SOUTH AFRICA and the COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL:

A Documentary History

VOLUME I

SOCIALIST PILGRIMS TO BOLSHEVIK FOOTSOLDIERS 1919–1930

EDITORS:

Apollon Davidson • Irina Filatova
Valentin Gorodnov • Sheridan Johns



This publication is a comprehensive selection of unique documents pertaining to the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) from the formerly closed archives of the Communist International, a powerful international organisation that operated from Moscow in 1919–1943.

These documents reveal the complex history of relations between South African and Moscow communists in the 1920s and 1930s and disclose both official and covert methods that the Comintern used to control and manipulate the international communist movement. No other publication of this nature devoted to relations between the Comintern and African countries exists.

The documents also shed light on debates within the CPSA, on internal problems of the party and on its strengths and weaknesses. The issues in question, such as the CPSA's approach to the nationality problem in South Africa, its understanding of the correlation between class and colour in South African society, of the nature of the country's black bourgeoisie, and its vision of the goals and character of the national liberation movement have not lost their importance even today. Since no other archives of the CPSA – the only communist party in Africa south of the Sahara – have survived, these documents are particularly significant.

This publication is an invaluable source for all those interested in the history of South Africa in the twentieth century and in the history of the international communist movement.

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SOUTH AFRICA AND THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL: A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

Volume I
Socialist Pilgrims to Bolshevik Footsoldiers
1919–1930

Institute of Universal History,
Russian Academy of Sciences

'To-day the Comintern is an engine, a conquering force . . . It is a power which is determined to win the world in our day. It should be our privilege, not to stand on a Cape Town dunghill and crow that we know better, but to march in solidarity with it to win the world victory we all desiderate . . .'

S.P. Bunting, 1923

To Norman with great admiration and gratitude for friendship

Irina

1 October 2003 Cape Town.

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Volume I
Socialist Pilgrims to Bolshevik Footsoldiers
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APOLLON DAVIDSON, IRINA FILATOVA, VALENTIN GORODNOV, SHERIDAN JOHNS

Foreword by

ALEXANDER O. CHUBARIYAN

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FOREWORD

South Africa and the Communist International: A Documentary History is part of the series of publications of documents from the archives of the Communist International, an international communist organisation which in the 1920s and 1930s controlled and directed the communist movement throughout the world. The Communist International, or Comintern, operated from Moscow but covered the globe with a network of its affiliates and front organisations. The Institute of Universal History of the Russian Academy of Sciences has been working on the publication of Comintern's documents since late 1991 when the archives of this organisation – part of the former Soviet Party Archive – were first opened for researchers. Several volumes dealing with different communist parties have already been published, both in Russian and in English, and more are in the pipeline.

These publications reveal an entirely new aspect of the world history of the 20th century. The existence of the Comintern and some of its activities had been known to historians but its real significance and the real meaning of its policy came to light only with the new evidence emerging from the archives.

Inevitably, there has been a huge academic interest in these publications. For the first time historians from many countries have obtained access to the sanctum of the factory of communist ideology and its mentality and methods in the key decades of the 1920s and 1930s. Revelations from the Comintern's archives are bound to change the picture of the history of the 20th century as we knew it. Dozens of historians from all over the world came to work in the archives, and a huge international project aimed at computerising the entire archives of the Comintern is under way. Numerous conferences, seminars and other academic gatherings devoted to the Comintern in light of the new documents have taken place. Publications of documents on the activities of a number of the Comintern's organisations in different countries are being prepared by our colleagues in those countries. On the basis of all these publications and of the archival materials still unpublished but now available historians have the opportunity of reconstructing not only a hitherto closed history of the Comintern but also more informed versions of national and regional histories, of the personalities involved and of the global world order of the time.

Russian historians have a special interest in the history of the Comintern. Not only does it reveal the real background to Soviet foreign policy and its international relationships of the time but it also enables us to understand the history of the Soviet communist party itself, the mentality of the Soviet communist elite and its relations with its counterparts abroad, the mechanism of its influence internationally and the reasons for the lasting impact of its ideology and methods.

This publication offers a selection of documents that cover one of the least studied areas of the activities of the Comintern; its policy in South Africa. This region, geographically very distant from the Soviet borders, had a Communist Party from 1921 on, and this party maintained close relations with Moscow for decades. The Comintern was the organisation which introduced and mediated the party's experiences of the Soviet world, and there is no doubting the Comintern's profound and long lasting effect on its South African section.

The South African party influenced the Comintern too. It certainly drew the attention of the leaders of the Comintern to what was then called 'the Negro question' and 'the colonial problem'. Party representatives participated in the Comintern's discussions on race and nationality, on the interpretation of the political and social situation on the African continent and on the strategy and tactics of the communist movement in colonial countries. They did not themselves devise the policy of the Comintern but contributed to the opinions and views of those who did. The documents that the reader finds in these two volumes shed light on all these discussions both within the Comintern and within the South African party.

The publication also gives an opportunity of a better understanding of the social and political scene in South Africa in the period between the two world wars, on the position and views of the urbanised African population and of the emerging African intelligentsia. Party documents, private and official letters from the party members to Moscow, reports by the Comintern's emissaries to the region – documents that formed the basis of the opinions of Comintern's top leadership – give a detailed account of the position of the South African party and within it, and of the situation in the region as a whole.

All this makes the publication an invaluable resource to both historians of the communist movement and to students of African history.

Alexander O. Chubariyan
Academician,
Director of the Institute of Universal History,
Russian Academy of Sciences

A NOTE ON THE DOCUMENTS

The documents are arranged in chronological order.

Each document bears an editors' title, followed by a date and in some cases an indication that the document is reproduced in extracts only. If the date has been established by the editors it is put in square brackets (e.g., [March–April 1921]). The original title of the document, if there is one, is reproduced after this.

An addressee (if a document has one) is put next to the left margin, irrespective of where it is positioned in the original. Similarly, the date, the classification note ('confidential', 'strictly confidential' and so on) and the name or the address of the sender are put next to the right margin irrespective of their position in the original.

Each document is followed by an archival citation, the indication of the language of the original and a description of the document (for example 'Typed, copy'). Where appropriate, this is followed by a description of clerical and archival notations, inscriptions, stamps, and so on.

Other notations in the original, such as remarks, comments, exclamation or question marks, single, double or triple lines in the margins of the original are described in the footnotes that follow.

The format of the documents included in these volumes is intended to reflect their character as they were found in the archives. It should be stressed that the original documents were often prepared in a hurry, sometimes by people who were unfamiliar with South African realities, place names, and so on. Some were heavily edited drafts, others were written by people whose English was poor – this added to the fact that Comintern jargon generally does not translate into English well. We have attempted to reproduce the text of the documents as close to the original as possible.

Crossed-out words and sentences have been reproduced and crossed out as they are in the original. Inserted words and sentences have been reproduced, again, as they are in the original, above the line (for example, 'Com. ~~Raymond~~ Roux refuses to come . . . ').

Stylistic errors have been retained. Orthographic, grammatical and typographical errors have been kept. In cases where the correct word, place name or name was difficult to guess a footnote indicating the correct spelling was added.

Many other inaccuracies, slips, mistakes, errors, unclear phrases and variant readings of the documents are also indicated in the footnotes but we could not do this in every case.

The following typographical notations are used to indicate:

- Words and phrases underlined in pencil in the original are underlined this way in the publication.

- Words and phrases underlined in pen in the original are underlined this way in the publication.
- Words and phrases written in pencil in the original are underlined this way in the publication.
- Words and phrases written in pen in the original (including original signatures in the documents) are underlined this way in the publication.

Documents originally handwritten are described accordingly but not underlined (including original signatures in the documents).

Footnotes by authors of documents are indicated by [x].

Comments and notes by the editors are indicated by numbers. They are positioned at the bottom of corresponding pages.

GLOSSARY OF SELECTED NAMES[1]

Abramov, Alexander L. (1895–1937). Soviet communist. Head of *OMS*[2] in 1926–34. Executed in GULAG.

Adler, Ray. South African communist from Johannesburg.

Alexander, Rachel (Ray) (another surname: Simons) (1914–). South African communist. Born in Latvia, emigrated to South Africa aged fifteen. Prominent activist, organiser and leader of communist and trade union movement in South Africa. In 1938–50 – member of PB of *CPSA*. Banned from trade union activities in 1953. In 1954 elected to South African Parliament by Africans in the Western Cape but barred from taking her seat under the Suppression of Communism Act. Together with her husband, prominent South African communist Jack Simons, emigrated to Zambia where continued trade union and party work. Returned to South Africa after legalisation of *South African Communist Party* and of *ANC*. Was long time member of CC of *SACP*. Author of: *Job Reservation and the Trade Unions* (with Jack Simons), 1959; *Class and Colour in South Africa* (with Jack Simons), Middlesex, Baltimore, 1969. (See: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 3.)

Amter, Israel (alias: John Ford) (1881–1954). American communist. In 1922–45 – member of CC of *Communist Party of USA*, in 1923–5 – representative of *CPUSA* in *ECCI*. Active in discussions on 'Negro question' in *Comintern* in the 1920s.

Andreiev, Matvei Zakharovich (1888–?). Soviet communist. In 1938–9 – Head of Personnel Department of *ECCI*.

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1. This glossary provides maximum possible information about previously unknown or little known personalities who were connected with South African activities of the *Comintern*. References to more detailed biographical data about such personalities are provided where these exist. In some cases it proved impossible to find any information or even to ascertain personalities behind the names mentioned in the documents. Information about better known historical figures is limited to their activities in the *Comintern* or in connection with it. Places of birth or death are mentioned only if they had a particular meaning in the context of the *Comintern*, for example if a particular person was a Russian émigré. The editors felt it appropriate to mention cases of persecution of adherents and followers of the *Comintern* either by the organisation itself or by Soviet authorities. To allow the readers the easiest way of using the glossary all names in it are listed as they are mentioned in the text, irrespective of whether these are real names, aliases, or both. In case both a name and an alias are mentioned in the text an alias is referred to a real name if the latter could be established.
2. Names of organisations and personalities italicised in the glossary have glossary entries of their own.

Andrews, William Henry (Bill) (1870–1950). South African communist and trade union leader. Founder member and leader of *International Socialist League* and of *CPSA*. In 1921–5 – Secretary of *CPSA*, in 1923 – member of *ECCI*, in 1947–50 – Chairman of *CPSA*. In 1925–32 – secretary of South African Association of Employees' Organisations and its successor organisations, South African Trade Unions Congress and *South African Trades and Labour Council*. In 1931 was accused of 'social chauvinism' and expelled from *CPSA*. He was later reinstated. (See: R.K. Cope. *Comrade Bill. The Life and Times of W.H. Andrews, Workers' Leader*. Cape Town [1943]; *Dictionary of South African Biography*, Pretoria, 1972, vol. 1, p. 17.)

Angaretis (real name: Zigmas Ionovich Aleksa) (1882–1940). Latvian communist. Representative of the Communist Party of Latvia in *ECCI*. Secretary of the International Control Commission of *ECCI* (1926–35). Executed during purges.

Arnot, Robin Page (1890–1986). British communist, Member of Presidium of *ECCI*, Deputy Head of *Eastern Secretariat*. Chairman of *Negro Bureau*, 1928. Participated in South African Commission of *Anglo-American Secretariat*.

Avigdor, Georgy (George) A. (real name: Yehiel Kossoi) (1892–1938). Communist, *Comintern* official. Born in Ukraine. Member of Bund (Jewish socialist party in Russia). Emigrated to the USA before World War I. Secretary of Communist Party of Palestine, representative of Communist Party of Egypt at *ECCI*, official of Middle Eastern Section of *Eastern Secretariat*. Executed during purges.

Bach, Lazar (aliases: Yakov Yuzhin; Jacob Yuzhin; Jack Yuzhin; Eugene) (1906–41). Latvian and South African communist. Born in Latvia, emigrated to South Africa. From 1931 – member of CC of *CPSA*. In 1934–5 studied at *KUTV*. Participated at 7th Congress of *Comintern*. Perished in *GULAG*.

Baker, Charles. British Marxist and South African communist from Transvaal. In mid 1920s – director of *CPSA* school in Johannesburg. Activist of anti-religious movement, Rationalist Press Association, and of *League of African Rights*.

Ballinger, William George (1892–1974). British and South African politician and trade union organiser. Came to South Africa in 1928 as an adviser to *ICU* and was instrumental in its demise. Founder member of South Africa's Liberal Party. Author of: *Race and Economics in South Africa*, 1934. (See: *Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. V, Pretoria, 1987, pp. 25–6; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 5.)

Banderas, D. (real name: Stanislav S. Pestkovsky; other aliases: Diego Ortega, Andrei Volsky) (1893–1937). Soviet communist. Born in Poland. Emigrated to

England, took part in October 1917 revolution and in civil war in Russia. Delegate to 2nd Congress of *Comintern*, member of Presidium of *ECCI*, official of *Krestintern* and *MOPR*. Head of Department of East and Colonies of *Krestintern* (1930). Executed during purges.

Barlin, Sam. South African communist and trade unionist. Active member of *International Socialist League*. Member of *CPSA*, delegate to 3rd Congress of *Comintern*.

Basch, M. South African communist from Johannesburg.

Basner, Hiam Meyer (Hyman, Hymie, Harry) (1903 or 1905–77). South African communist from Johannesburg and Cape Town. Born in Latvia. Emigrated to South Africa in 1912. Trained as attorney in USA in 1922–7. Joined *CPSA* in 1933, resigned in 1939. Elected to Senate as Native Representative from Transvaal in 1942, resigned in 1947. Worked for Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana, 1962–6. After Nkrumah's ouster emigrated to Britain. (See: Miriam Basner. *Am I an African? Political Memoirs of H. M. Basner*. Johannesburg, 1993; *Dictionary of South African Biography*, Vol. V, Pretoria, 1987, pp. 25–6; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 6.)

Batwa, Jane. South African communist, Party organiser in Cradock. Provincial secretary of the *Independent ANC*. Was candidate to study at *KUTV* but Mpama was substituted for her.

Bell, Thomas (1882–1940). British communist. Member of the CC and PB of *Communist Party of Great Britain* and its representative at *ECCI*. Member of Presidium and Politsecretariat of *ECCI*. Head of *Anglo-American Secretariat*, 1928–32.

Bennett (Bennet), A. See: D. Petrovsky.

Berman-Yurin, Konon B. (alias: Hans Stauer) (?–1936). In 1921–3 – member of the Communist Party of Latvia. In 1923–33 – member of the German Communist Party. From 1933 – in the USSR. Perished in GULAG.

Billings, J. See: O. Huiswoud.

Bittelman, Alexander (1890–1982). American Communist. Born in Russia. Member of CC and of PB of CC of *Communist Party of USA*. Delegate to 4th Congress of *Comintern*.

Bolton (James) (1900–?). South African trade unionist. Secretary of the Durban branch of Textile Workers' Union.

Borodin Mikhail M. (real name Gruzenberg) (1884–1951). Soviet communist. Official of *ECCI* and of People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. Representative of *ECCI* in China. Perished in GULAG.

Botha, Gideon. South African communist and trade unionist. Member of *International Socialist League*. Secretary of *Friends of Soviet Union*. In 1931–3 went through a period of disappointment in *CPSA* and participated in creation of Workers' and Farmers' Bond, organisation of white unemployed, then returned to *CPSA*.

Boydell, Thomas (1882–1966). Activist of *South African Labour Party*. Member of South African Parliament, later minister and member of Senate. Author of *My Beloved Country*, Cape Town, 1959.

Bradley (Ben). British communist. In late 1920s – representative of *Communist Party of Great Britain* to Communist Party of India. Participated in discussions on *CPSA* in *CPGB* in 1930s.

Brandler, Heinrich (1881–1939). German communist. In 1921–5 was a prominent figure in *Comintern*. In 1929 expelled.

Brigader, Arvid A. (?–1937). Soviet communist of Latvian origin. From 1928 – Head of Department of Translations of *ECCI* (after *G. Gerisch*). In 1935–7 official of Personnel Department of *ECCI*, responsible for Anglo-American countries, including South Africa. Executed during purges.

Brockway, Fenner (1888–1988). British Socialist. Prominent member of Independent Labour Party until 1945. Labour Party member of Parliament, 1929–31, 1950–64, member of House of Lords, 1964–88. Active supporter of anti-colonial organisations. Chairman of British Centre for Colonial Freedom, 1942–7. In 1945 one of founders of Congress of Peoples Against Imperialism. Chairman of Movement for Colonial Freedom, 1954–67.

Browder, Earl R. (1891–1973). American communist. In 1930–45 – General Secretary of *Communist Party of USA*. In 1946 expelled. Member of Politsecretariat and of Presidium of *ECCI*.

Buirsky, Solomon (Solly) (1892–?). South African communist. Born in Lithuania.

Bukharin, Nikolai Ivanovich (1888–1938). Soviet political leader. In 1917–34 – member of CC of *AUCP(B)*, in 1924–9, candidate member of PB. Member of Presidium and of Politsecretariat of *ECCI*. Executed during purges.

Bunting, Rebecca (maiden name: Notlowitch) (1888–1970). South African communist. Born in Lithuania. Emigrated to South Africa before World War I. Founder member of *International Socialist League*. Prominent member of *CPSA*. Delegate to 6th Congress of *Comintern*. Wife of *S.P. Bunting*.

Bunting, Sidney Percival (1873–1936). South African communist. Founder member and one of leaders of *International Socialist League* and of *CPSA*. Was among first South African socialists and communists to speak up in support of rights of black population. In 1918 was prosecuted for his role in strike of sanitary workers of Johannesburg ('bucket strike'). Delegate to 4th and 6th Congresses of *Comintern*. In 1931 expelled from *CPSA* and accused of Trotskyism, opportunism and white chauvinism. (See: E. Roux. *S.P. Bunting. A Political Biography*. Cape Town, 1944, 1993; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 13–15.)

Campbell, John Ross (1896–1969). British communist. Member of PB of *Communist Party of Great Britain*. Member of *ECCI*. Alternative delegate for *CPSA* to 4th Congress of *Comintern*. Delegate to 7th Congress of *Comintern*. Was closely involved with matters of *CPSA* through 1930s.

