17th convention. If the delegation is sent earlier, I will, in my capacity of a member of the Executive Committee of the CI,† submit all my views in accordance with the statement above.”

Comrade Pepper therefore withdrew his amendment that Comrade Ruthenberg be added to the delegation and Comrade Lore withdrew his that Comrade Cannon be added.

Vote was taken on the question of substituting Comrade Lore for Olgin as the opponent to the Third Party position in the CEC in the delegation. Voting in favor: Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, and Ruthenberg. Opposed: Abern, Bittelman, Burman, Browder, Foster, Dunne, Cannon, and Lore.

*[Amendment failed.]*

The vote on the Pepper motion to postpone sending the delegation resulted in the same vote — Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, and Ruthenberg voting for, and Abern, Bittelman, Burman, Browder, Foster, Dunne, Cannon, and Lore opposed.

*[Amendment failed.]*

The vote on the Foster motion to send the del-

egates at once and naming the delegation [Olgin, Pepper, Foster], resulting in the same vote — Abern, Bittelman, Burman, Browder, Foster, Dunne, Cannon, and Lore voting for, and Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, and Ruthenberg opposed.

*[Motion carried.]*

### Third Party Thesis.

Comrades Foster, Cannon, and Bittelman submitted a thesis to be presented to the Executive Committee of the CI on the present economic and political situation and the immediate tasks of the Workers Party.

**Motion (by Comrade Foster):** That the CEC endorse this statement to the CI.

**Amendment (by Comrade Pepper):** In consideration of the fact that the thesis presented is a repetition of the Ruthenberg-Pepper theses of November and February and in spite of its many minor inaccuracies, we vote in favor of the thesis.

**Comrade Lovestone moved to amend** by striking out on page 5 the first two sentences of the last paragraph:

“The strategy of the LaFollette group has been to gain the leadership of the revolting masses, preferably under the banner of the Republican Party. If they fail to control the Republican Convention they will very probably split and try to unite the entire mass revolt against the two old parties into a third party under their leadership.”

and to strike out on page 10 the first sentence of the third paragraph:

“On the other hand, it is not out of the range of possibility that LaFollette or one of his group will secure the Republican nomination at the hands of the big capitalists who control the Republican Party and attempt to lead the revolting back into its ranks.”

Voting in favor of the Lovestone amendments: Lovestone.

Voting against: All other members of the Committee.

*[Amendments failed.]*

Voting in favor of the Pepper amendment: Git-

†- Ruthenberg was elected as a candidate (non-voting) member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International by the 4th World Congress of the CI [Nov. 5-Dec. 5, 1922].

low, Lovestone, Pepper.

Voting against: Abern, Browder, Bittelman, Burman, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, Ruthenberg, Lore.

*[Amendment carried.]*

Voting in favor of the Foster motion to endorse the statement: All members present excepting Comrade Lore.

*[Motion carried.]*

### **Teapot Dome Campaign.**

Comrade Lovestone submitted a resolution on the development of the Teapot Dome Campaign in relation to the Daugherty investigation.

*On motion by Lovestone, the resolution was unanimously adopted.*

### **Lore Writings.**

The articles by Comrade Lore in the *Volkszeitung* which came before the Executive Council were taken up. Comrade Ruthenberg submitted the following motion:

#### ***Motion (by Comrade Ruthenberg):***

1. That the action of Comrade Lore in printing in the *Volkszeitung* a statement that the WP observer agreed that the July 4th convention would nominate an independent candidate was a violation of the discipline of the CEC, being in contradiction to our policy before the workers and farmers, and that Comrade Lore is censured for this action.

2. That the CEC considers it reprehensible that Comrade Lore, because his view of the situation in the United States differed from that of Comrade Zinoviev, should throw doubt and suspicion upon the sources of information upon which Comrade Zinoviev relied, which could result in no other inference than that the Party was sending misleading reports to the CI, and that Comrade Lore is censured for this action, and is directed to print a statement giving the view of the CEC in the *Volkszeitung*.

Comrade Pepper submitted to the Committee the editorial of Comrade Lore on the Fifth Anniversary of the CI, Lore's editorials on the controversy in the Russian Party, and other articles and submitted the following motions:

#### ***Motions (by Comrade Pepper):***

1. That the CEC shall censure Comrade Lore for his attack upon Comrade Zinoviev and his misstatements of the position of the CI in the Fifth Anniversary article.

