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# Letter to L.E. Katterfeld in Moscow from Jay Lovestone in New York, Feb. 11, 1922 [fragment]

Document in the Comintern Archive, RGASPI, f. 515, op. 1, d. 100, ll.

Feb. 11th, 1922 6 2/2 2/4 2/5 — 2/17 2/19 1/2 1/4 1/3, ofic.  
Weekly letter no. 2 cat. [official organ] of the Jewish customers of the 1/  
21 5/1. The air is thick with rumors. We are now

Dear Friend [Katterfeld],

Your first 7 reports received. Will send you a complete report on 2/10 1/3 1/9 as soon as our salesmen delegated to take charge of this matter submit their quotations.†

Am sending you under separate cover a complete report of the status of yours and newly arrived friend's [Foster's?] midwestern stock.‡ Blstr. [Robert Minor] has just completed the circuit. He has visited every section of our territory and has gotten good results. A rep. of the Board of Directors [ECCI] accompanied him.§

Your message of exoneration received and of value. Our three former shareholders are now on the war path. In Territory 3 [Philadelphia] they are interfering with our nucl [=???] work. Our stockholders offer them cooperation on an equal basis. They rejected this and have carried the fight into open territory.Δ

In Territory 1 [Boston] their Jewish customers have published a price bul. [newspaper] called the 2/

6 2/2 2/4 2/5 — 2/17 2/19 1/2 1/4 1/3, ofic. cat. [official organ] of the Jewish customers of the 1/21 5/1. The air is thick with rumors. We are now told that Johnnie [Ballam] is on his way to shake hands with you [in Moscow]. We trust that you will give him a rousing welcome. Their [the Opposition's] whole campaign is now aimed at smashing the sales of our old [CPA] and especially new [WPA] line of goods.

Our own Jewish friends are having the time of their lives with their newlyweds [Workers Council group]. Unless we secure funds for daily sales [the daily *Freiheit*] we are very likely to strike a serious snag in this field. Keep this in mind.

Friend Grey [Karlis Janson?] is moving North [to Canada] in 2 days. We are fitting him out as best we can. Balstr. [Minor] will welcome the Northern No. 1 [Communist Party of Canada] stockholders gathering [convention]. On the whole this situation seems rather promising.

The polish shipment has arrived in good shape. It is being disposed of in its own territory.β

The enemy [DoJ] has succeeded in breaking through our service in sectors 6 [Detroit] and 11 [Pittsburgh]. In the former our chief sales agent is taking a

†- This document seems to use the variant of the fractions code known as “code Q” or “code Quebec” in party lingo. The code key for this particular code variant has not been solved of this writing, but it is known that 1/3 indicates the letter P. The first paragraph is probably a reference to the budget of the newly formed “LPP” (Legal Political Party), the “WPA” (Workers Party of America). Jay Lovestone was particularly adept in cloaking his communications in the terms of business correspondence and his letters are the most difficult to interpret of any of the various Executive Secretaries or Moscow Reps of the CPA.

‡- Possibly a reference to the Chicago-based Trade Union Educational League of William Z. Foster.

§- Reference is to a tour in attempt to liquidate the split of the Central Caucus-CPA Opposition.

Δ- Reference to the CEC Minority who anchored the Central Caucus-CPA Opposition: John Ballam, George Ashkenuzi, and Charles Dirba. The paragraph is an apparent reference to a feud in the “open” Friends of Soviet Russia, then engaged in a massive fund-raising effort on behalf of famine victims in Soviet Russia. Lovestone seems to indicate the Opposition rejected collaboration on an equal basis and took the feud public.

β- Seemingly a reference to Polish-language literature having been received successfully.

vacation in order to save himself from hospital treatment. In the latter our man is actually tied up in the enemy's camp.† We have a hard sale ahead of us here. One of our local sales agents is suspected. He has as a result been disconnected from our firm. Because of this situation we are doubling our insurance policies [precautions]. We have withdrawn from circulation the Jan. No. 6 price list (which was sent to you) as a consequence of the increasing signs of a strong competition.‡ A revised price list [new issue] containing no firm trade formulas or secrets is in the process of formation.

We are also considering increased division of labor in order to protect our sales of old [CPA] and new [WPA] goods and to build up both.

We are holding many sessions of the unemployed salesmen. On Abe's Birthday there will be an open air celebration on the waterfront of our city. Associations of these salesmen have been set up in many of the large cities.

We are having certain difficulties in the formation of a new relief service which as a part of the 2/17 1/3 2/10 — 2/1 2/2 2/12 stands ...§

\* \* \*

†- The records of the Department of Justice's Bureau of Investigation (NARA collection M-1085) indicate that they had a spy, party pseudonym "Ryan," in the role of Pittsburgh SDO dating back to days of the UCP. This individual was even elected a delegate to the May 1921 Woodstock Unity Convention and provided an exhaustive report of the proceedings there. Following the 1921 merger to form the unified CPA, "Ryan" seems to have changed his pseudonym to "C. Williams" (pseudonym changes being common after conventions) and to have been appointed the SDO for Youngstown, Ohio, part of the Cleveland District.

Lovestone here seems to have pegged its Pittsburgh DO, pseudonym "James Curley" as a DoJ spy. Circumstantial evidence in the DoJ material — the fact that "Curley" was being reported upon to the DoJ by "Ryan," combined with the fact that "Curley" hailed from the old CPA and the DoJ's mole was a former member of the UCP — indicates that this was a misidentification, however. In any event, on March 27, 1922, the CEC of the CPA approved "Jim Bruce," a member of the African Blood Brotherhood, as the Pittsburgh DO for the organization. It is unclear whether there was another Acting DO on an interim basis between "Curley" falling into disfavor and the appointment of "Bruce." It should additionally be noted that the removal of "Curley" may not have been completely the result of suspicion of his allegiance, as on Jan. 8, 1922, the Pittsburgh section of the CPA met and discussed conditions in the district and, citing inefficiency, "unanimously agreed that the district organizer, James Curley, is not the kind of a man who ought to represent the Pittsburgh district; in other words he is unfit for the position of organizer." [Letter to CEC signed by SDO "F. Stein" and Section Organizer "Paul Harris," Comintern Archive, RGASPI, f. 515, op. 1, d. 112, l. 1.]

‡- The Central Caucus-CPA Opposition claimed that the first version of *The Communist* No. 6 was "suppressed." This reference to a "No. 6" from January 1922 seems to substantiate this accusation. Instead, a "No. 6-7" dated "February-March 1922" was published by the CPA. Lovestone's mention to "strong competition" is a reference to the Opposition, which designated itself as the official "Communist Party of America" at an emergency convention held in New York in early January.

§- The first page terminates here. The final page is missing from the archival file.

*Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport.*

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