Champion, Allison Wessels George (1893–1975). South African trade unionist and politician. Secretary of Natal branch of *ICU*. In 1928 broke with *ICU* to form *ICU yase Natal*. Activist of *ANC*. In 1942–51 was member of Native Representative Council. (See: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 1. Pretoria, 1995, pp. 40–3; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1997, pp. 18–19.)

Chapman, T. South African communist from Benoni.

Chattopadhaya, Virendranath (nickname: Chatto) (1880–1937). Born in India, from 1927 – member of Communist Party of Germany. Member of Secretariat of *League Against Imperialism* (1927–31). Senior Researcher at Academy of Sciences of USSR (1934–5). Executed during purges.

Chemodanov, Vasily Tarasovich (1903–37).[3] Soviet communist. In 1930–3 – member of Politsecretariat of *ECCI*. In 1935–8 – candidate member of ECCI. Member of leadership of *KIM*. Executed during purges.

Chicherin, Georgy Vasilievich (1872–1936). Soviet diplomat. Member of Party of Socialist Revolutionaries and later of *RCP(B)*. In 1918–30 – People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

Clark, George (real name: Georgy Samuilovich Shkliar) (1895–1941). Born in Russia. From 1919 – American, and from 1928 – Soviet communist. One of

3. Both dates, that of Chemodanov's death and his expulsion from ECCI, come from an authoritative publication, G. Adimbekov, E. Shakhnazarova, K. Shirinia. *Organisational Structure of the Comintern*. Moscow, Rospen, 1997, pp. 190, 275. This may mean either that the execution was carried out before Chemodanov was excluded from the ECCI or that the exact date of the execution is unknown and was thus attributed generally to the 1937 purge.

*ECCI*s emissaries to South Africa (1930). Official of *ECCI*, student at *MLSh*. During World War II – officer of Soviet Army. Perished in battle for Moscow.

Cohen, D. South African communist from Johannesburg.

Cohen, E. South African communist from Johannesburg.

Cohen, L. South African communist from Johannesburg, possibly Leslie Cohen (1916–?).

Cornelius, Hester Elizabeth (1907–78). South African trade unionist. During 1930s one of leaders of Garment Workers' Union in Transvaal. In 1960s – national organiser of that Union. In 1933 visited USSR. (See: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 1. Pretoria, 1995, pp. 50–2.)

Cornelius, Johanna Catharina Jacoba (1912–74). South African trade union organiser. During 1930s leader of Garment Workers' Union in Transvaal together with *E. Sachs*. From 1952 – general secretary of that Union. In 1933 spent a month in the USSR. (See: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 1. Pretoria, 1995, pp. 50–2.)

Crawford, Archibald (1861–1924). South African militant trade unionist and socialist.

Cresswell, Colonel Frederick Hugh Page (1866–1948). South African politician. Founder member and leader of *South African Labour Party*. From 1924 to 1933 – Minister of Defence and Labour in *National Party–SALP* government.

Danchin, Victor (alias: William Johns) (1902–?). South African communist and trade unionist. Joined *CPSA* in 1921. One of leaders of Union of Furniture Workers of South Africa. In 1928–30 – student at *MLSh*.

Davidson, Mary. See: B. du Toit.

Demar, Victor W. (real name: Victor Borisovich Vaksov) (1896–?). Soviet communist and trade unionist. In 1927–8 – official of *Anglo-American Secretariat* and of Organisational Department of *ECCI*.

Den Bakker, Jacob (1892–?). South African communist. Prominent member of *International Socialist League*, member of EC of *CPSA*. Delegate to 3rd Congress of *Comintern*.

Dennis, Eugene (other aliases: Russel, Tim Ryan; real name: Francis X. Waldron) (1904–61). American communist. In 1946–61 – General Secretary, Chairman of *Communist Party of USA*. In 1930s functionary of *ECCI*. In 1932–3 – emissary of *ECCI to CPSA*. (See: Peggy Dennis. *The Autobiography of an American Communist: A Personal View of a Political Life, 1925–75*. Westport, 1977.)

Diamond, Irma. South African communist.

Diamond (Dyamond), Issy (1899–1971). South African communist from Johannesburg. Born in Russia.

Diaz, José Ramos (1895–1942). Spanish communist, leader of Communist Party of Spain.

Dimitrov (Dimitroff), Georgi (1882–1949). Bulgarian communist, leader of Communist Party of Bulgaria. In 1935–43 – General Secretary of *ECCI*.

Doriot, Jaques (1898–1945). French communist, later anti-communist. Member of CC of French Communist Party (FCP). In 1925–34 was deputy of FCP in French parliament. Head of Colonial Commission of FCP. Represented FCP at numerous *ECCI* meetings. Delegate to 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Congresses of *Comintern*. Expelled from the FCP in 1934. Became increasingly sympathetic to fascism. After Nazi occupation of France organised French units and fought on Russian front. Killed during Allied air raid in Germany.

Douglas. South African communist. Party organiser in Pinetown.

Dryburgh, David Livingstone (1889–?). South African communist.

Dube, John (1871–1946). South African politician, educator, journalist, church leader and author. From 1912 to 1917 – first President of South African Native National Congress (later *ANC*). Remained President of Natal branch of *ANC* until 1945. Supported ousting *Josiah Gumede* as President of *ANC* in 1930. (See: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 24–6.)

Du Bois, William Edward Burghardt (1868–1963). American political activist, historian, sociologist. Initiator and one of leaders of Pan-African Congress movement. One of leaders of National Association for Advancement of Coloured People. Late in life joined *Communist Party of USA*.

Dunbar, Andrew (1879–1964). South African radical socialist and left communist. Member of *International Socialist League*, expelled in 1918. Founder member of Communist League, then of first Communist Party of South Africa which was not recognised by *Comintern*.

Dunne, William F. (1887–1953). American communist. Member of *ECCI* and of Organisational Bureau of *ECCI*. Member of *Negro Commission*. In 1946 was expelled from *Communist Party of USA* for left deviations.

Du Toit, Bettie (Elizabeth) (alias: Mary Davidson; another surname: Cachalia) (1910–). South African communist and trade unionist. Student at *KUTV* in 1936–7. (See: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of*

African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 27.)

Dutt, Palme (1896–1974). British communist. In 1924–36 resided in Brussels and worked closely with Comintern. Prominent spokesmen of *Communist Party of Great Britain* on colonial issues, particularly on India.

Emerich (Emmerich) James William (1910–?). South African communist and trade unionist from Cape Town. In 1937 – unsuccessful candidate for Parliament on ticket of *South African Labour Party*.

Ercoli, M. (real name: Palmiro Togliatti) (1893–1964). Italian communist. General secretary of Communist Party of Italy. In the 1930s – member of *ECCI*.

Eugene. See: L. Bach.

Farmer, James (real name: Roy Mahoney). American communist. Was among first black American students at KUTV in 1925. Member of *Negro Commission* and then of *Negro Bureau*.

Findlay, George (1897–1978). South African communist from Pretoria. Joined *CPSA* in late 1930s, drifted away from it after World War II.

First, Julius. South African communist and businessman. Father of prominent communist Ruth First.

First, Matilda (1900–6). South African communist. Wife of *Julius First*, mother of Ruth First.

Fisher, Percy. South African militant trade unionist killed by government troops in the Rand mineworkers' strike of 1922.

Fleet, Ronald. See: J.B. Marks.

Flior, S. (nickname: Jack) (1915–96). South African communist from Johannesburg. Born in Latvia. Emigrated to South Africa in 1932. Active in *Jewish Workers Club*. Served in International Brigade in Spain in late 1930s. (See: Immanuel Sutter, ed. *Cutting Through the Mountain: Interviews with South African Jewish Activists*. London, 1997, pp. 289–305.)

Florin, Wilhelm (1894–1944). German communist. Representative of Communist Party of Germany at *ECCI*. In 1932–43 – member of Secretariat of *ECCI*.

Ford, James (1893–1957). American communist. Candidate for vice-president of USA on ticket of *Communist Party of USA* in 1932 and 1936. Member of EC of *Profintern* and of General Council of *League Against Imperialism*. Studied at *MLSh*. Member of *Negro Commission* and then of *Negro Bureau*.

Fried, Dedijer (?), or **Fried, Eugenius** (1900–43). It proved impossible to ascertain which of these two people is mentioned in documents. Both were officials of *Organisational Department* of *ECCI*.

Gaivoronsky, Fedor Stepanovich (1904–41). Soviet communist. Member of staff of *NIANKP*. Author of articles on South Africa and on 'Negro question' in USA.

Gallacher, William (1881–1965). British communist. Member of CC of *Communist Party of Great Britain*. Member of Presidium and of Politsecretariat of *ECCI*. Participated in discussions on South Africa in *Anglo-American Secretariat* in 1927–8.

Galvin, Isidoro (1908–?). South African communist. Born in Lithuania.

Garvey, Marcus (1887–1940). American politician and international public figure. Born in Jamaica. Emigrated to the USA in 1916. Deported in 1925. Subsequently lived in Jamaica and England. Ideologist of black nationalism, author of slogans 'Africa for the Africans' and 'Back to Africa'. Founder of *United Negro Improvement Association* in Jamaica in 1914.

Gerisch, Grigory Moiseievich (1895–1937). Soviet communist. In late 1920s – Head of Translations Bureau of Secretariat of *ECCI*. In 1928 – Head of Department of Translations of *ECCI* (before *A. Brigader*), then Head of Bureau of Secretariat of *ECCI*. Executed during purges.

Gerngross, Georgy Yevgenievich (pseudonym: Yug) (1892–1937). Russian Africanist. Was closely associated with *NIANKP*. Author of first Soviet book on South Africa (Yug. *The Union of South Africa*. Moscow, 1931, in Russian) and of books and many articles on Africa. Executed during purges.

Gibarti, Louis (another alias: Vladislav Kaminski; real name: Laszlo Dobos) (1895–1967). Hungarian Communist. In 1926–7 was Secretary of *League Against Imperialism*. Agent of *Comintern*. Official of *International Labour Defence*.

Glass, C. Frank (1901–88). South African communist and trade unionist. Party organiser and administrator. Secretary of Cape Town branch of *CPSA*. Resigned from *CPSA* in 1925 to join *South African Labour Party*. Secretary of Tailors' Union, treasurer of South African Association of Employees' Organisations, activist of *ICU*. Possibly returned to *CPSA* as he is mentioned among those expelled from it in 1931. Became Trotskyist.

Goldman, Abe. South African communist.

Gomas (Gomaz, Gomes, Gomez), John Stephen (Johnny) (1901–79). South African communist and trade unionist. One of leaders of *CPSA* and of *ICU*. Expelled from *ICU* in 1926 together with other communists. Expelled from *CPSA* in 1933 for championing co-operation with non-communist groups. Became increasingly bitter about *CPSA* and developed strong anti-white sentiment. Eventually joined Pan-African Congress. (See: Doreen Musson. *Johnny Gomas, Voice of the Working Class: A Political Biography*. Cape Town,

1989; *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 1. Pretoria, 1995, pp. 80–4; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 33.)

Gool, Zainunnissa (nickname: Cissie) (1900–63). South African communist from Cape Town in late 1930s. In 1938 elected to PB of *CPSA*. Drifted away from *CPSA* in the 1940s. In 1935 became founding member and first president of National Liberation League. From 1938 until her death represented District Six on Cape Town City Council. (See: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 34.)

Green, Albert. See: E.S. Sachs.

Green, W. South African communist.

Greenwood. See: E. Mofutsanyana.

Grey. South African communist from Johannesburg. Active in *Anti-Fascist League*.

Grossman, Oskar (1903–?). Austrian Communist. In 1930–3 – representative of Communist Party of Austria at *ECCI*.

Gumede, Josiah Tshangana (sometimes spelled Gumedi; nickname: James) (1867–1947). South African politician, businessmen, journalist. Founder member of Natal Natives' Congress and of South African Native National Congress (later the *ANC*). President-General of *ANC* in 1927–30. Chairman of South African branch of *League Against Imperialism* and of *League of African Rights*. Visited USSR in 1927. This strengthened his procommunist views that he began to develop earlier that year. In 1930 was ousted from his position as President-General of *ANC* for his proximity to *CPSA* and for his leadership style. In recognition of his earlier service was, however, appointed life-long honorary president. Editor of Zulu language newspaper *Ilanga lase Natal* and, by 1930s, owner and editor of *ANC* mouthpiece *Abantu Batho*. (See: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 1. Pretoria, 1995, pp. 86–8.)

Gurleigh, R. See: M. Kotane.

Gusev, Sergei Ivanovich (alias: Travkin; real name: Yakov Davidovich Drabkin) (1874–1933). Russian and Soviet Communist. Member of Presidium of *ECCI*. In 1930 and 1932–3 – Head of *Anglo-American Secretariat*.

Hall, Otto (alias: probably, Jones) (1890–?). American communist. In 1928 – student at *KUTV*. Member of *Negro Commission*. Brother of *Harry Haywood*.

Hani, Martin Thembilise (nickname: Chris) (1942–93). South African communist. General Secretary of *South African Communist Party* in 1991–3. Assassinated by right-wingers in attempt to destabilise situation in South Africa before first democratic elections. (See: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 2. Pretoria, 1999, pp. 44–6.)

Hardy, George (1884–1965). British communist and trade union organiser. Official of Executive Bureau of *Profintern*. Emissary of *ECCI* to *CPSA* in 1936. Delegate to 4th Congress of *Comintern* and to 4th Congress of *Profintern*. In 1927–8 participated in discussions on South Africa in *Anglo-American Secretariat*. In 1930s participated in discussions about *CPSA* in *Communist Party of Great Britain* and in South African Commission of *Anglo-American Secretariat*. Author of *Those Stormy Years: Memories of the Fight for Freedom on Five Continents*, London, 1956.

Harrison, Wilfred (about 1870–1950). South African socialist and communist. Author of: *Memoirs of a Socialist in South Africa, 1903–47*, Cape Town, 1948.

Haynes, H.W. South African communist and trade unionist.

Haywood, Harry (real name: Haywood Hall) (1898–1985). American communist. In 1930s, member of CC and PB of *Communist Party of USA*. Prime advocate of *CPUSA* policy of self-determination for blacks in USA. Expelled in 1959. Became prominent member of Communist Party (Marxist–Leninist) in the 1970s. In the 1920s – student at *KUTV* and *MLSh*. Delegate to 6th Congress of *Comintern*. Member of *Negro Commission*. In 1928–30, member and sometime Vice-Chairman of *Negro Bureau*. Active participant in debates on South African problems. Brother of *Otto Hall*. Author of *Black Bolshevik: Autobiography of an African-American Communist*, Chicago, 1978.

Henderson, Arthur (1863–1936). British political and public figure. Major organiser of British Labour Party. Home Secretary (1924) and Foreign Secretary (1929–31). Was President at World Disarmament Conference of 1932 and was awarded Nobel Peace Prize (1934).

Henderson, Beatrice. See: J. Mpama.

Henry (real name: Johannes Moses Beyers). South African communist, later Troskyist. In early 1930s – student at *KUTV*. Until 1936 worked at *Worker's Voice* in Cape Town. Drifted away from *CPSA* and developed Trotskyist views.

Hertzog, General James Barry Munnik (1866–1942). Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa in 1924–39. Founder and leader of *National Party*.

Hilton, Jack. See S. Nikin.

Hofmeyr, J.H. (1894–1948). South African politician. Prominent 'liberal' in *United Party*. Minister in government, 1933–45.

Horner, Arthur (1894–1968). British communist and trade unionist. Member of CC of *Communist Party of Great Britain*. Alternative member of *ECCI*.

Huiswoud (Huiswood), Otto E. (alias: J. Billings) (1893–1961). American communist. Born in Dutch Guyana (Surinam). 1919 – first black member of *Communist Party of USA*. Delegate to 4th Congress of Comintern. Presented 'Theses on the Negro Question' adopted by 4th Congress. In 1930s, functionary of *Profintern* and of *International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers*. In 1932–3 was emissary of *Profintern* to South Africa. Participated in South African Commission of *Anglo-American Secretariat*. In 1947 refused re-entry to USA and emigrated to Holland. Chairman of Ons Suriname, 1953–7.

Humbert-Droz, Jules (1891–1972). Swiss communist. Founder member and one of leaders of Communist Party of Switzerland. Member of Presidium and of Politsecretariat of *ECCI*.

Hyndman, Henry Mayers (1842–1921). British socialist. Founder member of Social Democratic Federation (1881), of British Socialist Party (1911) and of reorganised Social Democratic Federation in 1920.

Idelson, Boris Iosifovich (aliases: Louis, Merker, Fernand, Ernest) (1895–1938). Soviet communist. In 1921–30 and in 1931–3 – official of *ECCI*. In 1929 – first emissary of *ECCI* to *CPSA*. In 1924–5 – representative of *ECCI* in Communist Party of Germany, and in 1926 – representative of *ECCI* in Communist Party of France. Executed during purges.

Inkpin, Albert (1884–1944). British communist. Secretary and member of CC of *Communist Party of Great Britain*.

Jackson, Tom; Jackson M. See: A. Nzula.

Jacobson, Cyril (1890–?). South African communist from Johannesburg. Born in Lithuania.

Jansen, Jan (real name: Jan Proost) (1890–1943). Member of Dutch Communist Party until 1926. Member of *ECCI*. Delegate to 1st and 2nd Congresses of *Comintern*.

Joffe, Louis Charles (1895–?). South African communist from Johannesburg. Born in Lithuania.

Joffe, Max (usually called Dr Joffe). South African communist from Johannesburg. Born in Lithuania. Brother of Louis Joffe.

Johns, William. See: V. Danchin.

Johnson, Charles (real name: Janson Karl Ernestovich) (1882–1938 or 1939). American communist. Born in Latvia. Delegate to 2nd, 6th and 7th congresses of *Comintern*. Member of Executive Bureau of *Profintern*. Head of *OMS* of *Profintern*. Head of *Eastern Section* of *Profintern*. Perished in GULAG.

Jones. See: O. Hall.