2. The CEC shall make a public statement of the Party position in answer to Comrade Lore's misconceptions of the tactics of the CI.

3. That the CEC endorses the decisions of the [13th] Conference of the Russian Communist Party [January 16-18, 1924] on the controversy within the Party.

After full discussion of the question, during which Comrade Lore presented his interpretation of the article in question, the following motion was submitted by Comrade Cannon:

***Motion (by Comrade Cannon):*** That a committee of three, consisting of Comrades Ruthenberg, Bittelman, and Foster, draft a resolution on the Lore articles with a recommendation as to how the matter is to be handled and report to the next session.

Voting in favor: Abern, Bittelman, Burman, Browder, Cannon, Dunne, Foster.

Voting against: Pepper.

*Motion was adopted.*

### **New York Police Correspondence.**

The Executive Secretary read the letter sent by the District Organizer of District 2 [New York] to Commissioner Enright of the Police Department, thanking him for the efficient service in connection with the Memorial Meeting at Madison Square Garden and the reply of the Police Commissioner.

It was brought out in this connection that Comrade Lore had also written an editorial, the tenor of which was similar to the communications to the Police Commissioner.

Comrade Pepper thereupon moved

#### ***Motion (by Comrade Pepper):***

1. That the DEC and the DO and Comrade Lore be censured for thanking the Police Department of New York.

2. That we shall send a circular to all Party units commenting upon the situation and calling the attention of the Party membership that a Communist Party

cannot at any time place itself in the position of expressing thanks to the force machine of the capitalist state.

**Amendments (by Comrade Cannon):**

1. That the Executive Secretary write a letter to the DEC and DO of District 2 setting them right in regard to the question of expressing thanks to the Police Department, and

2. That the CEC condemns their action and also the action of editors of Party papers which may have handled the matter in an incorrect manner.

Voting in favor of the Cannon amendment: Abern, Burman, Bittelman, Browder, Cannon, Foster, Dunne, Lore.

Voting against: Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, Ruthenberg.

[Amendment carried.]

Voting for Section 2 of Pepper's motion: Gitlow, Pepper, Lovestone.

Voting against: Abern, Burman, Bittelman, Browder, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, Lore, Ruthenberg.

[Motion failed.]

Voting for Section 1 of Pepper's motion: Gitlow, Pepper, Lovestone, Ruthenberg.

Voting against: Abern, Burman, Bittelman, Browder, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, Lore.

[Motion failed.]

**May Day Celebration.**

Comrade Ruthenberg submitted the following resolution:

"That the celebration of May Day this year shall be arranged on the basis of a United Front under the slogans: DOWN WITH THE CAPITALIST TEAPOT DOME: FORWARD TO THE WORKERS' AND FARMERS' GOVERNMENT.

Our propaganda shall consist of an attack upon the capitalist government on the basis of the Teapot Dome and Daugherty exposures and for a mass Farmer-Labor Party as a step toward the Workers' and Farmers' Government."

and **moved its adoption.**

*The motion was unanimously adopted.*

The Committee then adjourned until 10 am on Tuesday [March 18].

C.E. Ruthenberg,  
Executive Secretary.

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**March 18, 1924.**

Present — Abern, Browder, Bittelman, Burman, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, Gitlow, Lore, Lovestone, Ruthenberg, Pepper.

Chairman — Comrade Cannon.

**Lore Writings.**

Comrade Foster submitted the following report for the special committee to draft a resolution on Comrade Lore's writings.

**Motion (by Comrade Foster):** That the CEC objects to certain erroneous statements that have appeared in the *Volkszeitung* relative to the CI and instructs Comrade Lore to write an editorial correcting them, same to be passed upon by the Political Committee before publication in the *Volkszeitung*.

Comrade Ruthenberg as a minority of the committee submitted the following:

**Amendment (by Comrade Ruthenberg):** That the CEC issue a statement to be published in the *Volkszeitung* and the *Daily Worker* to the effect that its attention has been called to certain statements in the *Volkszeitung* which are in conflict with the Party and which the CEC is unable to permit to pass unchallenged.

