
Letter to the Central Executive Committee of the United Communist Party in New York from Max Bedacht [“James A. Marshall”], Representative of the UCP to ECCI in Moscow, May 13, 1921.

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May 13, 1921.

Dear Friends:—

Was in Petrograd for a few days. There I was given your letter of April 13 [1921]. It was handed to me by Leo L. [=???]. Also met Wells there. † I returned yesterday and take an opportunity which just presents itself to send you a letter *sub rosa*. Not because it contains anything that could not stand the scrutiny of a censor, but because I am sure that it will travel much faster than over the regular route.

I have already told you in my last letter, and I repeat it here, in answer to repeated urgent reminders from you, that I have been writing at least once a week to you since I left, only the 11 days on the sea excepted. Of course you must take in consideration that it is a little more than just a little report from the DO [District Organizer] of 3 to the NO [National Office], which may be posted in the next best letter box. My mail can only go by carrier and these commodities are not standing at my door and at my service but must be gotten whenever they are ready to be sent by the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs.

You ask me to give you exact description of negotiations. Well, comrades, that is what I would like to get from you, because no negotiations are carried on. That is your work now and here I am being asked every day whether I have some news about the stand of negotiation. The Board of Directors [ECCI] here has given its decision in March [1921] at the first meet-



ing I attended and that was final. No more negotiations here in spite of all the emissaries that are still arriving from our competitor [the old CPA]. Only 3 days ago another one arrived. I have already told you that it has become a crime here to mention America. I am liked here about as much as poisoned ivy. When the last cable arrived about the question of the Chairman [of the future Joint Unity Convention] I spoke to Rad. [Radek]. He told me in his sweet manner, indicating how he loves the matter at hand: “*Wir haben beschlossen, dass wir mit der Sache absolut nichts mehr*

†- The English Fabian socialist H.G. Wells published his Russian travel memoir, *Russia in the Shadows*, in 1921. Reference also could be to Hulet Wells, later prominent in the Friends of Soviet Russia organization.

zu tun haben wollen.”† Then he turned around and left me standing here like a spanked child. Then I tried to take the matter up with Zin. [Zinoviev]. He said: “We have done all we could, now it is up to you to do what you can do. We will not act any more in the matter.”

For two meetings the Board [ECCI] had all hands full with matters in the German branch office [Communist movement]. In the light of these matters our troubles seem to them like child's play. Although I differ greatly from their opinion; but it is not me that is the boss here.

In regard to the question of finances for the def. [defense]. I have taken the matter up. But I have not heard anything about it any more. You must consider that the only way I can take up the matter is to take it up with the secretary. And he has very little to say. The bigger heads I only get to see once in about 3 or 4 weeks. It is about as easy to see them as it is for a night owl to see in daytime.

My time is mostly taken up with making translations for the Comintern. Then I prepare reports to the com. [Comintern], answer questionnaires, which in some instances require the writing of a book. I make also translations for our trade union delegation.‡ I am preparing an extensive report for the general stockholders' meeting [CI World Congress]. I can assure you that we both work about 10 times more than the average standard here requires. I would send you copies of everything, but the mail service is so uncertain that I do not want to take a chance in losing these copies.

I must again impress upon you the necessity of getting at least 15 to 20 addresses so I can arrange all matters [printed publications] to be sent to you. Also of getting papers, etc., through to your representative [Bedacht]. Whatever you did send here up to now should be sent directly to your ambassador. I almost believe that newspapers, like the [NY] *Times*, [NY] *Call*, etc. could be ordered directly for Marshall, Moscow, Hotel Lux. Whomever would be here could be

“Marshall” and get that stuff. For instance our own publications. I must prepare a number of reports. I must answer questionnaires. There I need Constitution and Program. Instead of having a dozen or two of those papers containing same, I only have one paper and must copy this matter every time I need it. This is a joke. And not a very good one at that. Every representative gets papers and news from his country in bundles of papers, etc. every day. Only we do not get anything. We get a look at an American paper after the foreign office or V.Tshe.K.§ gets through with it and sends it to the reading room of the Lux. And even then we only get to see these papers not one number after the other but one of Tuesday one week and of Friday the next, and so on. This matter must be arranged for the coming man here.

You again repeat in your last communication the matter about Brown [=??] in Chicago. I want to say that if you insist upon this matter it will be impossible to stay for the [CI] Congress. That meeting will not be over in time for me to get through the necessary preparations and send the man there in time. Victor [=??] will tell you how easy it is to get away from here. If you insist on filling that date you must cable and demand Brown's [=??] appearance. Only then will I be able to arrange the matter in time.

I also want to call your attention to the disgraceful conditions in regards to Am. [American] representatives here. The Lux is full of them. You must pass a resolution demanding the immediate return of all those that want to continue to be connected with our American branch office [party]. And you must instruct your representative here to carry that decision through.

I hope that by the time you receive this letter better amalgamation is achieved. I also hope that you were successful in bringing about the desired results. I further hope that Victor [=??] will have been of great use to you in that work.

Yours,

James [Max Bedacht].

†- “We've decided that we want to have absolutely nothing more to do with the affair.”

‡- Bedacht was a native German-speaker, one of the primary languages of the Comintern.

§- VChK — the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission, also known as the “Cheka” — the secret police.

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