Jones, David Ivon (1883–1924). South African socialist and communist. Founder member, leader and theoretician of *International Socialist League* and of *CPSA*. In 1921–4 was representative of *CPSA* in *ECCI*. Member of *ECCI*. In 1919 was prosecuted for publishing pamphlet *The Bolsheviks Are Coming* (co-authored with L.H. Greene). While in Russia, published many articles in communist periodicals in South Africa and Britain, and in *Comintern* publications (some exist only in Russian). Died and buried in Russia. (See: B.H. Hirson, G.A. Williams. *The Delegate for Africa. David Ivon Jones, 1883–1924*. London, 1995; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 43.)

Jurdzik, Semen B. (1885-?). Soviet communist. From 1924 – member of Executive Bureau of *Profintern*. Head of Administration of *Profintern*. In 1928–33 – Head of *OMS* of *Profintern*.

Kadalie, Clements (about 1896–1951). South African trade unionist. Born in Malawi (Nyasaland). Founder (1918) and General (National) Secretary (1919–29) of *ICU*. Collaborated with communists in *ICU* (but not with *CPSA*) until, in 1926, they were expelled. Supported coalition between *National Party* and *Labour Party* against *J. Smuts*. In 1929 resigned as Secretary after *A.W.G. Champion* and Natal branch broke away. Founded *Independent ICU*. Author of *My Life and the ICU: The Autobiography of a Black Trade Unionist in South Africa*, London. 1970. (See: *Encyclopedia of Africa South of the Sahara*, vol. 2. London *et al.*, 1997, p. 417; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 45–7.)

Kahn, Samuel (Sam) (1911–87). South African and British communist. In 1949–52 – member of South African Parliament. In 1952 was expelled from Parliament as member of 'banned organisation'. Emigrated to Britain. Subsequently became member of Liberation (formerly Movement for Colonial Freedom). Visited the USSR in 1954. (See: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 47–8.)

Kalk, William Karl Frederick (Willie; alias: Victor Brown, N. Brown) (1900–89). South African communist and trade unionist. Founder member of War-on-War League, of *International Socialist League* and of *CPSA*. From 1923 – member of EC of *CPSA*. From 1931 to 1953 – one of leaders of Transvaal Leather and Allied Trades Industrial Union. In 1928–30 was student at *MLSh*.

Kamenev, Lev Borisovich (1888–1936). Soviet communist, one of leaders of Bolshevik party. Member of PB in 1919–26. Executed during purges.

Katayama, Sen (1859–1933). Japanese communist. In 1884–96 and 1914–21 lived in USA. Active among left-wing American socialists and first American communists. Founded Japanese communist group in New York in 1919. From 1921 until death lived in USSR. Member of Presidium of *ECCI*. Participated in debates on Negro question, particularly during and after 4th Congress of *Comintern*. Delegate to 1st Congress of *League Against Imperialism*.

Kentridge, Morris (1881–1964). South African politician. One of leaders of *South African Labour Party*. Member of South African Parliament.

Kenyatta, Johnston Kamau Ngengi (Jomo; alias: Joken) (between 1891 and 1894–1978). Leader of nationalist movement in Kenya, later – president of Kenya. From late 1920s to early 1930s participated in work of *League Against Imperialism* and of *International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers* in Hamburg. In 1929 visited Moscow. In 1932–3 – student at *KUTV*.

Kerensky, Alexander Fiodorovich (1881–1970). Russian politician. Chairman of Council of Ministers of Provisional Government in July–October 1917. Ousted from power by Bolshevik revolution. Emigrated in 1917.

Kerrigan, Peter (1899–1977). British communist. Member of CC of *Communist Party of Great Britain*. Official of *ECCI*. Emissary of *ECCI* to *CPSA* in 1937. Participated in 6th and 7th Congresses of *Comintern*. In 1930s was closely involved with South African affairs. Participated in South African Commission of *Anglo-American Secretariat*.

Klenerman, Fanny. South African communist and Trotskyist. Expelled from *CPSA* in 1931 for Trotskyist views.

Knorin, Wilhelm (another alias: Sokolik; real name: Tishler) (1890–1938). Polish communist. From 1931 – member of Politsecretariat of *ECCI*. Head of Central European Secretariat of *ECCI*. Perished in GULAG.

Kobetsky, Mikhail V. (1881–1937). Soviet communist. From 1920 member of *ECCI* and of Small Bureau of *ECCI*, then of Presidium and of Secretariat of *ECCI*. In 1924 transferred to Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Executed during purges.

Kolarov, Vasil (1877–1950). Bulgarian communist. In 1919–23 – Secretary of CC of Communist Party of Bulgaria. In 1921–43 – member of Presidium of *ECCI*. From 1928 – Head of *Krestintern*. In 1946–50 – Chairman of Supreme People's Council of Bulgaria. In 1949–50 – Chairman of Council of Ministers of Bulgaria.

Kolchak, Alexander Vasilievich (1873–1920). Russian admiral. Fought against Bolsheviks during Civil War in Russia and proclaimed himself 'Supreme Ruler of the Russian State'. Executed by Bolsheviks.

Kostanian Glraj (1895–1938). Armenian communist. Delegate of 6th Congress of *Comintern*. Functionary of *Profintern*. Perished in GULAG.

Kotane, Moses Mauane (another name: Pilane; aliases and code names: James Warren, John Gurleigh, Rio Gurleigh, Edward, J.W. Macauley) (1905–78). South African communist. In 1932–4 – secretary, in 1938–78 general secretary of *CPSA* and of *South African Communist Party*. Member of *ANC*, from 1963 – treasurer of ANC. In 1963 went in exile, lived in Tanzania. In 1969 elected to National Executive of *ANC*. In 1931–2 – student at *MLSh*. Visited Moscow in 1935–6. Died and was buried in Moscow after years of treatment there. (See: B. Bunting. *Moses Kotane, South African Revolutionary*. London, 1975, Cape Town, 1998; *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 1. Pretoria, 1995, pp. 119–21; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 50–2.)

Kouyaté, Tiemoko Garan (1892–1942). French communist of Malian origin. Head of League of Protection of Negro Race (Paris). Member of *International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers* and of editorial board of *Negro Worker*. Member of EC of General Council of *League Against Imperialism*. Visited Moscow in 1929 and 1930. Participated at 5th Congress of *Profintern*. In 1933 was expelled from French Communist Party, from *ITUCNW* and from *Negro Worker*. Executed by Nazis in France.

Kruger, Julia. South African communist and trade unionist. Official of *Friends of Soviet Union*. Visited USSR in 1936.

Kumalo (another name: Nchee). (1906–?). South African communist. Member of PB of *CPSA*. Possibly, W. Nchie from Durban.

Kun, Béla (1886–1939). Hungarian communist. Member of *ECCI*. Executed during purges.

Kuusinen, Otto W. (1881–1964). Finnish and Soviet communist. Member of Presidium and of Secretariat of *ECCI*, General Secretary of *ECCI*. In 1928–32 – Head of *Eastern Secretariat*. Member of Political Commission of Politsecretariat of *ECCI*.

Lacerda (Laserda), Fernando (1890–1957). Brazilian communist. Representative of Communist Party of Brazil at *ECCI*, delegate to 7th Congress of *Comintern*.

La Guma, James (Jimmy) (1984–61). South African communist and trade unionist. Held several top positions in *ICU* and in *Federation of Non-European Trade Unions*. Joined *CPSA* in 1925, was elected to CC in 1926. Expelled from *CPSA* in 1929, readmitted in 1931 but ceased participating in Party activities. Rejoined *CPSA* after World War II, in 1947–50 was member of CC. Active participant in several political organisations of Coloured population. Delegate

at 1927 Congress of *League Against Imperialism*. Visited USSR twice in 1927. (See: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 1. Pretoria, 1995, pp. 123–7; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 53–4.)

Lapile (Lapele; Lepele). South African communist from Cape Town.

Lazeray, Henry (alias: Gordon) (1898–1952). French communist from the Antilles. From 1920 – Secretary of French Federation of Communist Youth, then Secretary of Colonial Section of French Communist Party. Participated at 3rd Congress of *Comintern*.

Lefela, Maphutseng (1895–1955). General Secretary of *Lekhotla la Bafo*.

Lenin, Vladimir Ilich (real name: Vladimir Ilich Ulianov) (1870–1924). Founder and leader of Bolshevik party. Head of Soviet state and government. Founder of *Comintern*. Author of numerous works on theory and practice of communist movement.

Lepele. See: Lapile.

Liebknecht, Karl (1871–1919). German socialist and communist. Founder member of German Communist Party.

Litvinov, Maxim Maximovich (real name: Meier Wallach) (1876–1951). One of first members of Bolshevik party. Soviet diplomat. In 1917–18 – representative of Bolshevik government in Britain, in 1921, in Estonia. In 1930–9 – People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, in 1921–30 and in 1941–3 – Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

Lopes, Manuel. South African communist. Founder member and secretary of Industrial Socialist League. Secretary of Communist Party of South Africa, a Cape Town communist organisation that existed before creation of *CPSA*. Editor of this organisation's organ, *Bolshevik*. Expelled from *CPSA* in 1930 (?), in 1937 joined *National Party*.

Lovestone, Jay (real name: Jacob Libstein) (1898–1990). American communist. In 1927–9 – General Secretary of *Communist Party of USA*. Expelled from *CPUSA* in 1929. Member of *ECCI*. Participated at 6th Congress of *Comintern*.

Lozovsky, A. (real name: Solomon Abramovich Dridzo) (1878–1952). Soviet communist and government official. General Secretary of *Profintern* from 1921 until its dissolution in 1937. Member of Presidium of *ECCI*. Delegate to 3rd–7th Congresses of *Comintern*. In 1939–46 – Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. Died in prison.

Lunt, Winifred M. South African communist from Johannesburg.

Mabete. South African communist from Pinetown.

Macauley, J.W. See: Moses Kotane.

MacManus, Arthur (1891 or 1892–1927). British communist. Founder member and chairman of *Communist Party of Great Britain*. Member of Presidium of *ECCI*.

Madeley, Walter Bayley (1873–1947). One of leaders of *South African Labour Party*. In 1925–8 – Minister of Posts and Telegraph.

Mafele (another name Mathlomi) (1907–?). South African communist.

Magyar, Ludwig (real name Lajos Milgorf) (1891–1937). Soviet communist. Born in Hungary. In 1928–33 worked at *MLSh* and *KUTV*. From 1928 – Deputy Head of *Eastern Secretariat*. Executed during purges.

Makabeni, Garner (Gana) (1897–1955). South African communist and trade unionist. Activist of *ANC*. Was expelled from *CPSA* in 1932 but later reinstated. One of leaders of Native Workers' Clothing Union. Occupied leading positions at several trade unions and played important role at National Executive of *ANC* in 1940s. (See: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 2. Pretoria, 1999, pp. 84–5; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 67–8.)

Makoe. South African trade unionist. Chairman of Clothing Workers' Union.

Malan, Daniel F. (1874–1959). South African politician. From 1934 – leader of *Purified National Party*. Prime Minister, 1948–56.

Malupi, Lucas. South African communist and trade unionist.

Mann, Tom (1856–1941). British communist and trade unionist. Founder member of National Minority Movement. Participated at 3rd and 5th Congresses of *Comintern*, and at founding and 3rd Congresses of *Profintern*. Member of Executive Bureau of *Profintern*. Visited South Africa briefly in 1910 and again for four months in 1922–3.

Manuilsky, Dmitry Zakharovich (1883–1959). Soviet communist. Member of Presidium and Secretary of *ECCI*. From 1933 – member of Politcommission of Politsecretariat of *ECCI* and one of central figures at *ECCI* until dissolution of *Comintern*.

Marks, John Beaver (nickname: 'J.B.'; aliases: Max Raymond; possibly, Jack Raymond; Roland Terny Willem Fleet) (1903–72). South African communist, one of leaders of *CPSA*. From 1930 to 1937 – member of PB. In 1934–6 secretary of *CPSA*. In 1937 expelled from the Party, in 1939 – reinstated. One of organisers of African miners' strike in 1946. In 1962–72 – *Chairman of South African Communist Party*. Went into exile in 1963. Member of National Executive of *ANC*. In 1933–4 – student at *KUTV*. Died and buried in Moscow.

(See: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 1. Pretoria, 1995, pp. 158–9); *Autobiography* (in Russian) – RGASPI, 495-279-23-4.)

Marty, André (1886–1956). French communist. From 1932 representative of French Communist Party at *ECCI*. Member of Presidium of *ECCI*. Secretary of *ECCI*. Delegate to 7th Congress of *Comintern*. Head of *Anglo-American Secretariat*. In 1935–8 – head of Commission of Enquiry into *CPSA* (Marty Commission; South African Commission). In 1936–9 – head of International Brigades in Spain. In 1939–43 worked for *Comintern* in Moscow. In 1943–52 – member of CC secretariat and of PB of French Communist Party. Expelled from Party in 1953.

Masabalala (Mashabalala), Samuel Makama Martin. (1877–?). Activist of *ICU* in Port Elizabeth, close associate of *C. Kadalie*. From 1919 – official of Cape *ANC*. His arrest in 1920 provoked demonstration during which 23 people were killed. (See: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 76.)

Masigo. South African trade unionist. Activist of Laundry Workers' Union.

Mathews, Tom. South African communist.

Merkel, Alf. South African communist and trade unionist. In 1931 was accused of 'social chauvinism' and expelled from *CPSA* together with *Andrews* but continued as trade union leader.

Merker, Paul. See: B. Idelson.

Michel, Rosa (real name: Marie Wartziarg; other alias: Anna Walter) (1901–89). French, German, Ukranian and Soviet communist. Born in Poland. Official of *ECCI*, aide of *A. Marty*.

Mif, Pavel (real name: Mikhail Fartus) (1901 or 1902–38). Soviet communist. Deputy Head of the *Eastern Secretariat* of *ECCI*. Lecturer and researcher at *KUTV*. Rector of *Comintern*'s Communist University of Toilers of China. Died in prison.

Mingulin, Ivan G. (1900–?). Soviet communist. In 1924–7 – official of Foreign Department of *OGPU*. In 1927–37 – official of *ECCI*. Perished in *GULAG*.

Mofutsanyana (Mafotsonyane), Edwin Thabo (aliases: Greenwood, sometimes – Edward Roux) (1899–1995). South African communist and trade unionist. Activist of *ANC*. In late 1930s General Secretary of *CPSA*. In 1940s editor of Party journal, *Inkululeko*. In 1932–4 studied at *KUTV*. (See also: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 92–3.)

Mofutsanyana, Josephine. See: J. Mpama.

Mohuma. South African communist from Johannesburg.

Moloinyane (Moloinjane), P.B. (P.G.). South African communist. Activist of *ANC*, member of *ICU*. In 1932 – member of editorial board of *Negro Worker*.

Mopu, Frans. South African communist from Johannesburg.

Morake, I. South African communist from Brakpan. In early 1930s – member of Secretariat of PB.

Morkel, J. South African communist from Cape Town, member of PB of *CPSA*. Possibly, pseudonym of prominent communist Jack Simons. (For J. Simons see: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 142–3.)

Moshoeshoe (Moshesh) (1795?–1870). Founder and ruler of the Sotho state.

Mpama, Josephine (Josie; other surnames: Mofutsanyana, Palmer; aliases: Vinifred Palmer; Beatrice Henderson) (1906–79). South African communist. In late 1920s participated in local African organisations protesting against discrimination in Potchefstroom. In 1920s–1940s – activist of *CPSA*, head of its Women's Department. In 1935–6 – student at *KUTV*. Delegate to 7th Congress of *Comintern*. In last decades of her life moved from communist ideology to Christianity. (See also: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 102.)

Msimang, Henry Selby (1886–1982). South African politician. One of founder members and leaders of South African Native National Congress (later *ANC*), close associate of *Pixley ka Isaka Seme*. Early leader of *ICU* and its first president. Founder member of the Liberal Party of South Africa. (See: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 1. Pretoria, 1995, pp. 189–91; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 104–5.)

Münzenberg, Wilhelm (Willi) (1889–1940). Swiss socialist, German communist. Born in Germany. Member of CC of Communist Party of Germany. Key person at founding congress of *KIM* in 1919. One of leaders of *League Against Imperialism*. Was founder member and General Secretary of *International Workers' Relief (Mezhrabpom)*. Member of Secretariat of *ECCI*. Participated at 2nd, 3rd and 6th Congresses of *Comintern*. In 1921–36 played an important role in *Comintern* and fulfilled numerous important secret missions. Elected to Reichstag on ticket of Communist Party of Germany. In 1939 left the Party in

protest against Molotov–Ribbentrop pact and accused Stalin of treachery. In 1940 was interned in France, then set free. Found hanged in a forest soon after.

Naidoo, Harry Alimotos (1915–71). South African communist and trade unionist from Durban. Joined *CPSA* in 1930s. Moved to Cape Town when co-opted to CC of *CPSA* in 1943. Emigrated to UK in 1951 after harassment by government and dissolution of *CPSA*. In 1952–5 worked for Radio Budapest. Inactive in politics after return to UK in 1955. (See: Pauline Podbrey. *White Girl in Search of the Party*. Pietermaritzburg, 1993; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 109.)

Nasonov (Nassonov) Nikolai Mikhailovich (alias: most probably, Nicolaus) (1902–38). Soviet communist. In mid-1920s – emissary of *KIM* to USA. Member of *Negro Commission*. Official and later Head of *Negro Bureau*. Worked closely with *Communist Party of USA* on South African questions and on self-determination for blacks in the USA. First Head of African Section and of African Laboratory at *KUTV*. Perished in GULAG.

Naumann, Robert (aliases and pseudonyms: Robertson, Razumov) (1899–1978). Soviet and German communist. Born in Germany, emigrated to Russia. Official of *Anglo-American Secretariat*. Taught political economy at several educational institutions of *Comintern*. Worked for *A. Marty* in South African Commission, accusing his *KUTV* colleagues, *I. Potekhin* and *A. Zusmanovich*, as well as *KUTV* students, *L. Bach*, *P. Richter* and *M. Richter*, of Trotskyism. After World War II returned to German Democratic Republic. Was member of CC of Socialist Unity Party of Germany, Professor and Director of Institute of Political Economy at Humboldt University in East Berlin.