That there follow this statement, a correction of Comrade Lore's statements regarding Comrade Zinoviev's being misinformed as to American conditions and as to the authenticity of the reports being sent by the Party.

Also a correction of misstatements by Comrade Lore on the question of the attitude of the CI toward parliamentarism, dual unionism, minority action, and underground conspiratorial methods.

Voting in favor of the Ruthenberg amendment: Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, Ruthenberg.

Voting against: Abern, Browder, Bittelman, Burman, Cannon, Dunne, Foster.

Not voting: Lore.

[*Amendment failed.*]

Voting in favor of the majority report: Abern, Browder, Bittelman, Burman, Cannon, Dunne, Foster.

Voting against: Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, Ruthenberg.

Not voting: Lore.

[*Motion carried.*]

Comrade Pepper moved the following:

**Motion (by Comrade Pepper):**

1. That the CEC censures Comrade Lore.
2. That the CEC makes a public statement in regard to this matter.

**Comrade Foster moved** to refer the matter to the next meeting of the CEC.

Voting in favor of the motion to refer to the next meeting of the CEC: Abern, Browder, Bittelman, Burman, Cannon, Foster.

Voting against: Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, Ruthenberg.

Not Voting: Dunne and Lore.

[*Motion to refer carried.*]

**Comrade Pepper moved** that the CEC endorse the position taken by the Russian Communist Party Congress on the controversy in the Russian Party.†

Comrade Foster submitted the following motion:

**Motion (by Comrade Foster):** In view of the fact that the controversy in the Russian Communist Party has been decided by a Conference of the Russian Communist Party, the CEC is of the opinion that it is not called upon at this time to take a position on the merits of the controversy. The CEC will print in the Party press all documents bearing on the debate and will encourage the membership to study them and to discuss the question in the columns of the Party

press. The CEC will condemn any attempt to make a factional issue of the matter in the American Party.

Motion was adopted by a vote of: Abern, Bittelman, Burman, Browder, Cannon, Foster in favor; Gitlow, Ruthenberg, Lovestone, Pepper opposed; and Dunne and Lore not voting.

**Amendment (by Comrades Cannon and Abern):** That the discussion of the subject be published in *The Daily Worker* and in *The Liberator*.

Voting in favor of the Cannon amendment: Abern, Bittelman, Burman, Browder, Cannon, Foster, Dunne, and Lore. Against: Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, Ruthenberg.

[*Amendment carried.*]

Voting in favor of the Pepper motion: Gitlow, Pepper, Ruthenberg, Lovestone.

Voting against: Abern, Bittelman, Burman, Browder, Cannon, Foster.

Not voting: Dunne, Lore.

[*Motion failed.*]

## Unemployment.

Comrade Browder submitted a statement on unemployment in the United States.

Comrade Pepper submitted the following amendment:

**Amendment (by Comrade Pepper):**

1. Economic conditions are becoming worse and worse. Unemployment is unquestionably a mass phenomenon today. The official labor movement of the AF of L neglects criminally the problem of unemployment because only the millions of unskilled workers suffer from unemployment, while the labor aristocracy so far does not feel the economic depression. This situation makes it doubly the task of the Workers Party to make the cause of unemployment its own cause.

2. The big mistake made by our New York comrades in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers in de-

†- Reference is actually to the actions of the 13th Conference of the RKP(b), held Jan. 16-18, 1924, not to any Congress. At that gathering Stalin, Zinoviev, and Kamenev counterattacked Trotsky in response to his publication of *The New Course*, published in *Pravda* on December 11, 1923. The 13th Conference passed a resolution "On the Results of the Discussion and on Petty Bourgeois Deviation in the Party," which condemned the "incorrect and ultra-factional" analysis of Trotsky and his associates in no uncertain terms. Pepper thus seeks here for the WPA to weigh in against Trotsky and "Trotskyism" at this early date.

feating a proposal for a 5 percent assessment for the benefit of jobless workers, thus violating the basis of our Party, which is the solidarity of working workers with unemployed workers, was caused by lack of policy of the CEC on the unemployment question.

3. The CEC adopts as the basis of its policy the resolution on unemployment submitted by Pepper to the full CEC meeting of February.

