
Letter to Morris Hillquit at Saranac Lake, NY, from Adolph Germer in Chicago, August 3, 1918.

Morris Hillquit Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, microfilm edition, doc. 790.

Chicago, Ill., Aug. 3, 1918.

Morris Hillquit,
480 Military Rd.,
Saranac Lake, NY

Dear Morris:—

You don't know how much I regret to learn of your physical condition and the consequent news affects me as if it had been one of my own household. It is necessary that you take the situation philosophically, for to worry and grieve over it would only aggravate it. There is no need of me saying, for I am sure you thoroughly understand, that I share in the disappointment at your inability to be with us next week.† I had confidently counted on you to help steer the ship along in safe waters.‡

Indications are that we will have a pretty full representation. A few State Secretaries notified us that they would not come but since changed their mind and informed me that they will be here. This morning one of the newspaper men called me up and told me that considerable interest is manifest in the outside world in our conference. He wanted an advance state-

ment as to what the results of the meeting would be but I told him that I had nothing to say and that unlike the Democratic and Republican gatherings, those in attendance would formulate the program, instead of the bosses.

[Seymour] Stedman will be out of town until Monday [Aug. 5, 1918] so I cannot consult with him. Victor [Berger] was in town the other day and it is not likely that I will see him until the meeting. I know they will agree with me in my disapproval of your contemplation to resign from the NEC.§ I advise against it not only for fear that it might be misconstrued, but for other good and legitimate reasons. It may make an opening for disturbing elements on the NEC. As soon as I communicate with Stedman and Berger, I will have them write you their opinions.

I hope that your condition will permit us to hear from you from time to time for we are indeed anxious for your speedy recovery so that you might again join us in our work.

Yours faithfully,

Adolph Germer,
Executive Secretary

†- Reference is to the "Conference of State Secretaries and Socialist Officials" held in Chicago — a conference of State Secretaries, the 15 member National Executive Committee, a representative from each of the SPA's Language Federations, and a representative of the Young People's Socialist League. This meeting was required under the party constitution of 1917 (Article VIII) to be held annually in all years when National Conventions were not held. The only such Conference took place in 1918, as the former Article VIII was removed from the new party constitution which emerged from the 1919 Emergency National Convention.

‡- This is a reference to anticipated revision of the anti-war program of the SPA implemented by the 1917 St. Louis Emergency Convention. There was widespread belief among party members that the party's position on the war and the ensuing reconstruction period needed to be modified in the face of changed conditions, but the threat of a split over such a change loomed large. The precise phrasing of such a new document was a delicate matter — a task at which the diplomatic and levelheaded Hillquit excelled.

§- NEC member Hillquit was at Saranac Lake attempting to recuperate from tuberculosis.

Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport.

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