Ndobe, Bransby. South African communist. Militant leader of *ANC* in Western Cape. Supported Gumede's policy on closer cooperation with *CPSA* (See: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 110–11.)

Ngedlane, Josia (another name: Thomas). (1893–?). South African communist and trade unionist. Member of PB of *CPSA*. Member of Secretariat of *African Federation of Trade Unions*.

Nicolaus. See: Nasonov.

Nkosi (Nkosie), Johannes (1905–30). South African communist and militant trade unionist from Durban. Activist of *ANC* and of *ICU*. Was killed during campaign to burn passes organised by CPSA. (See: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 1. Pretoria, 1995, pp. 204–6.)

Noko (Noku), John. South African communist from Johannesburg.

Norrie, Harry. Militant South African socialist from Johannesburg.

Nortye, Tom. South African communist.

Nzula, Albert (alias and pseudonym: Tom Jackson; other aliases: M. Jackson, Conan Doyle Modiagkotla) (1905–34). South African communist. In 1929 elected first black secretary of *CPSA* and editor of party organ, *South African Worker*. Simultaneously – General Secretary of *Federation of Non-European Trade Unions*. In 1931–2 – student at *MLSh*. From 1932 was acting Chairman of *International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers*. Member of Central Council of *Profintern*. Published articles in *Negro Worker* and in Soviet journals. Co-authored a book, *Forced Labour and Trade Union Movement in Negro Africa* (with *A. Zusmanovich* and *I. Potekhin*, Moscow, 1933, in Russian; translated into English as *Forced Labour in Colonial Africa*, London, 1979). Died of lobar pneumonia in Moscow. (See also: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 1. Pretoria, 1995, pp. 208–9; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 123–4.)

Padmore, George (real name: Malcolm Ivan Meredith Nurse; other alias: Hamilton) (1903–59). American and Soviet communist, later Pan-Africanist. Born in Trinidad, member of *Communist Party of USA*. In 1927 joined *AUCP(B)*. Head of *International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers*. Functionary of *Profintern*. In 1932–3 – student at *KUTV*. Early in 1934 expelled from *AUCP(B)* and from *Comintern* for refusal to denounce Tyemoko Kouyaté. Subsequently ideologist and leader of Pan-African movement. From 1957 was adviser to Kwame Nkrumah, first President of Ghana. Authored several works, most significant of which is *Pan-Africanism or Communism?*, 1956. (See also: *James R. Hooker. Black Revolutionary*. London, 1967.)

Palmer, Josie. See: J. Mpama.

Patterson, William L. (alias: William Wilson) (1891–1980). American communist. In 1960s–80 – member of PB of *Communist Party of USA*. In 1927–31 studied at *KUTV*. Delegate to 6th Congress of *Comintern*. Delegate to 2nd Congress of *League against Imperialism*. Author of *The Man Who Cried Genocide: An Autobiography*. New York, 1971.

Peterson. South African communist from Cape Town.

Petrov, Fedor. See: F.F. Raskolnikov.

Petrovsky, Bonio D. (real name: Bonio Dimitrov; another alias: Vladimir T. Petrovsky) (1896–1973). Bulgarian and Soviet communist. In 1931–6 was director of joint Soviet–South African Oil Company AROP in Johannesburg. Deputy Head of Soiuznefteexport – Soviet state oil trading organisation.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade of Bulgaria. In 1950 sentenced to life imprisonment but then rehabilitated.

Petrovsky, David A. (real name: Max Goldfarb; other aliases: A. Bennet, D. Bennet, David E. Lipets, Humboldt, Sonia, Max, Maximovich, Isolda) (1886–1937). Member of the Presidium of *ECCI*. Head of Department of Agitation and Propaganda of *ECCI*. Emissary of *ECCI* to *CPGB*. In 1927–8 head of the *Anglo-American Secretariat*. Executed during purges.

Pettersen, Sophus M. Durban ship owner of Norwegian origin. During 1920s and early 1930s assisted South African socialists and communists, helping them to get to Russia. In 1921 joined *CPSA*. Later resigned and joined *National Party*. From 1950 – member of Senate of South African Parliament.

Philamon (Philame). South African communist from Durban.

Piatnitsky, Iosif (Osip) A. (real surname: Tarshis) (1882–1938). Soviet communist. In 1921–35 – official of *ECCI*. Secretary of *ECCI* from 1923. Head of OMS of *ECCI*. Executed during purges.

Pick, J. South African communist from Cape Town. Founder-member of *CPSA*. Expelled from CPSA in 1931 as 'Buntingist'.

Pilane. See: M. Kotane.

Pirow, Oswald (1890–1959). Minister of Justice and Minister of Defence in *J.B.M. Hertzog's* government.

Pollitt, Harry (1890–1960). British communist. General Secretary, Chairman of *Communist Party of Great Britain*. Member of *ECCI*. Participated at 3rd and 7th Congresses of *Comintern*. Delegate to 1st Congress of *Profintern*. Participated in discussions about *CPSA* in *CPGB* during 1930s. (See: Kevin Morgan. *Harry Pollitt*. Manchester and New York, 1993.)

Potekhin (Potechin) Ivan Izosimovich (pseudonym: John Izotla) (1903–64). Soviet communist. Lecturer and researcher at *KUTV*. Specialised in and widely published on South African problems. In 1936 was accused of Trotskyism and of imposing his views on *CPSA* and sacked. From 1946 – member of staff of Institute of Ethnography of Soviet Academy of Sciences. In 1959 became initiator and first Director of Africa Institute of Soviet Academy of Sciences.

Quelch, Thomas (1886–1954). British communist. Participated at 2nd Congress of *Comintern*. Member of *ECCI*. Member of Committee on National and Colonial Questions at 2nd Congress of *Comintern*.

Rabb, Ralf. South African communist.

Radebe (about 1887–?). South African communist from Johannesburg. Possibly, Gaur Radebe (nickname: Green). (For G. Radebe see: *From Protest*

to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 130.)

Radebe, Paul. South African communist from Johannesburg.

Radek, Karl Berngardovich (real name: Karl Sobelsohn) (1885–1939). Soviet communist. In 1920–4 – member of *ECCI*, in 1920 – Secretary of *ECCI*. After 1924 worked in Soviet newspapers *Pravda* and *Izvestiia*. Accused of Trotskyism. Perished in GULAG.

Radford, Betty (1906–73). Left activist and communist in Cape Town. In 1941–8 – member of *CPSA*. In 1961 moved to Britain together with her husband, *George Sacks*. Founder and editor of *Guardian* newspaper.

Rákosi, Mátyás (real name: M. Rosencranz) (1892–1971). Hungarian communist. In 1921–5 and 1940–3 – member of *ECCI*. From 1922 – Secretary of *ECCI* responsible for co-ordination of ties with member parties. General Secretary of Hungarian Communist Party. In 1925–40 imprisoned in Hungary. After World War II – Deputy Prime Minister, Prime Minister of Hungary. Fled to USSR during 1956 Hungarian revolution.

Ramutla, Pieter. South African communist.

Randolf (Randolph). See: W. Weinstone.

Raskolnikov, Fedor Feodorovich (real surname: Iliin; another alias: Fedor Petrov) (1892–1939). Russian and Soviet communist. Military leader, diplomat and author. Head of Eastern Department of *ECCI* and of *Eastern Secretariat*. Member of Organisational Department of *ECCI*. In 1938 emigrated and accused Stalin of unfounded reprisals against his own Party. Died under mysterious circumstances in France.

Raymond, Jack; Raymond, M. See J.B. Marks.

Reed, John (1887–1920). American journalist. One of founders of communist movement in USA. Participated in Bolshevik revolution in Russia. Delegate to 2nd Congress of *Comintern*. Author of *Ten Days that Shook the World*, New York, 1919.

Reesema, William. See: W. Van Reesema.

Remmele, Hermann (1886–1939). German communist. Member of CC of Communist Party of Germany and its representative at *ECCI*. Participated at 5th and 6th Congresses of *Comintern*. In 1929–31 – member of Presidium of *ECCI*. Perished in GULAG.

Rheinalt Jones, John David (1882–1953). South African public figure. One of initiators and long-time Secretary of South African Institute of Race Relations. In 1937–42 – representative of 'Native' interests in Senate. Activist and one of leaders of Boy Scouts movement.

Richter, Ilza Karlovna (1895–?). Senior Assistant at African Laboratory of *NIANKP*.

Richter, Maurice (Mauris, Morris) (alias: Marian Bicher, possibly, Matvei Yugov) (1906–38). South African communist. Born in Latvia. Member of *CPSA* from 1926. In 1930 or 1931 returned to USSR. In 1934–5 – student at *KUTV*. Returned to South Africa but was soon sent back as representative of PB of *CPSA* to South African Commission. Accused of ties with Trotskyists and executed in *GULAG*.

Richter, Paul (another name: Pinchus Abelevich; alias: Matvei Yugov) (1909–38). Soviet and South African communist. Born in Latvia. Member of *CPSA* from 1929. From 1932 worked in Moscow. In 1935–6 – student at *KUTV*. Accused of ties with Trotskyists and executed in *GULAG*.

Righthouse, Joseph. South African communist and businessman. Supported *CPSA* financially. Member of EC of *CPSA*.

Rio. See: M. Kotane.

Roux, Edward (nicknames or aliases: Dr; Doctor; Professor; Professor Cambridge) (1903–66). South African communist. Editor of Party newspaper, *Umsebenzi*, member of PB. In 1935 was removed from PB. Delegate to 4th Congress of *Comintern*. Author of *S.P. Bunting. A Political Biography*, 1944; *Time Longer than Rope. A History of the Black Man's Struggle for Freedom in South Africa*. Wisconsin, 1948, 2nd edn 1964; *Rebel Pity: The Life of Eddie Roux* (with his wife, Win Roux), London, 1970. (See also: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 133–4.)

Roy, Manabendra Nath (real name: Nurendranath Bhattacharia) (1887–1948). Indian communist. Representative of Mexican Communist Party at 2nd Congress of *Comintern*. Lenin consulted him when writing his thesis on national and colonial questions. Representative of Indian Communist Party at *ECCI*. Was elected member of *ECCI* at 3rd and 6th Congresses of *Comintern*. Member of Secretariat and of Organisational Bureau of *ECCI*. Was accused of 'rightist deviations' and expelled from *Comintern*.

Rutgers, Sebald Justius (1879–1961). Dutch communist. In 1919–20 – Head of Dutch Bureau of *ECCI* in Amsterdam.

Sachs, Emil Solomon (Solly; alias: Albert Green) (1900–76). South African communist, left activist and trade unionist. Born in Lithuania, moved to South Africa as a child. Expelled from *CPSA* in 1931. Member of National Executive of *South African Trades and Labour Council*. Secretary of Garment Workers Union. Worked in USSR in 1925. In 1930 participated at 5th Congress of *Profintern*. From 1946 – member of *South African Labour Party*. In 1953

emigrated to Britain. Author of four books on South African problems. (See also: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 1. Pretoria, 1995, pp. 220–3.)

Sacks, George (1900–81). Journalist and left-wing activist in Cape Town. In 1941 joined *CPSA*. Lived in South Africa from mid-1930s until 1961 when emigrated to UK with his wife, *Betty Radford*.

Safarov, Georgy (1891–1942). Soviet communist. From 1929 – Deputy Head of *Anglo-American Secretariat*. In 1932–4 – Deputy Head of *Eastern Secretariat*. *ECCI*'s authority on colonial problems and Asian issues. Perished in GULAG.

Saks, Hilda. South African communist.

Seme, Pixley ka Isaka (1882–1951). South African politician. Founder-member, treasurer and President-General of ANC. (See: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 2. Pretoria, 1999, pp. 205–6; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 137–9.)

Sepeng (Speng), J.P. South African communist. Expelled from *CPSA*.

Shanly (Shanley), Errol Terrence (1911–?). South African communist and trade unionist from Durban.

Shatskin (Shatzkin), Lazar Abramovich (1902–37). Soviet communist. One of leaders of *KIM*. Perished in GULAG.

Shields, James (1900–49). British and South African communist. Resident in South Africa in 1924–8. Secretary of *CPSA* in 1925–8. Returned to the UK in 1928. Active in discussions on *CPSA* in *Communist Party of Great Britain* in 1920s. In 1932–3 – candidate member of Presidium of *ECCI*. Delegate to 7th Congress of Comintern. Participated in South African Commission of *Anglo-American Secretariat*.

Shochet, J. South African communist from Johannesburg.

Shubin, Petr Abramovich (real surname Vilensky) (1878–1937). Soviet communist. Official of *Profintern* and of *ECCI*. Deputy Head of *Eastern Secretariat* and Head of its Middle Eastern Section. Executed during purges.

Sik, Endré (1891–1978). Hungarian and Soviet communist, academic and politician. Lived in USSR in 1915–45. Author of programme of study of 'Black Africa' for *Comintern* schools and universities (1929) and of 4-volume *History of Black Africa* the first two volumes of which he wrote in Moscow (Budapest, 1966, vols I–II). Worked in *Comintern* organisations from middle 1920s until 1936. In 1958–61 – Foreign Minister of Hungary.

Singmoney (Sigamoney), Ben. South African communist.

Skobelev, Matvei Ivanovich (1885–1938). Russian Social Democrat – Menshevik, subsequently communist. In 1917 was Labour Minister in Provisional Government. Joined Bolshevik Party in 1922. Executed during purges.

Slambat, Andries. South African communist and trade unionist.

Slawinski, Adam (real surname: Kaczarowski) (1890–1937). Polish communist. In 1930–3 – representative of Communist Party of Poland in *ECCI*. Executed in GULAG.

Slovo, Jossel Mashel (Joe) (1926–95). South African communist. Born in Lithuania, moved to South Africa aged nine. Leader of both *ANC* and *South African Communist Party*. Was one of earliest members of military wing of *ANC*, Umkhonto we Sizwe. In 1978–91 – General Secretary of *SACP*, from 1991 – National Chairman of *SACP*. From 1994 – Minister of Housing. (See: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 2. Pretoria, 1999, pp. 214–15; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 147.)

Small, E.F. (alias: Miller). Trade union activist in Gambia. Delegate to 5th congress of *Profintern*. Participated at Hamburg Conference of *International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers*.

Smoliansky, Grigory Borisovich (1890–1937). Soviet communist. Official of Comintern. Executed during purges.

Smuts, Field-Marshal Jan Christian (1870–1950). South African politician. In 1919–24 and 1939–48 – Prime Minister; in 1933–9 – Minister of Justice and Deputy Prime Minister.

Sobia, Nikin (alias: Jack Hilton) (1908–?). South African communist and trade unionist. Secretary of Trade Union of Wall Paper Workers. Joined *CPSA* in 1932. In 1932–4 – student at *KUTV*.

Solundwana, G. South African communist. Secretary of Brakpan branch of *CPSA*.

Souvarine, Boris (1895–1984). French communist, journalist and publicist. Born in Ukraine, moved to France. Member of PB of French Communist Party. In 1921–6 – active in *Comintern*. Member of Presidium and of Secretariat of *ECCI*.

Speng. See: Sepeng.

Spilkin, Anna C. South African communist from Johannesburg.

Stalin, Iosif Vissarionovich (real surname: Dzhugashvili) (1879–1953). Soviet leader. Member of *ECCI*. Initiator of campaigns of terror against his own party, *AUCP(B)*, other Soviet people and foreign communists in which leadership, staff and associates of *Comintern* were particularly targeted.

Stasova (Stassova), Yelena Dmitriievna (Helena) (1873–1961). Soviet communist. Official of *AUCP(B)* and of *ECCI*.

Stepanov, Ivan Petrovich (real name: Stojan Minev Ivanov or Stojan Minev (Mineff); other aliases and code names: Lorenzo Vanini, Lebedev, Moreno, Dr Chevarini) (1890–1959). Bulgarian and Soviet communist. Official of *ECCI*. Participant of 2nd, 4th and 7th Congresses of *Comintern*. From 1932 – Head of Romanic Secretariat of *ECCI*. From 1948 – member of staff of Institute of Economy, later of Institute of World Economy and International Relations of Academy of Sciences of USSR. Participated in South African Commission of *Anglo-American Secretariat*.

Ström, Frederich (1880–1948). Swedish social democrat and communist. In 1919–20 was associated with *Comintern* as Head of Stockholm liaison centre between Moscow and Western Europe and as Soviet consul. Resigned from Communist Party of Sweden in mid-1920s when *Comintern* began Bolshevisation of its sections.

Tefu, Stephen Frans. South African communist and trade unionist. *ICU* activist. Secretary of *Ikaka la Basebenzi*.

Thaele, James (often called Professor) (1888–1948). South African politician, educationist and journalist. President of Western Cape branch of *ANC*. Educated in the USA, he was influenced by Garvey's ideas. His views changed from support to hostility towards *CPSA*. (See: *New Dictionary of South African Biography*, vol. 2. Pretoria, 1999, pp. 225–6; *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 154–5.)

Thema, Richard Victor Selope (1886–1955). South African journalist. Editor of *Bantu World* in 1932–52. (See: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1997, pp. 155–7.)

Thibedi, Thomas William (about 1899–?). South African communist and trade unionist. First African in *International Socialist League* and in *CPSA*. Member of CC of *CPSA* from 1925 or 1927. Was expelled from *CPSA* in 1932. Founder-member of *Communist League*. Refused invitation for reinstatement in *CPSA* in 1936–7. Head of Laundry Workers' Union. Leader of *African Federation of Trade Unions*. General Secretary of *Federation of Non-European Trade Unions*. (See also: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of*

African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 157.)

Thomas, Margaret Jane (another surname: Kalk). British and South African communist. Born in the UK, emigrated to South Africa in 1930s.

Thomas. See Ngedlane.

Tinker, T.P. South African socialist and trade unionist. Prominent figure in *International Socialist League* and in Trade Union of Printing Workers. In 1918 was prosecuted together with *S.P. Bunting* for his role in strike of sanitary workers of Johannesburg ('bucket strike').