4. We must give our whole unemployment campaign a political edge. We must focus the eyes of unemployed workers upon Congress and the government.

5. The unemployment campaign must be the central campaign of our Party in the industrial field. Therefore the CEC instructs the TUEL to enter into the campaign with all its forces. The CEC and TUEL shall issue at once a joint manifesto on unemployment. The Party and the TUEL shall begin at once preparatory work for organizing councils of unemployed. Our immediate work shall be to organize such councils among the miners, needle trade workers, and textile workers. The councils of unemployed shall not be organized before May 1, so that we shall have sufficient time to mobilize the Party for introducing new slogans into the trade unions. Our May 1 meetings shall feature the organization of unemployed councils. The difficulties of reaching the unemployed masses will make the organization of unemployed councils a slow process. We cannot expect that the masses will at once stream into the councils; but the earlier we build the framework of such an organization, the surer and more thoroughly will we reach the masses of unemployed.

Voting in favor of the Pepper amendment: Gitlow, Lovestone, Ruthenberg, Pepper.

Voting against: Abern, Browder, Bittelman, Burman, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, Lore.

*[Amendment failed.]*

Voting in favor of the Browder statement: Abern, Browder, Bittelman, Burman, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, Lore, Ruthenberg.

Voting against: Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper.

*[Statement carried.]*

### **Letter from Canadian Party.**

The Executive Secretary read a letter from the Canadian Party complaining because of infringement on the Canadian territory by Party organizations and auxiliary organizations through circularization for funds.

**Motion (by Comrade Ruthenberg):** That all Party units be instructed not to circularize Canadian territory and that care be taken when using the mailing lists of papers to eliminate the Canadian connections before sending out the circularization.

*Motion was adopted unanimously.*

A second letter from the Canadian Party stating that the convention of the Party would be held beginning April 18 [1924] and requesting that a fraternal delegate be sent was read and Comrade Ruthenberg was unanimously elected to represent the Party at this convention.†

### **Mexican Party.**

Letter from the Mexican Party stating that its national convention would be held beginning April 25 [1924] and also in regard to the Pan-American Congress was read.

Comrade Lovestone was elected unanimously as representative of the Party at the Mexican convention.

### **FSR Representative in Berlin.**

Comrade Cannon at this point raised the question of the FSR [Friends of Soviet Russia] representative at Berlin and nominated Noah London to represent the FSR there. Comrade Pepper amended to refer the question of nomination to the committee of the FSR.

Later Comrade Pepper nominated William Kruse.

Vote was taken on the two candidates and resulted in Comrades Abern, Bittelman, Burman, Browder, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, Lore voting in favor of London and Comrades Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, and Ruthenberg voting in favor of Kruse.

†- The 3rd Convention of the Workers Party of Canada was held April 18-20, 1924.



[Noah London elected.]

Motion to refer to the Committee of the FSR was defeated by the same vote.

### Statement of Party Activities.

Comrade Foster submitted a statement of Party activities and *moved its adoption*.

Comrade Pepper objected to the reference to the political adventurism in paragraph 4 on page 3 and this was amended to read “maneuvers having no relation to the real facts of the class struggle and the relative strength of the party.”

Comrade Pepper moved to insert “opportunism” between the words “factionalism” and “infantile disorders” on page 4 and this motion was adopted.

The statement was then adopted unanimously.

### Publicity of Documents.

*Comrade Cannon moved* that the next magazine section of the Daily Worker contain the documents on the Third Party, Unemployment, Party activities, and other decisions of the CEC.

*Comrade Pepper amended* that a discussion on the Third Party situation be opened to the entire Party press and that the anti-Third Party group be required to prepare and publish a thesis.

*The motions and amendment were unanimously adopted.*

### Jewish Federation.

Comrade Cannon made a report on the Jewish Federation convention, stating that the controversy in the federation has seemingly been settled and also that the federation had voted unanimously to request the CEC to give the Federation Bureau power to nominate the editors of the *Freiheit*.†

Cannon submitted the following motion:

*Motion (by Comrade Cannon):* That the CEC shall accept the proposal of the Jewish convention regarding the management of the *Freiheit* and that the Jewish Bureau make nominations.

