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# DECIDED: Not to Comply...

## Resolution of Boston Lettish Federation Branches #5, 6, and 7 on the decision to establish a Legal Political Party, December 13, 1921

*[In the second half of November of 1921, a split developed in the unified CPA over the decision of the party's leaders to proceed with great speed (and little caution) towards the establishment of a Legal Political Party (LPP). Three members of the old CPA on the governing Central Executive Committee — Charles Dirba ["C. Dow"], John Ballam ["Curtis"], and George Ashkenudzie ["Kelly"/"Henry"] — strongly dissented from this decision. On Nov. 24, 1921, Dirba, Ballam, and Ashkenudzie appealed the new line of the CEC to the Executive Committee of the Communist International for reversal of the decision. The CEC minority group, which had been meeting since mid-September as an organized faction, was brought up on charges by the 7 member majority of the CEC for violation of party discipline. A split of the party and leaders of both factions hit the road to wage a pitched battle for the allegiance of the Language Federationists who comprised the overwhelming majority of the Communist Party. The document reprinted here, which was preserved in the Comintern Archive (f. 515, op. 1, d. 75, l. 95-96), was one of the opening shots in the battle — the organized Latvian Federationists of Boston answering the CEC majority in no uncertain terms.]*

We have received an ultimatum from the majority of the CEC of our Party to legalize our underground organization.

Here is our answer:

Lettish Branches #5, 6, and 7, Section 1, SD 1, District 1 of the CPA [*i.e.* Boston] in its joint membership meeting, held December 13, 1921, by a vote of 77 in favor, 3 against, and 3 members regaining from voting

DECIDED: Not to comply with the command of the CEC majority, calling for immediate legalization of the underground Groups, but remain for the present underground as before.

The following are our chief reasons:

1. We challenge the authority of the CEC majority to speak or act in the name of the CEC of the CPA. By their autocratic and unconstitutional action in suspending (on trumped-up charges) the three minority members of the CEC they have actually SPLIT THE PARTY. After this they have authority to act in the name of the OPPORTUNISTIC FACTION of the CPA ONLY.

2. The majority of the CEC did not get its authority "by the grace of god," but from the Joint Unity Convention. This was the highest authority, as far as

this country is concerned. It has very wisely LIMITED THEIR AUTHORITY by its decisions, resolutions, program, and constitution adopted. As far as the majority of the CEC has violated all these decisions of our supreme body, we indict them for breach of party discipline, and violation of its decisions.

3. In order to decide on such an important question as formation of a new party, the majority of CEC not only failed to initiate wide discussions on this question by party membership but even ignored repeated demands of the membership for an Emergency Convention. The majority of CEC could foresee that their infamous policies would be defeated in party convention, and now they strive to reach their selfish aims by blending their faith with the noncommunistic elements.

4. Their excuses and apologies, that they are acting under the orders of the EC of the CI are rank hypocrisy. We were fortunate in getting a copy of the Theses of the Third World Congress (Moscow Edition) and can state that every page of this book is an indictment against their corrupt and opportunistic practices. It is for this reason that they still refuse to publish the Theses of the Third Congress and by doing so commit treason even against the CI, who they pretend to serve.

5. The slogan “Go to the Masses” as explained in the Theses means participation in the everyday struggle of the workers. They have never done it, except in fluent words.

6. There is nothing in the Theses about our duty to organize a LPP. (Nothing that would even suggest the liquidation of underground parties or the existence of two parties in the same country and at the same time). And while the majority of CEC maintains on this question “diplomatic silence,” their partners in the work for LPP — the honest opportunists — declare that the LPP “will become a POWERFUL AMERICAN SECTION of the THIRD INTERNATIONAL. This gives away their plans, as they have announced an agreement on most important questions. It is plain that the LPP must become the AMERICAN SECTION of the Communist International, *instead of the CP of A.*

7. The CEC majority has admitted (in the *T*— [The Toiler, *formerly* The Ohio Socialist, *the main legal English language weekly of the CPA*]) that their part-

ners in the LPP are centrists, and are opposed to the principles of the Communist International. The Communist International commands us to fight and to expose them. The CEC majority, on the contrary, is engaged in building of an asylum for an insignificant group of homeless centrists that left lately the Socialist Party and have no place to go to. In so doing, the majority of CEC has betrayed the CP of A.

In the light of the above considerations we made our decision, and here once more we want to emphasize our solidarity with the three members of the minority group of the CEC and their adherents. We will stand firm by the defenders of communistic principles against the disorganizing and opportunistic tendencies of the majority of CEC.

The CI has not acted yet on the appeal of the minority of the CEC on this question. We are confident that the CI will fully endorse our stand, as soon as it will get acquainted with the real situation in this country and the plans of the CEC majority for the LPP.

*Edited by Tim Davenport, who wrote the introduction.*

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