Tommasi, Joseph (nickname or alias: Tomas) (1886–1926). French communist. Prominent figure in French communist movement. Participated at 3rd, 4th and 5th Congresses of *Comintern* and at 1st Congress of *Profintern*.

Tonjeni, Elliot (1895–1962). South African communist. One of leaders of *Independent ANC*. Activist of *ICU*. Was selected to study at *KUTV* but unable to go. Left *CPSA* in 1929 but continued to cooperate with communists. (See: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, pp. 158–9.)

Traub, C.H. South African communist.

Trilisser, Meer Abramovich (alias: M. Moskvin) (1883–1941). Soviet communist. In 1921 was member of Presidium of *ECCI*. In 1926–9 – Head of Foreign Affairs Department of *OGPU*. From 1935 – member of *ECCI*. Perished in GULAG.

Troianovsky 'Trojanovsky', Konstantin Mikhailovich (1879–?) Soviet communist. In 1921–2 – official of *Eastern Secretariat*. Author of *The East and Revolution* (in Russian), Moscow, 1918.

Trotsky, Leon (real name: Lev Davidovich Bronstein) (1879–1940). Soviet communist, founder of Trotskyism. In January 1919 he and Lenin signed a document calling for foundation of *Comintern*. In March 1919 Trotsky addressed founding Congress of *Comintern*. In 1920 and 1922 was candidate member, and in 1921 and 1924, full member of *ECCI*. In 1923 was appointed official of *ECCI* responsible for French and Belgian communist parties. During 5th Congress sat in Presidium and was member of two commissions, Political and Programme. In 1927 was removed from *ECCI* and expelled from *AUCP(B)*. In 1929 was expelled from USSR. Assassinated in Mexico by *NKVD*. Author of many works on history and theory of communist movement and of autobiography.

Truter, Theodorus Gustaff (1873–1949). Colonel and First Commissioner of Police of the Union of South Africa (1913–28).

Tsuene (Tsoene), Josiahs. Activist and Acting President of *Lekhotla la Bafo* (1930).

Tyler, C.B. South African communist and trade unionist.

Van Reesema, William (1884–?). Dutch and Soviet communist. In 1924–36 – official of *ECCI*. In 1927–9 participated in discussions on South Africa in *Anglo-American Secretariat*. In 1933–8 – lecturer at *KUTV*. In 1936–45 – translator at Foreign Literature Publishers in Moscow. Subsequently worked at All-Union Society for Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries (VOKS).

Varga, Evgeii Samuilovich (another name: Jenö) (1879–1964). Hungarian and Soviet communist. Born in Hungary. In 1919 – Chairman of Supreme Economic Council of Hungarian Soviet Republic. After fall of republic emigrated to Russia. Participated in 2nd–7th Congresses of *Comintern*. From 1927 – Director of Institute of World Economy and Politics of Academy of Sciences of the USSR. From 1939 – Academician of Academy of Sciences.

Vasiliev (Vassiliev), Boris Afanasievich (1889–1937). Soviet communist. In 1926–8 – member of the *Eastern* and Romanic *Secretariats*. From 1927 – Head of Organisational Department of *ECCI*. From late 1920s until 1934 – Head of Permanent Commission of Politsecretariat of *ECCI*. Perished in GULAG.

Vasilieva (Vassilieva), Vera Yakovlevna (1900–59). Soviet communist. Official of *ECCI*. From 1931 to 1938 – lecturer at *KUTV*.

Voronoff, Phillip (another name: Faivelis Veronavas) (1912–?). South African communist from Johannesburg. Born in Lithuania.

Vujovich (Vujovic), Voja (1895–1936). Yugoslavian communist. In 1921–7 – member of Presidium of *ECCI* (representative of *KIM*). In 1932–4 – representative of Communist Party of Yugoslavia at *ECCI*. Perished in GULAG.

Wade, Colin. South African communist and public figure.

Wan Min (Wang Ming) (real name: Chen Shao-yu) (1904–74). Chinese communist. Representative of Communist Party of China at *ECCI*. Member of Presidium and of Secretariat of *ECCI*.

Warren, James. See: M. Kotane.

Weinberg, Eli (1908–81). South African communist and trade unionist in Cape Town. Born in Latvia. *ANC* activist. In 1964 sentenced to five years imprisonment, released in 1970 and banned. In 1976 emigrated to Tanzania.

Weinbren, Ben (alias: G. Berns) (1897–?). South African communist and trade unionist. In 1928–30 – President of *Federation of Non-European Trade Unions*. In 1931 was expelled from *CPSA* together with other members of *S.P. Bunting*'s group. From 1930 – member of *South African Labour Party*. Functionary of

South African Trade Union Council and of *South African Trades and Labour Council*.

Weinstone, William (alias: Randolf) (1897–1985). American communist. Member of Politsecretariat and of Presidium of *ECCI*. Member of International Control Commission of *Comintern*. Participated in South African Commission of *Anglo-American Secretariat*.

Wilkinson, Friedrich William (1892–?). Australian communist, representative of Communist Party of Australia at *ECCI*.

Williams (real name: Boris Danilovich Mikhailov; had many other aliases) (1895–?). Soviet communist. From 1925 – official of *ECCI*. In 1926–7 involved in underground work as agent of *ECCI* in Greece, France, Austria, India, Germany, Czechoslovakia, South America. In 1928 was Deputy Head of *Eastern Secretariat* and member of *Negro Bureau* of *Eastern Secretariat*, in 1929–30 – representative of *ECCI* in USA. Fought in World War II, from 1942 – official of Sovinformbureau, organisation that took over some functions of *Comintern* after the former was dissolved. In 1946–7 – representative of *Sovinformbureau* in France, in 1947 – Head of its Press Department in Western and Southern Europe. In 1950 expelled from *AUCP(B)*.

Wilson, William See: W. Patterson.

Wolberg, Mikhail Yakovlevich (alias: De Velmont) (1891–?). South African socialist of Russian origin.

Wolfson, Issy (1906–80). South African communist and trade unionist from Johannesburg. In late 1930s, member of PB and of CC of CPSA.

Wolton, Douglas (1898–1987). British and South African communist. Born in UK. Member of *CPSA* from 1925. In 1930 attended 5th Congress of *RILU* in Moscow as *CPGB* delegate. Was charged with task to proceed to South Africa in order to oversee implementation of *Comintern*'s line. In 1930–4 – General Secretary of *CPSA*. He and his wife, *M. Wolton*, were main proponents of *Comintern*'s slogan of independent native republic and of Bolshevisation of *CPSA*. Fought against *S.P. Bunting* and his supporters. Returned to UK in 1933. Author of: *Wither South Africa?* 1947. (See also: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles*, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 163.)

Wolton, Molly (alias: Molly Gordon; maiden name: Selikovitz) (1905–45). British and South African communist. Born in Lithuania. Lived in South Africa from 1919 until 1933. Joined *CPSA* in 1924. In 1930–1 was student at *MLSh*. Was one of editors of *CPSA*'s newspaper *Umsebenzi*. Together with her husband, *D. Wolton*, propagated Bolshevisation of *CPSA*. Returned to UK in 1933. (See also: *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African*

Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964. Vol. 4. Political Profiles, by G.M. Gerhart and T. Karis, Stanford, California, 1977, p. 163.)

Young, Jim. South African communist from Cradock.

Yugov. See: M. Richter, P. Richter.

Zack, Joseph. American communist and trade unionist from Eastern Europe. Conducted propaganda among African Americans.

Zinoviev, Grigory Yevseievich (real name: Hirsch Apfelbaum; another alias: Radomyslsky) (1883–1936). Soviet communist. In 1921–6 – member of Politbureau of *AUCP(B)*. In 1919–26 – Chairman of *ECCI* and of Presidium of *ECCI*. Executed during purges.

Zusmanovich (Zussmanovich), Alexander Zakharovich (pseudonym: Manzu) (1902–65). Soviet communist. From 1927 – official of EC of *KIM*. From 1929 – official of EC of *Profintern*, Deputy Chairman of *International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers*. In 1932–5 – official of *Comintern*. In 1934–5 – Head of African Section of *KUTV* and of African Laboratory of *NIANKP* and official of *Eastern Secretariat*. In 1935 accused of Trotskyism and expelled from *Comintern*. In 1949–56 – imprisoned. In 1956–60 – researcher at Department of Africa of Institute of Oriental Studies, in 1960–65, at Africa Institute of Academy of Sciences of the USSR.

GLOSSARY OF SELECTED ORGANISATIONS[1]

African Blood Brotherhood African–American nationalist organisation sympathetic to socialism. Created in late 1919 in opposition to M. Garvey's *United Negro Improvement Association*. Originally secret, it became public, achieving membership of several thousand. Its leading members became communists in 1921. Was dissolved in 1924 or 1925.

African Federation of Trade Unions (AFTU) See *Native Federation of Trade Unions*.[2]

African National Congress (ANC) African political organisation in South Africa founded in 1912 to represent Africans throughout country. Organised deputations, petitions and campaigns to protest against government policies of segregation and discrimination. Originally called South African Native National Congress, it changed its name to African National Congress in 1925. Its membership comprised Africans of different political persuasions. Under presidency of *Josiah Gumede*, 1927–30, ANC became close to *CPSA*. Following Gumede's ouster from presidency in 1930, ANC distanced itself from *CPSA*.

African People's Organisation (APO) Political organisation of Coloured population in South Africa. Founded in 1902. Remained active until the mid-1920s.

Agitprop[3] Russian abbreviation of 'Agitation and Propaganda Department' (Agitatsionno-Propagandistskii Otdel). *Comintern* department responsible for organising propaganda and mobilisation campaigns.

All-African Convention (AAC) Umbrella organisation of mainly African bodies in South Africa created in 1935 to block Representation of Natives Act. After passage of Act in 1936 remained in existence as forum for debate on both African issues and government policy for Africans.

Amsterdam International See *International Federation of Trade Unions*.

ANC See *African National Congress*.

Anglo-American Secretariat Bureau of *Comintern* established in 1927, succeeding British Secretariat established in 1926. Oversaw affairs of communist parties in English-speaking countries including USA, Britain, its

1. The guiding principle for the selection of entries in this glossary is to make the documents more accessible for two categories of readers: those who are familiar with South African history but may know less about the Comintern, and those who specialise in the history of the Comintern but may not be familiar with South African history.
2. Names and organisations italicised in the glossary have glossary entries of their own.
3. Abbreviations and acronyms rather than full names of organisations are used in the glossary in cases where organisations are mostly known and are usually called by these abbreviated forms.

dominions and colonies. Consisted of *Comintern* functionaries and resident representatives assigned to *Comintern* in Moscow by member parties. *CPSA* fell under its jurisdiction, but never had resident representative in Moscow.

Anti-Fascist League South African organisation created in mid-1930s to oppose fascist pro-Nazi activities in South Africa. Members of *CPSA* were active in it.

AUCP (B) (USSR) See *RCP(B)*

Bantu World African newspaper in South Africa founded in 1932. Had white owners but was published by and for Africans. *Selope Thema* was editor in 1932–52.

Black Shirts (South Africa) Two South African fascist organisation sympathetic to German Nazis and active in late 1930s were known by this name: South African National Democratic Party with headquarters in Orange Free State, and its splinter body, Die Volksbeweging. Manie Wessels and Chris Havemann shared running of both organisations.

Cape Federation (of Labour Unions) Co-ordinating body of trade unions in Cape Town and Western Cape Province (South Africa) founded in 1913. Member unions generally included Coloured workers.

Chamber of Mines Co-ordinating body of South African mining companies created in 1887 to protect their interests.

Comintern (Communist International) (CI) International organisation of communist parties founded in 1919 with headquarters in Moscow. Also known as Third International. Created to establish communist (as expressed in leadership of *RCP(B)*) control over world socialist movement after disintegration, during World War I, of Second, or Socialist, International formed in 1889. Held seven congresses (1st – 2–6 March 1919; 2nd – 19 July–17 August 1920; 3rd – 22 June–12 July 1921; 4th – 5 November–5 December 1922; 5th – 17 June–8 July 1924; 6th – 17 July–1 September 1928; 7th – 25 July–20 August 1935). Managed by *ECCI* through a complicated and diversified system of administrative bodies. 2nd Congress stipulated 21 conditions of admission main thrust of which was full compliance of member parties with any decisions, policy or otherwise, passed at congresses or taken by *ECCI* (e.g., only one national communist organisation could be recognised by *Comintern*; no splits were allowed; no dissent with adopted policy was tolerated). Some conditions outlined tactics that could be used by member parties (e.g., participation in parliamentary elections which was often unacceptable for ultra-left organisations). Disbanded in 1943.

Communist League Organisation created by *Thomas Thibedi* and other African communists after their expulsion from *CPSA* in 1932.

Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) Political party established in 1920 uniting British socialist groups seeking affiliation with *Comintern*. In 1991 majority of party delegates changed name to Democratic Left.

Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) Political party formed in 1921 uniting South African socialist groups seeking affiliation with *Comintern*. Official name – Communist Party of South Africa, South African Branch of Communist International. Dissolved in 1950 under threat of being banned. Clandestine successor party renamed *South African Communist Party (SACP)* was formed in 1953.

Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) Name of American communist party from 1929 onward. Predecessor organisations formed in 1919 were Communist Party of America and Communist Labour Party of America. Subsequent names for the party from 1920 to 1929 were United Communist Party, Workers' Party of America, and Workers' (Communist) Party of America.

CPSA See *Communist Party of South Africa*.

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Component of South African police responsible for, inter alia, security and intelligence.

Eastern Secretariat Bureau of *Comintern* established in 1927. Successor to Eastern Department created in 1919. Oversaw affairs of communist parties and proto-communist organisations in Asia and Middle East. Consisted of *Comintern* functionaries and resident representatives assigned to *Comintern* in Moscow by member parties. In December 1928 *Negro Bureau* was created within Eastern Secretariat.

ECCI See *Executive Committee of the Communist International*.

Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI) Directing body of *Comintern*. Members were elected at *Comintern* congresses with responsibility for making policy decisions between world congresses. Chaired by *Grigory Zinoviev* (1919–26) and *Nikolai Bukharin* (1926–29). No chair appointed until 1933 when *Georgi Dimitrov* was named General Secretary, position he held until dissolution of *Comintern* in 1943.

Federation of Non-European Trade Unions (FNETU) See *Native Federation of Trade Unions*.

Friends of the Soviet Union; Friends of Soviet Russia (FOSU; FSU) South African branch of *Comintern*-sponsored organisation founded under auspices of *Communist Party of South Africa* in 1931. Established to mobilise support for Soviet Union from both party and non-party members. Largest membership during World War II. Went out of existence in 1963 by which time the majority of its leadership was banned, arrested or went underground.

Friends of the Spanish Republic South African organisation active in late 1930s. Established to mobilize support for Spanish Republic against Franco-led military forces.

Geserd (Gesert) Yiddish-language abbreviation for Society for Jewish Settlement on Land 'Gezelschaft tzu bezetzen Yiddin auf Erd'. Soviet-sponsored organisation created in 1926 to mobilise international support for settlement of Jews on land in Ukraine and Crimea and subsequently in Birobidzhan, a Jewish autonomous area in Soviet Far East. South African branch was founded in 1932.

GPU See *NKVD*.

Grey Shirts, Greyshirts South African fascist organisation sympathetic to German Nazis. Official name – The South African National Party. Founded by Louis T. Weichardt in mid-1930s.

ICU See *Industrial and Commercial Union* and *Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union*.

ICU yase Natal South Africa's Natal province branch of *Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU)* under leadership of *A.W.G. Champion*. Broke away from national *ICU* in 1928, but continued as independent body based in Durban.

Ikaka La Basebenzi See *International Red Aid*.

Independent ANC (IANC) Political organisation in South Africa formed by *Elliot Tonjeni* and *Bransby Ndobe* in 1930 after their expulsion as communists from Cape Town *African National Congress* headed by *James Thaele*. Subsequently gained support in Eastern Cape Province, particularly in Cradock and Tarkastad.

Independent ICU Trade union body in South Africa formed by *Clements Kadalie* in 1929. Attracted limited national support. See *Industrial and Commercial Union*.

Indian National Congress Umbrella political organisation of Indian population in South Africa, comprised of three provincial affiliated bodies – Cape Indian Congress, Natal Indian Congress, and Transvaal Indian Congress. Launched in 1919 as South African Indian Conference and formally renamed South African Indian Congress in 1923.

Industrial and Commercial Union (ICU) Largest organisation of Africans in 1920s in South Africa. Founded in Cape Town in 1919. Headed by *Clements Kadalie*. ICU and *Kadalie* participated in *ICWU*. By end of 1921 *Kadalie* assumed leadership of national organisation that henceforth was known as ICU but retained name *Industrial and Commercial Workers Union* as its full title. Headquarters moved to Johannesburg in 1925. *CPSA* worked closely with ICU

until communists were expelled from it in December 1926. Subsequently affiliated with Socialist International. ICU grew rapidly in both rural and urban areas, 1925–8. Leadership claimed membership of 100,000 in 1928. Bitter feuds over funding and leadership sparked rapid decline of membership and splits after 1928. *Kadalie* was expelled for financial irregularities. *William Ballinger*, British trade unionist, seconded as adviser in 1928, became most prominent figure associated with ICU.

Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICWU) First national trade organisation of African and Coloured workers in South Africa founded in 1920 at national meeting in Bloemfontain under *Selby Msimang*. By end of 1921 *Clements Kadalie* assumed leadership of organisation. Henceforth known as ICU. See *Industrial and Commercial Union*.

Inprecor (Inprecorr; Inprekor; Inprekorr) Abbreviation for 'International Press Correspondence' (German 'Internationale Presse Korrespondenz'). Semiofficial *Comintern* organ published under supervision of *ECCI*. Appeared weekly and sometimes more often from 1921 to 1933.

International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) International trade union organisation with headquarters in Amsterdam (Netherlands). Opposed communism and communist practices in trade unionism. Considered 'reformist' by *Comintern*. Known colloquially as 'Amsterdam International'.

International Labour Defence (ILD) *International Red Aid* organisation in USA.

International Lenin School (ILS) (MLSh) *Comintern*-affiliated institution providing political training for selected foreign communist cadres, mainly from Western countries, and for Soviet communists who worked with them.