*Amendments (by Comrade Pepper):*

1. That the CEC maintain the present form of editorial control of the *Freiheit*.

2. That the CEC disapproves of the action of Comrade Cannon in not defending the present form of editorial control of the *Freiheit* before the Jewish Federation.

*Amendment (by Comrade Cannon):* That the resolution of the Jewish Federation be incorporated in the minutes.

*Amendment (by Comrade Gitlow):* That all resolutions of the Jewish Federation convention be translated and furnished to the Political Committee.

*Amendments of Cannon and Gitlow were adopted unanimously.*

Amendments of Comrade Pepper received the following vote:

Voting in favor: Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, and Ruthenberg.

Voting against: Abern, Browder, Bittelman, Burman, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, Lore.

*[Pepper amendments defeated.]*

Motion of Comrade Cannon received the following vote:

Voting in favor: Abern, Browder, Bittelman, Burman, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, Lore.

Voting against: Ruthenberg, Pepper, Gitlow, and Lovestone.

*[Cannon motion carried.]*

### Women's Work.

Comrade Gitlow made a report on the activities of the Women's Committee in New York in building the United Council of Working Class Women and submitted the following motions:

†- Editor of the *Freiheit*, the Yiddish language daily of the WPA based in New York, at the time was Benjamin Gitlow. This was thus a very hot issue to the Pepper-Ruthenberg minority, which (correctly) sensed an initiative intending to replace Gitlow in that post. Gitlow, not particularly adept in the Yiddish language, was an unpopular editor forced on the Jewish Federation by John Pepper as a means of resolving a long-simmering factional split over the editorial position between former members of the old Jewish Communist Federation (who supported Schachno Epstein aka “Joseph Berson”) and those hailing from the old Jewish Socialist Federation (who supported M.J. Olgin). From the perspective of the Jewish Federation the move for Gitlow's elimination probably had at least as much to do with technical and aesthetic issues as the ever-present politics.

**Motion (by Comrade Gitlow):** That the CEC endorse the work of the United Council of Working Class Women and disapproves of the Jewish Federation resolution to undertake this work as a Federation project.

**Motion (by Comrade Gitlow):** It also authorizes the United Council of Working Class Women to develop its work on a national scale.

**Amendment (by Comrade Cannon):** That the material on the question be referred to the Political Committee.

**Amendment (by Comrade Ruthenberg):** That the Jewish Federation take no steps in regard to the matter until action by the CEC.

**Amendment (by Comrade Foster):** That the secretaries of the various Federations submit reports on their work among women for the information of the Political Committee.

*Foster amendment was adopted unanimously.*

*Ruthenberg amendment lost — 4 in favor, 5 against.*

*Cannon amendment adopted unanimously.*

*Gitlow motions disposed of.*

### German Federation.

**Comrade Pepper moved** that the German Federation shall be instructed to take steps to secure ownership of the Volkszeitung for the Party.

That towards this end, 40 or 50 members of the Workers Party be permitted to join the Socialist Party for three months in order to comply with the charter provision in regard to SP membership.

Comrade Lore thereupon made a statement in regard to the situation in the Volkszeitung Publishing Association.

**Amendment (by Comrade Foster):** That the CEC has heard the report of Comrade Lore that the German Bureau is making an organized effort to secure control of the Publishing Association for the purpose of changing the by-laws so as to eliminate the requirement of SP membership and the CEC instructs the German Bureau to continue this effort and to bring the Publishing Association under the full control of

the Workers Party at the earliest possible date.

*Amendment was adopted unanimously.*

Comrade Lore requested permission to bring up the question of the letter sent upon the authority of the Executive Council instructing the German Federation to stop the lectures on Telepathy and Hypnotism being given under the auspices of the German Branch and

**Motion (by Comrade Lore):** That the letter be withdrawn.

**Amendment (by Comrade Pepper):** That the CEC approve the action of the Executive Council.

**Amendment (by Comrade Dunne):** That the CEC considers the wording of the advertisement published in the Volkszeitung ill-advised and tending to give a wrong impression to the public.

**Substitute (by Comrade Cannon):** That in view of the explanation of Comrade Lore that the lecture was before an open forum as part of an effort to attract non-Party members and the subject was Psychotherapy and Hypnotism, the apprehensions of the Executive Council were unfounded.

Voting in favor of the Cannon substitute: Abern, Bittelman, Burman, Browder, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, Lore.

Voting against: Gitlow, Pepper, Ruthenberg, Lovestone.

*[Substitute motion carried.]*

### Industrial Committee

**Comrade Foster submitted a recommendation** that during his absence Comrade Johnstone be appointed Acting Secretary of TUEL.†

**Amendment (by Comrade Pepper):** That in view of the fact that Comrade Gitlow's work is not decided and if he is released from his position as editor of the *Freiheit*, he would favor his election as Acting Secretary, [consequently, that the matter be referred] to the next meeting of the Political Committee.

Motion to refer was lost by a vote of: Gitlow,

†- The absence referred to here being Foster's imminent departure for Moscow to argue the issue of the Third Party.

Pepper, Ruthenberg, and Lovestone voting for; and Abern, Bittelman, Burman, Browder, Cannon, Dunne, and Foster voting against.

*[Amendment defeated.]*

Motion to appoint Johnstone was carried by Abern, Bittelman, Burman, Browder, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, Lore. Others not voting.

*[Motion carried.]*

### IWW Committee.

Comrade Foster reported that Comrades Richards, Nowak, and Harrison George had been appointed the IWW Educational Committee by the Red International [of Trade Unions] and that a statement would be drawn up to be submitted to Comrade Lozovsky for approval, which the Committee would issue.

**Motion (by Comrade Pepper):** That the statement be submitted to the Political Committee for approval before being sent to Comrade Lozovsky.

**Motion (by Comrade Pepper):** That the IWW Committee be established as a Public Propaganda Committee in the IWW.

Comrade Foster stated the Pepper motion was the understanding of the TUEL of the matter and *the motion was thereupon withdrawn.*

The motion that the statement be approved by the Political Committee was *adopted unanimously.*

*[Motion carried.]*

Comrade Foster reported further that in Los Angeles the Carpenters Union was trying to expel TUEL members and in Toledo similar effort was being made in the Machinists Union and that the situations were being handled in accordance with the regular policies of the TUEL.

### Needle Trades (New York).

**Motion (by Comrade Pepper):** That the CEC approves of the action of the Political Committee authorizing the issuance of a statement drawing the lessons of the fight made by the Left Wing against the 5% assessment for relief of the unemployed in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, *which was adopted unanimously.*

*[Motion carried.]*

**Motion (by Comrade Foster):** That the New York Committee of the Needle Trades Section issue a statement in regard to the election in Local 2.

*Motion was adopted unanimously.*

### Injunctions.

Comrade Foster recommend that the Party undertake a campaign against the use of injunctions in labor disputes and submitted the following motions:

**Motion (by Comrade Foster):** That we shall secure reports from the DOs and CCCs [City Central Committees] of labor disputes in which injunctions are issues and shall take the initiative in organizing mass opposition and violation of such injunctions.

**Motion (by Comrade Foster):** That the CCCs and DECs shall take up work of organizing such oppositions in each instance.

*The motions were adopted unanimously.*

*[Motion carried.]*

### Reorganization of the CEC.

**Motion (by Comrade Cannon):** That Comrade Halonen substitute for Comrade Foster during his absence and Comrade Bedacht for Comrade Pepper.

*Adopted unanimously.*

*[Motion carried.]*

### Political Committee.

**Motion (by Comrade Cannon):** That the Political Committee consist of the following: Cannon, Bittelman, Dunne, Browder, Abern, Lore, Bedacht, Ruthenberg.

**Amendment (by Comrade Pepper):** To add Comrade Engdahl.

Motion to add [Engdahl] was lost, by a vote of Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, and Ruthenberg in favor; and Abern, Browder, Bittelman, Burman, Cannon, Foster, Dunne, and Lore opposed.

*[Amendment failed.]*

Cannon motion was adopted by a vote of 8 in favor and 4 not voting, Comrades Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, and Ruthenberg being those not voting.

[*Motion carried.*]

*enberg.*]

### Organization Committee.

**Motion (by Comrade Cannon):** That the Organization Committee consist of Comrades Ruthenberg, Cannon, Burman, Browder.

**Motion (by Comrade Pepper):** To add Lovestone.

On the Pepper motion, the vote was Gitlow, Lovestone, Ruthenberg, Pepper voting for; and Abern, Burman, Bittelman, Browder, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, and Lore against.