International Red Aid (IRA) (MOPR) *Comintern*-affiliated organisation created in 1922. Headquarters in Berlin until 1933. Provided financial assistance and organised solidarity campaigns on behalf of communists and *Comintern*-supported individuals facing legal prosecution or political harassment. Often referred to by Russian acronym, *MOPR*. In South Africa several local branches were created in 1930s under isiXhosa name, *'Ikaka la Basebenzi'* (Shield of Workers).

International Socialist League (ISL) Socialist group formed in 1915 by anti-war, left-wing socialists who broke away from pro-war *South African Labour Party*. Identified with international movement of left socialists against war and with Bolshevik revolution. Most important of organisations which united in July 1921 to form *CPSA*.

International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers (ITUCNW) *Comintern*-affiliated organisation established in Moscow in July 1928 under auspices of *Red International of Labour Unions*. Conducted propaganda

among Africans, black Americans and West Indians. Published *Negro Worker* for circulation in Africa and in other areas with concentrated populations of black workers. In July 1930 organised conference in Hamburg, Germany, and set up headquarters there. Forced to flee after Nazis come to power in 1933. Subsequently operated in turn from Moscow, Vienna, Paris and New York. Headed initially by *James Ford*, then, until early 1934, by *George Padmore*, then by *Otto Huiswoud* until its dissolution in 1937.

International Workers' Aid (Mezhrabpom; MRP) *Comintern*-affiliated organisation created in 1921 to channel assistance from overseas supporters to victims of famine in Soviet Russia. Subsequently used to channel assistance to striking workers in capitalist countries. Little used after late 1920s. Also known by its Russian abbreviations, MRP and Mezhrabpom ('Mezhdunarodnaia Rabochaia Pomoshch').

Jewish Socialist Society Socialist group in Cape Town (South Africa) comprised of largely Yiddish-speaking members. Merged with *International Socialist League* that became part of *CPSA* created in July 1921. A sister Jewish Socialist Society in Johannesburg was called *Poalei Zion*.

Jewish Workers' Club Social and political club in Doornfontein, Johannesburg, organised about 1930 by recent Yiddish-speaking immigrants to South Africa from Lithuania, Latvia and Poland. Many members had been close to communist organisations in Eastern Europe and in South Africa they sympathised with or joined *CPSA*. Club dissolved in 1948.

Joint Council(s) of Europeans and Natives (Bantu) Bodies of whites and well-educated Africans established in major South African cities following visit of J.E.G. Aggrey, educator from Gold Coast (Ghana), sponsored by the Carnegie Endowment in 1921. Held periodic meetings to discuss social and economic issues affecting Africans.

KIM See *Young Communist International*.

Komsomol Russian acronym for Communist Union of Youth '(Kommunisticheskii Soiuz Molodiozhi'), Soviet Communist Youth League.

Krestintern Russian acronym for Peasant International ('Krestianskii Internatsional'). *Comintern*-affiliated organisation founded in 1923 to link and control peasant organisations through its headquarters in Moscow. Disbanded in 1939.

KUTV Russian acronym for Communist University of Toilers of the East ('Kommunisticheskii Universitet Trudiashchikhsia Vostoka'). *Comintern*-affiliated institution created in 1921 to train selected cadres from Soviet eastern territories. In 1923 a foreign division was created for selected foreign candidates.

Labour Party (LP) See *South African Labour Party*.

League Against Imperialism (LAI) *Comintern*-affiliated organisation created in 1927 at meeting of Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in Brussels. Designed to link anti-colonial and nationalist movements of Africa, Asia and Latin America. No further international meetings took place after second congress in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1929.

League of African Rights (LAR) Organisation created by *CPSA* in August 1929 to mobilise broad African support. Sponsored campaign to collect million signatures for 'Petition of Rights' to be presented to parliament. LAR was disbanded in 1930 to comply with October 1929 telegram from *ECCI*.

League of Soviet Friends South African organisation created in 1932 by supporters of *S.P. Bunting* after their expulsion from *CPSA*.

Lekhotla la Bafo Sesotho language for 'Council of Commoners'. Basotho nationalist organisation founded in 1919 under leadership of *Josiel* and *Maphutseng Lefela* to protect interests of Basotho population against appointed chiefs and British colonial administration. Established links with *CPSA* and *Comintern* in late 1920s.

Lenin School See *International Lenin School*.

Marxian Club Socialist group founded in 1919 in Durban (South Africa). United with *International Socialist League* and other socialist groups to form *CPSA* in July 1921.

MLSh See *International Lenin School*.

MOPR See *International Red Aid*.

National (Nationalist) Party (NP) South African political party formed in 1914 to advance Afrikaner national interests. Advocated primacy of South African interests over those of British Empire. Won plurality of parliamentary seats in 1924 election and formed pact government with *South African Labour Party*. From 1929 to 1933 held majority of parliamentary seats and headed government. Led by *J.B. Hertzog*. In 1934 majority of party merged with *South African Party* to form *United Party*. Minority rejected merger and formed *Purified National Party*, led by *D.F. Malan* which subsequently also became known as National Party. Won majority of parliamentary seats in 1948 election and became government that proclaimed and implemented apartheid.

Native Federation of Trade Unions (NAFTU) African trade union organisation created by *CPSA* in March 1928. In late 1920s membership of its constituent unions on the Witwatersrand numbered several thousand. Renamed *African Federation of Trade Unions* in 1931. Disintegrated amidst disputes between its leaders over financial practices and policy of *CPSA*.

Natives' Representative Council (NRC) Representative body in South Africa created under terms of Representation of Natives Act of 1936. Membership: 12 Africans indirectly elected by Africans from constituencies throughout South Africa, 4 Africans named by government, white 'native' commissioners. Provided forum for articulation of African views, but had only advisory powers.

Negro Bureau Unit within *Eastern Secretariat* created in December 1928 with responsibility to formulate and oversee policy on 'Negro issues'. In September 1929 renamed 'Negro Section'. In early 1930s was headed by *Nikolai Nasonov*.

Negro Commission Commission created at 6th Congress of *Comintern* to discuss 'South African question' and 'Negro question' in the USA. Similar Commission was created at 4th Congress of *Comintern* to work out resolution on 'Negro issues'.

Negro Worker Organ of *International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers* published from 1928 as bulletin and from 1931 as monthly journal. Was prepared mostly in *Comintern* and in *Red International of Labour Unions* in Moscow and published consecutively in Hamburg, Copenhagen, Antwerp, New York and Paris.

NIANKP Russian acronym for Academic Research Association for National and Colonial Problems ('Nauchno-Issledovatelskaia Assotsiatsiia Natsional-nykh i Kolonialnykh Problem'). Research unit of *KUTV*.

NKVD Russian acronym for People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs ('Narodny Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del'). Soviet security service (secret political police) from 1934 to 1943. Main instrument of purges and terror under Stalin. Prior to 1934 known by Russian acronyms as Cheka, *GPU* and *OGPU*.

Non-European Federation of Trade Unions (NEFTU; NFTU) See *Native Federation of Trade Unions*.

OGPU See *NKVD*.

OMS Russian acronym for Department of International Liaison ('Otdel Mezhdunarodnoi Sviazi'). Department of *Comintern* responsible for communications with member parties and clandestine operations.

Poalei Zion Jewish Socialist Society in Johannesburg linked to international organisation of the same name. One of organisations that merged with *International Socialist League* to form *CPSA*.

Presidium (of ECCI) Executive body of *ECCI*, analogous to Politburo of Central Committee of Communist Party.

Profintern See *Red International of Labour Unions*.

Purified National Party See *National (Nationalist) Party*.

RCP(B) Acronym for Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik). Official English-language title for Soviet communist party from 1918 to 1925 when it became All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) or *AUCP(B)*. In 1952 it became Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU).

Red International of Labour Unions (RILU) *Comintern*-affiliated organisation of left and communist trade unions founded in 1921 with headquarters in Moscow. Headed by *Solomon Lozovsky*. Disbanded in 1937. Also known as *Profintern*, Russian abbreviation for Red International of Labour Unions ('Krasnyi Internatsional Professionalnykh Soiuzov').

Social Democratic Federation (SDF) British socialist group headed by H.M. Hyndman. Branches existed in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town in South Africa. In 1921 refused to accept *Comintern's* conditions for membership in *CPSA*.

Social Democratic Party (SDP) Renamed branch of *Social Democratic Federation* in Durban. In 1921 refused to accept *Comintern's* conditions for membership in *CPSA*.

South African Communist Party (SACP) See *Communist Party of South Africa*.

South African Federation of Non-European Trade Unions (SANTU) See *Native Federation of Trade Unions*.

South African Labour Party (SALP) Political party formed in 1910 to advance interests of white workers through electoral politics. After outbreak of World War I majority led by *F.H.P. Cresswell* supported war and expelled militant left-wing anti-war minority which subsequently formed *International Socialist League* and later *CPSA*. SALP remained committed to strengthening position of white workers against both capital and black labour. Received electoral support in constituencies with concentrated population of English-speaking white workers. After Witwatersrand strike of 1922 made alliance pact with *National Party*. Rebuffed approaches by *CPSA* for affiliation. Participated in government from 1924 to 1929 as junior coalition partner. Supported segregationist legislation and regulations. Adopted more liberal stance during and after World War II when participated in *United Party* government led by *Jan Smuts*.

South African Party (SAP) Political party created in 1911. Advocated conciliation between Afrikaners and English-speakers to foster unity among white population. Supported maintenance of links with British Empire. Headed by *Louis Botha* until his death in 1919, then by *Jan Smuts*. Merged with *National Party* in 1934.

South African Trades and Labour Council (SATLC) National co-ordinating trade union body with headquarters in Johannesburg. Created in 1930 as successor body to South African Trade Union Congress (SATUC), formed in 1925 as South African Association of Employees' Organisations (SAAEO) and renamed in 1926. Initially member unions were white-only, later some included Coloureds and Asians; Africans (and sometimes Coloureds and Asians) were organised in separate parallel unions.

Sovnarkhoz Russian abbreviation for Council for People's Economy ('Sovet Narodnogo Khoziastva'). Soviet government body responsible for management of Soviet economy from 1917 to 1932.

Third International, III International See *Comintern*.

Unionist Party South African political party founded in 1910. Supported strong ties with Great Britain. Merged with *South African Party* in 1920.

United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) Political organisation of *Marcus Garvey's* 'Back to Africa' movement founded in 1914 in Jamaica. Vehicle for propaganda of Garveyist views throughout Africa and African diaspora. Branches of UNIA existed in Cape Town and several other South African cities in 1920s and 1930s, often headed by West Indian immigrants.

United Party (UP) South African political party formed in 1934 by merger of *South African Party* and majority of *National Party*. Headed government in 1934–9; in 1939–48 headed government in coalition with *South African Labour Party* and Dominion Party. Led by *J.B. Hertzog* until 1939 when he resigned over issue of supporting South Africa's entry into World War II. Thereafter led by *Jan Smuts* until his death in 1950.

Workers' International Relief (WIR) See *International Workers' Aid*.

Young Communist International (YCI; KIM) *Comintern*-affiliated organisation founded in 1919 to link country-based communist youth organisations through its headquarters in Moscow. Disbanded in 1943. Also known as *KIM*.

ACRONYMS

AAC	All-African Convention
AFTU	African Federation of Trade Unions
ANC	African National Congress
APO	African People's Organisation
AUCP(B)	All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)
CI	Communist International
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CPGB	Communist Party of Great Britain
CPSA	Communist Party of South Africa
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CPUSA	Communist Party of the United States of America
ECCI	Executive Committee of the Communist International
FNETU	Federation of Non-European Trade Unions
FOSU	Friends of the Soviet Union
FSU	Friends of the Soviet Union
GPU	Russian acronym for Main Political Administration ('Glavnoie Politcheskoie Upravlenie')
GULAG	Russian acronym for State Administration of Camps ('Gosudarstvennoie Upravleniie Lagerei')
IANC	Independent African National Congress
ICU	Industrial and Commercial Union
ICWU	Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union
IFTU	International Federation of Trade Unions
ILD	International Labour Defence
ILS	International Lenin School
IRA	International Red Aid
ISL	International Socialist League
ITUCNW	International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers
KIM	Russian acronym for Communist International of Youth (Kommunisticheski Internatsional Molodiozhi)
KUTV	Russian acronym for Communist University of Toilers of the East (Kommunisticheskii Universitet Trudiashchikhsia Vostoka)
LAI	League Against Imperialism
LAR	League of African Rights
LP	Labour Party
MLSh	Russian acronym for International Lenin School (Mezhdunarodnaia Leninskaia Shkola)

MOPR	Russian acronym for International Red Aid (Mezhdunarodnaia Organizatsia Pomoshchi Bortsam Revoliutsii)
MRP	Russian acronym for Mezhdunarodnaia Rabochaia Pomoshch (International Workers' Aid)
NAFTU	Native Federation of Trade Unions
NEFTU	Non-European Federation of Trade Unions
NFTU	Non-European Federation of Trade Unions
NIANKP	Russian acronym for Academic Research Association for National and Colonial Problems (Nauchno-Issledovatelskaia Assotsiatsiia Natsionalnykh i Kolonialnykh Problem)
NKVD	Russian acronym for People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (Narodnyi Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del)
NP	National Party
NRC	Native Representative Council
OGPU	Russian acronym for Unified State Political Administration (Obiedinennoie Gosudarstvennoie Politicheskoie Upravlenie)
OMS	Russian acronym for Department of International Liaison (Otdel Mezhdunarodnykh Sviazei)
RCP(B)	Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)
RILU	Red International of Labour Unions
SACP	South African Communist Party
SALP	South African Labour Party
SANTU	South African (Federation of) Native Trade Unions
SAP	South African Party
SATLC	South African Trades and Labour Council
SATUC	South African Trades Union Congress
SDF	Social Democratic Federation
SDP	Social Democratic Party
UNIA	United Negro Improvement Association
UP	United Party
WIR	Workers' International Relief
YCI	Young Communist International
YSL	Young Communist League

ABBREVIATIONS[1]

ac, a/c	agricultural
Afr.	Africa, African
agit.	agitation
agitprop.	agitation and propaganda
agr. cult.	agricultural
Apr.	April
Aug.	August
C., c.	communist
C., c., cd.	Comrade
c.c.	comrades
CC	Central Committee
CCC	Central Control Commission
CE	Central Executive Committee
Com.	Comrade
comm.	commission
coms.	comrades
conf.	confidential
CP	Communist Party
Com. Party	Communist Party
cop.	copy; copies
C.T.	Cape Town
DC	District Committee
Dec., Dez.	December
demo.	demonstration
dept.	department
DO	District Organiser
DPC	District Party Committee
DPO	District Party Organiser
E.	Executive
Eastsecretariat	Eastern Secretariat
EB	Executive Bureau
EC	Executive Committee

1. The list of abbreviations includes a) abbreviations which are found in the originals in English and that may need an explanation; b) abbreviations which are not used or not commonly used in English and which the editors introduced in the documents translated from Russian in order to preserve the style and flavour of the originals. The latter was not possible in all cases because some such abbreviations would have obscured the text. One such example is an abbreviation for the Union of South Africa which is commonly used in Russian ('YuAS') but can not be used in English for obvious reasons ('the USA'). Full words or names had to be given in the text in such cases.

Engl.	English
Europ.	European
Ex. Bureau, Exec. Bureau, Ex. Bu.	Executive Bureau
exc.	excluding
Exec. Com.	Executive Committee
Feb.	February
Fed.	Federation
Govt., govt.	government
Grt.	Great (Britain)
incom.	incoming
Int., int, intern.	international
Jan.	January
Joh., Johan., Johburg., JNB, J-bg	Johannesburg
Jul.	July
Jun.	June
L.M.	Lourenço Marques
Mar. Mrz.	March
meet.	meeting
nat.	nationalist, national
Nov.	November
Oct.	October
org.	organisation, organisational
orgs.	organisations
outg. No.	outgoing number
P.	party
para	paragraph
PB, pb.	Politbureau, Political Bureau
Polbureau	Politbureau
polit.	political
Politcom.	Political commission
Politsecretariat	Political Secretariat
Pres.	Presidium
Prof.	Professor
prop.	propaganda
Ps.	Politsecretariat
Py.	Party
rep., REP.	representative
Russ., Rus.	Russian
s.	secretariat
SA	South Africa, South African
S. Africa	South Africa
Sat.	Saturday
s. confidential	strictly confidential
Sep.	September

steno.	verbatim
str. conf., str. confidential	strictly confidential
S.W.A.	South West Africa
tr., trans.	translate, translation
Tr. Union, tr. union, TU	trade union
v.	very
YCL, ycl	young communist league (in general)

ILLUSTRATIONS

Between pages 130 and 131.

1. A leaflet of the International Socialist League, 1919.
2. Sidney Percival Bunting, a founder member and leader of both the International Socialist League and the Communist Party of South Africa. Bunting was a delegate to the 4th and 6th congresses of the Comintern.
3. Bill Andrews, a founder member and leader of both the International Socialist League and the Communist Party of South Africa. Andrews was also a member of the Comintern Executive.
4. Rebecca Bunting, a founder member of the International Socialist League and a prominent communist. Rebecca Bunting was a delegate to the 6th Congress of the Comintern.
5. David Ivon Jones, a founder member, leader and theoretician of the International Socialist League and of the CPSA. Jones was also a member of the Comintern Executive and South Africa's representative on the ECCI. He died in Moscow where he is buried.
6. Albert Nzula, the first black secretary of the CPSA, who studied at the Lenin School. He died in Moscow where he is buried. Nzula's photograph is pasted to a piece of paper with the following note by Potekhin: 'Albert Nzula. I. Potekhin, 5 April 53. This is the only photograph of Nzula in the USSR. For this reason to be looked after with greatest care and in any circumstances to be returned shortly. 5 April 53. I. Potekhin.'
7. Johannes Nkosi, the hero of the CPSA, killed during its pass-burning campaign of 1930.
8. Josiah Gumede, a founder member of the Natal Natives Congress and of the South African Native National Congress (the ANC), and later the president-general of the ANC.
9. Bill Andrews (centre) among the workers of the Moscow factory 'Dinamo' (1923).
10. S.P. Bunting's Election Address.
11. Lazar Bach, a prominent South African communist who studied at KUTV, was accused of Trotskyism and died in the GULAG.
12. Josie Mpama (Palmer), a prominent South African communist who studied at KUTV.
13. Participants of the 5th Congress of the CPSA (Bill Andrews: front row, first from the left, S.P. Bunting front row, second from the right).
14. George Clark, a Comintern emissary in South Africa.
15. Boris Idelson, the first Comintern emissary in South Africa.
16. Bonio Petrovsky, head of the Soviet Oil Trading Company (AROP) in South Africa.
17. The CPSA's weekly newspaper, *The International.*

18. S.P. Bunting's pamphlet.
19. Endré Sik, KUTV lecturer.
20. The KUTV building today.
21. The Soviet Union's first Africanist experts in 1934. Alexander Zusmanovich is second from the left, back row; Ivan Potekhin is first from the left, middle row; Endré Sik is at centre, between the front and the middle rows; Dmitry Olderogge is first from the right, front row, Igor Snegirev is in the middle, front row.