[*Motion failed.*]

Comrade Cannon's motion was carried by the vote as follows: Abern, Burman, Bittelman, Browder, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, and Lore voting for and the others not voting.

[*Motion carried.*]

**Motion (by Comrade Cannon):** That Comrade Bittelman remain in Chicago and be assigned to work of editing the magazine section of the *Daily Worker*† and other party work.

**Motion (by Comrade Cannon):** That the Organization Committee devote a meeting to the problems of the *Daily Worker*.

**Amendment (by Comrade Ruthenberg):** That Comrade Bittelman as editor of the magazine section work under the control of the editors of the *Daily Worker* [Engdahl and Dunne].

Motions were adopted by a vote of Abern, Burman, Bittelman, Browder, Cannon, Dunne, Foster, Lore voting in favor; and Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, and Ruthenberg opposed.

[*Motions carried. There is no outcome stated in the minutes as to the fate of the proposed amendment by Ruth-*

### Finnish Federation. ‡

Comrade Burman made a report on the Finnish Federation, giving an outline of the activities for the coming year. He reported that the Federation would, when moving into the new Party headquarters, reprint its stationery to read "Finnish Section of the Workers Party" in place of "Finnish Socialist Federation" although officially there is no change in its constitution.

**Motion** to approve the report was *adopted unanimously*.

### Party Name.

**Motion (by Comrade Ruthenberg):** That inasmuch as the time will come when we will be obliged to change the name of our Party to the Communist Party of America, it would be advisable to now take steps to combine the words Communist Party with Workers Party. [It was therefore moved] that we add the prefix Communist to the name of the Party and use it in our stationery and literature as Communist Workers Party.

**Amendment (by Comrade Foster):** That we ask permission of the CI to change the name as proposed by Comrade Ruthenberg.

**Amendment (by Comrade Cannon):** That Party writers be instructed to make use of the name "Communist" in writing about the Party as frequently as possible.

Voting in favor of the Cannon amendment: All members of the Committee.

[*Amendment carried.*]

Voting in favor of the Foster amendment: Abern, Bittelman, Browder, Burman, Cannon, Foster, Dunne, Lore.

†- Reference is to the weekly magazine supplement inserted into the *Daily Worker*, a slick-paper section which allowed use of better photographs and longer feature-type articles. The section was clearly patterned after the similar section of *The New York Call*, long edited by David Karsner. *The New York Times* had a similar supplement called *The Mid-Week Pictorial*.

‡- From the time of the formation of the Workers Party of America in the last days of 1921, the Finnish Federation was far and away the largest component of the organization, comprising fully 52% of the size of the entire organization in the third quarter of 1922 and approximately one-third of the membership at the time this CEC session. A separate report of the Finnish Federation was not esoteric trivia, but rather of fundamental importance to the organization. Fahle Burman, a figure not remembered in the histories of early American Communism, was in essence the liaison of the Finnish Federation on the CEC of the WPA.

Voting against: Gitlow, Lovestone, Pepper, and Ruthenberg.

*[Amendment carried.]*

Voting in favor of the Ruthenberg motion: Gitlow, Lovestone, Ruthenberg, Pepper.

Voting against: Abern, Burman, Browder, Bitelman, Cannon, Dunne, Foster.

Not voting: Lore.

*[Motion failed.]*

### **German Federation.**

Comrade Lore stated that in view of the fact that the June 17th convention [of the Farmer-Labor Party] would interfere with the date originally assigned for the convention of the German Federation, he asked that the German Federation be given permission to hold its convention in June or July.

### **Educational Work in New York.**

*Motion (by Comrade Cannon)* to refer to the Political Committee was *adopted unanimously*.

### **Minor's Resignation.**

Letter from Comrade Minor submitting his resignation as editor of *The Liberator* was read.

*Motion (by Comrade Ruthenberg):* That the resignation of Comrade Minor be not accepted.

*Motion (by Comrade Ruthenberg):* That he be granted an allowance of \$15 per week for stenographic services.

*Motions were adopted unanimously.*

Meeting then adjourned.

C.E. Ruthenberg,  
Executive Secretary.

*Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport.*

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