INTRODUCTION: SOCIALIST IDEALS AND BOLSHEVIK REALITIES: SOUTH AFRICA AND THE ARCHIVES OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The collapse of state communist structures in the Soviet Union had an enormous impact around the world – sometimes in spheres far removed from contemporary politics. One of the side effects of this event was the opening of several formerly top secret Soviet archives, of which the archives of the Communist International were one.

The Communist International (the Comintern) – a worldwide organisation of communist parties that operated from Moscow from 1919 until 1943 – may seem to belong to a very distant era. Even among historians few would remember that each member party was, in fact, a section of the Comintern, that its official name was 'The Communist Party of [a country]. Section of the Communist International', and that Comintern officials at the centre often referred to it as 'our party'.

However, if communism as an ideology, as a political, economic and social system and as a factor in world politics is to be recognised as one of the most important phenomena of the twentieth century and as one of the central features of its history and legacy – as we think it should be – then the Comintern was without doubt one of the most important global organisations ever to have existed. Its influence proved even greater than it seemed at the time, and the ideals and methods that it so vigorously spread around the world have already outlived several generations. Yet until recently it was next to impossible to study the Comintern, for it was not only one of the most powerful organisations in the world but also one of the most secretive.

The 'open' activities of the Comintern, such as its seven congresses and its affiliation with legal communist parties, were only the tip of the iceberg. Underneath there existed a diversified and secret network of communications, invisible chains of command, information and espionage, ramifying outwards from Moscow. It functioned under the guise of banks, industries, trade companies, youth, sports, women's and community organisations and depended on outright illegal activities. Secret emissaries of the Comintern travelled all around the world. Secret schools taught multiple disciplines relevant to the communist movement as it was then, from ideology to party building to military training and subversion. The Comintern's publications, funds and instructions were secretly delivered, even to the most remote parts of the world.

However, except for the memoirs of a few apostates who left the Comintern and wrote about their engagement with it many years later, there were no

documents to shed light on what the Comintern actually did and how it functioned. Stalin's era held those who worked in this organisation and survived the purges in such fear of repression that very few were willing to share what they remembered. It is in this light that the significance of the Comintern archives should be viewed.

During the Soviet era the documents and materials of the Comintern were preserved in the Archive of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). After the collapse of the Soviet Union the Party Archive was reorganised and renamed the Russian Centre for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Contemporary History (RTsHIDNI). In 1999 it was again renamed, becoming the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI).

At the end of 1991 RTsHIDNI opened many of its documents to researchers, the Comintern archives among them. However, these archives had not remained intact. Many documents had been destroyed at different times for a variety of reasons, mostly during the Stalin era. In October 1941, when German troops were at the outskirts of Moscow, the Party Archive was evacuated to Ufa, the capital of Bashkiria, 1,200 km to the east of Moscow. The evacuation was rushed and some losses were unavoidable. Though the archive is now open to researchers, access to its materials is not unlimited: a sizeable part of the documents has not been declassified, and of those that were some have been closed again for various reasons.

Nevertheless, the mass of Comintern documents that survived and has been declassified is enormous. The picture of the activities of the Comintern that emerges from them may be incomplete in every detail but it is full enough to be considered comprehensive. Several publications of documents from the Comintern archives and of studies based on them have already appeared, the majority on the activities of the Comintern in Europe, in the USA and in China. This is, however, only the beginning of a long process of incorporating the phenomenon of the Communist International into world history.

For this publication we have selected a broad range of documents from the South African part of the Comintern archives.

SOUTH AFRICA IN THE COMINTERN

South Africa was not the most important country for the Comintern but it was important enough to enjoy much attention. The number of documents pertaining to South Africa in the Comintern archives – many thousands – is testimony to this. The reason for this interest was the Comintern's preoccupation with colonial and dependent countries, which it perceived as potential allies of the communist movement in the struggle against capitalism.

Of all the African countries, South Africa was of the greatest interest to the Comintern. During the 1920s and 1930s, the Union of South Africa was the most industrialised and urbanised country on the continent. It had a more

developed, numerous and better organised urban working class than any other African country. The main purpose and goal of the Comintern was the preparation of world proletarian revolution, so, naturally, it saw the urban proletariat as the most revolutionary force. It was hoped that the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), which was later renamed the South African Communist Party (SACP), would spread communist ideals throughout the African continent, thus pulling it towards the world revolution.

The founder of the Comintern, Vladimir Ilich Lenin, showed much interest in events in South Africa.[1] At different times and in different circumstances, many well-known Comintern leaders were in one way or another connected with South Africa or had to deal with problems of South Africa's communist movement. Among them were Nikolai Ivanovich Bukharin, Grigori Yevseievich Zinoviev, Dmitri Zakharovich Manuilsky, André Marty, Georgi Dimitrov, Willi Münzenberg and Solomon Abramovich Lozovsky.

There is no straightforward answer to the question of which institutions and organisations within the Comintern were responsible for South African affairs. Diversified and complicated, the Comintern system was highly fluid: its internal structures changed continually, and at different times the same set of functions was attributed to different bodies. The names and chains of command of these bodies also changed and it was often difficult to identify the exact function performed by each part at any given time. It is clear, however, that the departments of the Comintern most closely involved in South Africa at different

1. Lenin was interested in South Africa from a very early stage of his political career. South Africa and the Anglo-Boer War were mentioned twice in the very first issue of the *Iskra*, the Marxist paper that Lenin began to edit in 1900. Lenin included many events in South African history in his 'Essayed Summary of World History Data after 1870' and 'Table of Colonial Seizures and Wars' (V.I. Lenin. Notebooks on Imperialism. In: V.I. Lenin. *Collected Works*, (in Russian), vol. 32, pp. 246–7, 286, 305, 341, 425, 451, 453, 459, 471, 483–5, 487, 511–15, 520, 522, 554, 562, 688–705, 710). He also included several books on South Africa in the reading list that he made for himself (Ibid., pp. 40, 76, 459). He made extensive notes from these books with his own addenda and comments. Lenin was particularly interested in the strike movement and in the Indian movement in Natal. He was also fascinated by the Nama and Herero uprising against the Germans in 1904–7 and even copied the words of a Herero song: 'Whom does Hereroland belong to? Hereroland belongs to us' (Ibid., p. 682).

   In November 1920, soon after the Comintern was formed, Lenin asked for Davidson Don Tengo Jabavu's book, *The Black Problem. Papers and Addresses on Various Native Problems*, to be ordered for him from London. Jabavu's book was among the first (perhaps, the very first) to be published by a black South African after World War I. Lenin received it a month after its publication. (See: *Biograficheskaia Khronika Lenina (Biographical Chronicle of V. I. Lenin's Life)*, vol. 9, Moscow, pp. 495, 534).

   Lenin stressed that the Rand Revolt of 1922 deserved the close attention of the Comintern and wrote about it several times. The South African communists David Ivon Jones and Sam Barlin took part in the 3rd Congress, and Sidney Percival Bunting in the 4th Congress of the Comintern in both of which Lenin participated. S.P. Bunting published an article 'Lenin: Personal Impressions' in the *International* (Johannesburg, 25 January 1924). This was the only personal recollection about Lenin published in Africa. David Ivon Jones published many articles about Lenin's works (See: A. Davidson. 'Lenin on South Africa'. *The African Communist*, 1982, Fourth Quarter, no. 91).

times were the Eastern Secretariat and the Anglo-American Secretariat. Both reported to the Political Secretariat and to the Presidium – the highest bodies of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI). Formally, the highest authority within the Comintern rested with its congresses, but in practice the policy of the organisation was defined by the Politsecretariat and the Presidium of the ECCI.

Besides these permanent bodies there were several temporary or ad hoc commissions that dealt with South Africa. The most important among these were the South African Commission (the so called 'Marty Commission', named after its head, the French communist André Marty) and the Negro Commission. The Comintern's affiliates, such as the Red International of Labour Unions (RILU), the Peasant International (Krestintern) and the International Red Aid (IRA), were also involved in South African affairs.

The forms and the intensity of the involvement of the 'centre', as the ECCI was often referred to by communists around the world, in local party matters, South African among them, varied but it was always the ultimate and final authority. The ECCI worked out a general line for the communist movement as a whole, as well as strategies and tactics for each member-party, and helped to introduce and implement these strategies, often reverting to direct imposition of its ideas. It supplied the parties with propaganda materials, and with funding for publications and remuneration of top officials, as well as for special tasks and operations. One of its major preoccupations was the leadership cadres of member-parties. The ECCI was the final authority behind the appointment of the parties' leading figures and sometimes offered its own candidates, charging them with a particular set of tasks. Future leaders were educated, studied and selected in ECCI's secret schools in Moscow, sent back to their own countries and were often recalled back to Moscow for instructions – and sometimes for punishment. The ECCI settled internal party squabbles, intervened in ideological debates and attempted to control even the day-to-day practical work of each member-party – some times more so than at others.

The directives to member-parties were prompted by the interests of these parties only to the extent to which they coincided with the global plans and concrete regional ideas of the 'centre' itself at any given moment. These latter were dictated by the interests of the Soviet Union, which was seen as the ultimate and most valuable achievement of the international communist movement. Even so, Moscow needed detailed information about the concrete situations within each party and country. This information was obtained from official reports sent to the ECCI by member-parties, reports by foreign communists who visited Moscow on ECCI's invitations or orders, representatives of member-parties at the Comintern congresses and at the ECCI, correspondence with member-parties and individual communists, from students who came to study at ECCI's schools and from secret agents whom the ECCI had sent as advisers to (and informers on) member-parties.

The first report from South Africa reached the Comintern in April 1920, before the creation of the Communist Party of South Africa. It was brought after a long trip, involving enormous difficulty and self-sacrifice, by a South African socialist of Russian origin, Michael Wolberg. The 3rd Congress of the Comintern (June–July 1921) was attended by two South African delegates, David Ivon Jones and Sam Barlin. One of them, Jones, was co-opted to the ECCI as a representative of South Africa, even though the Congress took place before the founding congress of the CPSA.

Jones actively participated in the work of the Comintern until his death in 1924. He died of tuberculosis in a sanatorium in the Crimea and is buried in Moscow. Another leader of the CPSA, Sidney Percival Bunting, was a delegate to the 4th Congress of the Comintern (November–December 1922). At this Congress the Chairman of the CPSA, William (Bill) Andrews, was elected to the ECCI. S.P. Bunting, his wife Rebecca Bunting, and another prominent South African communist, Edward Roux, participated in the 6th Comintern Congress (July–September 1928). Jones, S.P. Bunting and Roux wrote several reports and letters to the ECCI, and Jones published many articles in the Comintern's periodicals, some of which exist only in Russian. The South African trade unionist and communist Solly Sachs spent the last months of 1925 and the first months of 1926 in Moscow,[2] working in several organisations of the Comintern. He submitted a memorandum to the ECCI on how the Comintern should build its work with the CPSA and published a long article on South Africa in a Russian academic journal.[3]

In 1927, James La Guma became the first non-white South African communist to come to Moscow. He reported to several departments of the ECCI, including its presidium, and, as we shall see, his visit resulted in significant political developments. On his second visit during the same year he brought Josiah Gumede, the president of the ANC, with him.

In 1928, a new subdivision, the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers, was created within the Red International of Labour Unions with the task of spreading the Comintern's propaganda among black workers in the USA, West Indies and Africa. The Committee published *The Negro Worker*, at first as a bulletin with a limited number of copies, and from 1931 as a monthly journal. *The Negro Worker* was prepared mostly in Moscow and printed in Europe and in the USA: initially in Hamburg, then in Copenhagen, Antwerp, New York and Paris successively. Some issues of the journal were published in a way which was specifically designed for distributing it illegally. The cover bore the title, *The Missionary Voice. The Way of the Cross. Mouthpiece of the A. M. E. Missionary Society, London*, and the first page carried only the slogan, 'Hark! Ye tired and oppressed with various evils!'. Only

2. RGASPI, 495/64/49/1–2.
3. E.S. Sachs. 'The Union of South Africa'. *Novyi Vostok*, no. 1, 1922.

at the second page did the reader see the real title, *The Negro Worker*, and the communist slogan 'Workers of the World, Unite!' The South African communists Albert Nzula, Edwin Mofutsanyana and John Gomas were members of the editorial board together with communists from the USA and the West Indies.

In 1928, the first South African communists came for a course at one of Comintern's schools, the International Lenin School (MLSh), and during the 1930s several future leaders of South Africa's communist party studied at MLSh and at another Comintern's school, the Communist University of Toilers of the East (KUTV). The last to come was Bettie du Toit, who arrived in November 1936 and left on 31 December 1937. The students' trip to Moscow, their stay there and their departure were strictly secret; the schools themselves existed in conditions of strictest secrecy. The majority left South Africa illegally, all had to use aliases while in Moscow, and even their families knew nothing of their real whereabouts. In many cases, it was extremely difficult to find out personalities behind the aliases. Some would have remained unknown even now had they not been disclosed to Apollon Davidson by former lecturers of the Comintern when he interviewed them in the 1950s.

We have established that the South African students who studied at the Comintern's schools were William Kalk (aliases Victor Brown and N. Brown), Victor Danchin (alias William Johns), Molly Wolton (Molly Gordon), Albert Nzula (Tom Jackson), Moses Kotane (James Warren), Edwin Mofutsanyana (Greenwood), John Marks (Max Raymond), Nikin Sobia (Jack Hilton), Johannes Moses Beyers (Henry), Josie Palmer or Mpama (Beatrice Henderson), Lazar Bach (Jakov Yuzhin or Jacob Eugene), Maurice Richter (Marian Bicher), Paul Richter (Matvei Yugov), and Bettie Du Toit (Mary Davidson). As far as we know, this is the complete list of students – but not of their aliases.

Some people in the list used several aliases. For example, during his second stay in the Soviet Union and his second course of studies, in 1935–6, Moses Kotane was 'Rio Gurleigh', not 'James Warren'. Kotane also used other aliases: Pilane, John Gurleigh, and J.W. Macauley. In other cases, two people may have used the same alias. Thus, according to personal files and many other documents Maurice Richter was at KUTV as Marian Bicher and his brother Paul, as Matvei Yugov. Yet in some documents 'Matvei Yugov' was clearly Maurice, not Paul. Despite strict regulations there was also a considerable degree of confusion and disorder in the Comintern documents. Some people had several personal files that contained conflicting information, some were listed under their real names, others under aliases.

The majority of students from Africa, South Africans among them, studied at KUTV which became the centre of African studies (at that time mostly South African) at the Comintern and in the Soviet Union. No systematic study of Africa had been undertaken in the Comintern and generally in the Soviet Union before. The situation changed after the 6th Congress dealt with Africa specifically and introduced the slogan of an independent native republic as the

official policy of the Comintern for South Africa. The leadership of the Comintern needed to know more about Africa, South Africa in particular. KUTV officials commissioned a Hungarian communist, Endré Sik, to prepare a paper on the socio-economic situation in Africa. In April 1929 the paper was presented and in 1930 it was published in one of the Comintern's journals, the *Revolutsionny Vostok*.[4]

From that time on, the South African situation and the prospects of the revolutionary movement in the country became an important element of academic and political activities at KUTV. A new department – 'section' – for African and African-American students was created, its name undergoing frequent changes, and the African laboratory was formed at the Academic Research Association for National and Colonial Problems (NIANKP), itself part of KUTV.[5] The students of the department, their lecturers, several outside researchers who worked at the laboratory and those South Africans who studied at MLSh but came to KUTV for specialised regional courses collected and studied materials on Africa, held seminars, presented papers on various problems of the African continent, published articles and surveys of events in Africa in the Soviet media and in other communist periodicals, such as *The Negro Worker*, the publications of the British communist party and the CPSA's newspaper, *The South African Worker*. As a rule, the authors used pseudonyms. Thus KUTV lecturers Alexander Zakharovich Zusmanovich and Ivan Izosimovich Potekhin often signed their articles as Manzu and John Izotla.

Although education at the Comintern's schools was highly ideological it still offered a valid and in some respects advanced training of the kind that students could not get in their own countries. In Moscow they were specifically educated and trained as professional politicians and exposed to a broader international scene. Their fellow students came from many countries and from various backgrounds. There were personalities of significance among them, not all necessarily communists, such as Jomo Kenyatta, the future first president of Kenya, and George Padmore, editor-in-chief of *The Negro Worker* and the future ideologue of the Pan-African movement.

The Comintern's schools gave South African students opportunities to publish, first of all, in *The Negro Worker* but also in other journals. In 1933 Albert Nzula, the first black secretary of the CPSA published a book about conditions of labour and the labour movement in Africa, co-authored with

4. A. Sik. 'Chernaia Afrika na revolutsionnom puti' (*Black Africa on the Revolutionary Road*). *Revolutsionny Vostok*, no. 8, 1930.
5. To demonstrate how complicated the structure of the Comintern was it should be mentioned that in 1936 the NIANKP was renamed the Academic Research Institute of National and Colonial Problems (NIINKP) and that simultaneously KUTV itself became part of the new organisation. This did not mean much in practice, of course, because at that time KUTV was already the object of repression and its work was completely disrupted.

Potekhin and Zusmanovich.[6] This book was first published in English by the London Zed Press only in 1979. More often than not even the authors themselves saw these publications as propaganda materials or at least as 'applied' studies useful for the cause – rather than as the result of serious academic research. However, they contributed a lot to the emergence of new approaches in African studies far beyond Moscow. Suffice it to say that it was at KUTV that the debate on the existence of an African bourgeoisie and, more broadly, on the nature of social structures of contemporary African societies, began.

For the Comintern leadership, however, the main value of the department was not its academic achievements but the information that it could supply. One of the tasks of the staff of the department was to write closed assessments of the students, including their leadership qualities and the levels of political work at which they could be used. Some of these assessments proved quite astute. Student 'Joken', for example, was reported to have come 'to the School as a completely convinced national reformist'. Student 'Hamilton' was considered 'more secretive' than other students, and it was thought desirable 'to find out much more about his political complexion'. Student 'Raymond', on the other hand, required much attention, for, the assessment ran, 'a party leader grows here'.[7] 'Joken' was Kenyatta, 'Hamilton', Padmore, and 'Raymond', as it has already been mentioned, J.B. Marks.

The staff also provided the leadership of the Comintern and its committees with background information and analytical material on various countries and events in Africa. The analyses were mainly carried out by the three successive heads of the department, Nikolai Mikhailovich Nasonov, Zusmanovich and Sik, as well as by Potekhin, on the basis of the 'bourgeois' press from African countries. From South Africa the department received not only the main national newspapers but also regional and even vernacular newspapers.

The most valuable information, however, came from the Comintern's emissaries who were sent to South Africa, as well as to many other countries. Their task was to study the situation in the CPSA, to advise its leadership and assist it both organisationally and ideologically and to send back reports and to provide recommendations to the Comintern. Their reports were so highly regarded that they went straight to the top leadership of the ECCI, and at least one – directly to Stalin.

The names of three of these emissaries had been known before the opening of the archives. Eugene Dennis, later the leader of the Communist Party of the USA, was sent to South Africa in 1932 as 'Russel'. Two British communists, George Hardy and Peter Kerrigan, supervised the affairs in the CPSA in 1936

6. A. Zusmanovich, I. Potekhin, T. Dzhekson. *Prinuditelny trud i profsoiuznoie dvizheniie v stranakh negritianskoi Afriki* (*Forced Labour and the Trade Union Movement in Negro Africa*). Moscow, 1933.
7. RGASPI, 532/1/440/2, 32, 48.

and 1938. It has been difficult indeed to establish the names of other emissaries but as far as we can judge we have found them all. It turned out that the first emissary to be sent to South Africa was Boris Idelson, a Russian communist, who came out in 1929. He operated mainly as 'Louis' but used other aliases as well. In 1930, another Russian, Georgi Shkliar, came to South Africa as 'George Clark'. Otto Huiswoud, a West Indian born American communist, was sent to South Africa in 1932 by the RILU.

From 1931 to 1936 another Comintern official, Bonio Dimitrov Petrovski, worked in South Africa. He was a Soviet representative in AROP – the Soviet-South African Oil Company and in this capacity he dealt strictly with business. Secretly, however, he dealt with Comintern business as well, such as receiving Eugene Dennis during the latter's 1932 visit.

The identities of Idelson and Shkliar presented a particularly difficult case. Idelson's identity was covered twice: not only by his aliases but by his pseudo-real name as well. Not only the South African security service – which discovered the fact of the Comintern representative's visit only after he had already left the country – but many in the Comintern itself and even the most thorough historians thought that 'Louis' was a prominent German communist, Paul Merker. Even years later, in 1944, a South African communist, Ben Weinbren, referred to the visit as being by Merker. Merker never objected or wrote anything to the contrary. It was, however, somewhat odd – to say the least – that he could be in South Africa while simultaneously organising the First All-German Convention of the Revolutionary Trade Union Opposition. The solution to this riddle came in the form of a letter written by the same Weinbren in August 1929, in which he reported to the Comintern on the activities of its representative. In it he carelessly put 'Idelson' in brackets after Merker's name.[8] The problem with Shkliar-Clark was his double identity. He was an American communist, George Clark, who worked and lived in America and had a father there, and whose first language was English. And he was also a Soviet communist, Georgy Samuilovich Shkliar, who worked and lived in Russia, whose first language was Russian and who had a mother in Moscow and a sister in Kharkov. It took Valentin Gorodnov a long time and much effort to find the real identity of 'Louis' and to piece together Shkliar's story.

The fate of Moscow's South Africa – of those whose work at the Comintern was connected with South Africa – was tragic, as was the fate of the majority of the officials and staff of the Comintern generally. Georgy Ivanovich Safarov, Ludwig Magyar and other leaders and ideologues of the Comintern who formulated its strategy on national and colonial problems, Grigory Zinoviev, the first chairman of the ECCI, Nikolai Bukharin who participated in the discussion on the slogan of an independent native republic in 1927 and who, perhaps, was its author, were all executed. David Petrovsky who, under the

8. RGASPI, 495/155/80/47.

alias 'Bennet', spoke at the 6th Comintern Congress, insisting on the adoption of this slogan, and who closely supervised its implementation did not escape the same fate. Nor did Idelson, the first emissary of the Comintern to South Africa.

Almost all officials of the African department of KUTV and of the African laboratory were casualties of one sort or another. Some were executed, others exiled. Yet others got away with party reprimands or with an expulsion from the Comintern system, or from the party, or from both – which effectively ended their careers. Nasonov, Elsa Karlovna Richter,[9] a staff member of the laboratory, and Georgy Yevgenievich Gerngross who was closely connected with it, were either executed or died in the GULAG. Fiodor Stepanovich Gaivoronsky, a staff member of the laboratory, was arrested and tortured. Zusmanovich and Potekhin were expelled from KUTV with party sanctions. Endré Sik was expelled from the party and from the Comintern system.

Robert Naumann, who was particularly active in 'purging' the department and the laboratory during the term of the Marty Commission did not escape persecution himself. He was accused of a 'lack of vigilance in relation to the enemies of the people Patak and Nikolau among his surroundings in his flat and in his block of flats'[10] – but he survived.

The staff of the department and of the laboratory was persecuted for various individual reasons. One excuse, however, was a lecture presented to Comintern's Africanists by George Sacks, a Cape Town journalist, in 1935. To locate his name in the South African context it should be mentioned that Sacks was the husband of Betty Radford, who in 1937 started a well-known left weekly, *The Guardian*.[11]

After his departure a rumour spread in the Comintern that Sacks was a Trotskyist which meant that Zusmanovich and Potekhin had offered a platform for Trotskyist propaganda – and not in any ordinary place but within the Comintern. This was a death-threatening pronouncement in the Soviet Union in the late 1930s. Zusmanovich was dismissed with immediate effect. Potekhin followed soon thereafter. Sacks safely returned to South Africa, and in 1941 joined the CPSA. It seems that he never found out that he had been branded a Trotskyist in Moscow and that several people were persecuted on account of their acquaintance with him. A few years later, during the war, Sacks met the Soviet Consul General in South Africa, Ziabkin (the Soviet consulate was

9. Not a relative of the two Richter brothers.
10. An excerpt from the Minutes no. 4 of the meeting of the Party Committee of the staff ('apparat') of the ECCI Party Branch of 20.01.1938. Personal File no. 11 830 (Registration Section of the Staffing Department of the ECCI), list 90. Patak and Nikolau were obviously either staff members or employees of the Comintern.
11. *The Guardian* existed in South Africa from 1937 until 1963 under different titles: *The Guardian, The Clarion, The Advance, The New Age, The Spark*. The new names were used to renew the weekly every time the authorities banned it.

opened in 1942 and lasted until 1956). At that time Sacks edited a journal, *The Democrat*, and published Soviet materials offered to him by the Consulate. During the meeting he criticised many of these, saying that they were not interesting enough for the South African reader. Ziabkin obediently passed on his criticism to Moscow, obviously also unaware of Sacks's previous record there.[12]

As our documents show both Zusmanovich and Potekhin were very lucky to have been punished in this way – but they did not know it then.

THE COMINTERN IN SOUTH AFRICA

The history of the CPSA began long before its first congress which met on 30 July–1 August 1921 in Cape Town. In 1915 the South African Labour Party split. Members of its left wing, calling themselves socialist internationalists, objected to South Africa's participation in the world war. They left the party and founded a new organisation, the International Socialist League of South Africa (ISL). The League started a weekly paper, the *International*. The position of the League was close to that of Lenin and Karl Liebknecht, the German socialist leader, both of whom called on their respective parties to oppose the participation of their governments in World War I.

In 1917 the International Socialist League unconditionally supported the Bolshevik revolution. With the creation of the Communist International in 1919 it immediately resolved to join it. The official resolution about the application for membership was passed on 4 January 1920 at the ISL's meeting in Johannesburg. When the message from this meeting to the Comintern was read out at the 2nd Congress of the Comintern on 4 January 1920 it was met with applause.[13]

In 1920 a small group of ultra-left socialists proclaimed itself the Communist Party of South Africa and began to publish its own newspaper, *The Bolshevik*. This Party rejected any participation in parliamentary activities. This stand ran counter to the conditions of admission to the Comintern.

Another condition for admission (all in all there were 21 conditions) was that there could be only one communist party in each country. It was just such a united party that was created at a congress held in July–August 1921. Several regional and national Marxist organisations joined it. The proposed name of the new organisation was the United Communist Party of South Africa, but the congress decided to drop the word 'United', so the Party was called 'The Communist Party of South Africa, Section of the Communist International'.

12. The Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 145/4/4/3.
13. *Protokoly kongressov Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala. Vtoroi kongress Kominterna, iiul-avgust 1920* (*Minutes of the Congresses of the Communist International. The Second Congress of the Comintern, July–August 1920*) Moscow, 1934, pp. 78–80.

During the first years of its existence the *International* continued as its official organ. Later it was renamed consecutively *The South African Worker*, *Umsebenzi* and *Inkululeko*.

Both the ISL and at first, the CPSA, were organisations of white socialists and workers. The first black member to join the ISL and then the CPSA was T. William Thibedi, a trade union leader. However, already in 1916 at the first conference of the ISL S.P. Bunting presented a 'Petition of Rights for the Native'. In 1918 Bunting and his followers assisted the 'bucket strike' of African workers. During the strike of African miners in 1920 the ISL published an appeal to white workers, also written by Bunting: 'Don't Scab'. Another leaflet, 'To Bantu Workers', explained the idea of the class struggle and the need for proletarian unity. Soon after its formation the CPSA opened a Sunday school for African workers.

In the mid-1920s many black leaders who were to occupy important positions in the party for a long time to come joined its ranks. John Gomas, James La Guma, Albert Nzula, Edwin Mofutsanyana, Gana Makabeni, John B. Marks and Moses Kotane were among them.

Before 1928 the Comintern seldom intervened in the internal affairs of the CPSA. The party followed the general line of the Comintern but in its everyday life it did not feel much pressure from Moscow. The situation started to change in 1927 when James La Guma visited Moscow and spoke at a meeting of the presidium of the ECCI. A complete about turn began after the 6th Congress of the Comintern when the ECCI took the CPSA under its direct and permanent control. This control took different forms: letters demanding adherence to Comintern directives, interference in internal party struggles, the sending of emissaries to South Africa and finally the creation of the commission to study the situation within the party and to decide its future fate.

The slogan that the Comintern put forward for the communist movement in South Africa in 1927–8 was that of an independent native republic. Historians have argued as to whether the idea of this slogan was first originated by La Guma or by the ECCI – more particularly, by Bukharin. We have not resolved this puzzle definitively. What we have discovered is that La Guma presented a report about the situation in South Africa and in the Party to a meeting of the presidium on 16 March 1927 in which Bukharin also participated and argued that the CPSA must demand 'a Negro republic independent of the British empire' with 'autonomy for the national white minorities'. On his departure La Guma received 'verbal instructions' neither the contents nor the nature of which are clear. A resolution incorporating the slogan was then prepared within the ECCI and sent to the CPSA on 9 August 1927, and in August–September 1928 the 6th Congress finalised and confirmed it.

But there was still no clarity as to what the slogan actually meant. Did it imply a national democratic (that is bourgeois) state that would guarantee the interests of the minorities and develop into a socialist state at a later stage or was it an outright socialist state that would cater for the class interests of

workers irrespective of colour? If an independent native republic were a national democratic state should the CPSA work to create a broader class coalition within the black population to achieve it and what classes or parties would such a coalition include? If the republic were a socialist state would white workers, at the time the only class conscious and politicised proletariat in the country, not be alienated by its 'native' character? Where does one find a class-conscious black proletariat and how could black workers be attracted to a party which was overwhelmingly white? These questions were to preoccupy the mind of the CPSA for years to come. The slogan became and remained the main issue in the intense internal struggle inside the CPSA from 1928 until 1936 and in the relations between the party and the Comintern throughout the 1930s.

The ECCI used utmost pressure to make the CPSA accept the slogan. The problem was not only the lack of clarity about its nature but the way it was introduced. There was no consultation even with the top leadership of the party: the decision about the slogan came unilaterally from the Comintern. Those who had doubts were accused of 'white chauvinism', Trotskyism and opportunism and in 1931 were kicked out of the party.

The slogan had a drastic effect on South African politics. It aimed at attracting black workers to the party and was, indeed, in part responsible for the realisation of this goal. It was, however, accompanied by the 'bolshevisation' of the party. In fact, the imposition of the slogan on the CPSA and the struggle against 'white chauvinism' and Trotskyism within its ranks was simply the particular form that the 'bolshevisation' of the CPSA took. The party that emerged from this process was certainly much darker in complexion but it was also more dependent on Moscow, more dogmatic, divided and sectarian. It lost much of its following, as well as its contacts with other organisations, most notably, with the African National Congress. Just how dependent and sectarian the party became is clear from the episode concerning the League of African Rights. This was a broad-based national front organisation which the CPSA attempted to create in 1929 together with the ANC. The attempt was immediately stopped on ECCI's demand: black workers were supposed to join the CPSA, not a loosely organised nationalist body with an uncertain leadership.

As far as the Comintern was concerned, the slogan was just a part of its global strategy. The idea of an independent native republic was formulated in the same vein as a similar slogan, 'self-determination for Negroes in the Black Belt' (the southern states of the USA), which the Comintern put forward as a policy for the CPUSA. Both slogans were introduced in order to create yet another opposition front to the ruling circles of Great Britain and the USA.

No wonder the ECCI never bothered to explain what an independent native republic actually meant: its line for the CPSA was shaped less by South African realities than by its global interests. Despite what the slogan itself might lead one to believe, the specific situation in South Africa was hardly taken into

consideration any more than it was anywhere else. The essence of ECCI's directives to the CPSA and to the communist parties of Europe and Asia were the same. 'Bolshevisation' and campaigns against 'Trotskyists', social democrats, 'opportunists' and 'revisionists' were the core of its policy. An independent native republic in South Africa or a self-determination for Negroes in the Black Belt in the USA were different expressions of that core. Both slogans were easily dropped as soon as the political situation in the world changed and new tactics were required.

The internal situation within the CPSA merely reflected world-wide tendencies in the communist movement. Under the banner of 'bolshevisation' the centre in Moscow was tightening its grip over the international communist movement. The creation of a strong but obedient political force ready to protect Soviet interests world wide and within each country, and ultimately to destroy bourgeois governments was just one aim of the 'bolshevisation' campaign. Its other goal was getting rid of the old generation of communists in foreign communist parties.

Unlike Trotsky, Zinoviev and Bukharin, Stalin had not been involved in the creation of the international communist movement. He did not know the leaders of foreign parties, did not trust them, and did not like the fact that many of them had independent followings. Having asserted his power within the Soviet leadership by 1928 he decided to get rid of the 'old guard' of communists and to substitute his own cadres for them. 'Bolshevisation' was announced as the official policy of the Comintern at its 5th Congress in 1925 but the pressure for its implementation gained momentum only gradually. It began with the biggest communist parties of Europe, America and Asia and reached the CPSA by the end of the 1920s.

The policy had devastating results everywhere. Hundreds and hundreds of foreign communists disappeared into the GULAG, sharing the fate of their leaders. Many old scores were now settled and careers at the centre were quickly built, often at the expense of the lives of former comrades. Politically 'bolshevisation' weakened all member parties and in at least one case contributed to a global tragedy. Its authors decreed that socialists were the main evil in the world and put a ban on any alliances of communists with other parties. As a result the refusal of German communists to create a united front with socialists against fascism in the late 1920s and early 1930s helped Hitler to come to power.

In South Africa the effect of 'bolshevisation', though less dramatic, was quite sufficient to ruin a small and weak party. In 1930 Douglas Wolton, a British communist with a South African background was sent from Moscow to South Africa to 'bolshevise' the CPSA. He proceeded with zeal and with a total lack of consideration for broader party interests and for the people involved. A year later his wife, Molly, joined him after finishing her course at MLSh. She displayed even fewer scruples than he had in dealing with the old party cadres. The Woltons, together with Albert Nzula, the first black secretary of the party,

and Eddie Roux, later on joined by Moses Kotane, were the main victors in the struggle for 'bolshevisation'.

1931 was the turning point in the relations between the Comintern and the CPSA and in the history of the South African communist movement itself. The ECCI asserted its authority by 'purging' the CPSA of some of its best cadres. The founder members of the party, S.P. Bunting and Bill Andrews, were expelled on accusations of 'white chauvinism' and 'Trotskyism'. T.W. Thibedi and Gana Makabeni, the first Africans to join the party, followed, accused of 'Buntingism'.

The slogan of an independent native republic was now unequivocally accepted as were all the other demands of the ECCI, however inappropriate some of them seemed in the context of 1930s South Africa (for example, organisation of 'factory cells', 'village cells', and so on). This did not, however, stop the struggle within the party. The main problem now lay with the implementation of the slogan – and here the lack of clarity of its meaning came to the fore. Kotane, Roux and John Gomas saw an independent native republic as merely a first, democratic, stage of the forthcoming revolution, while the Woltons and then Lazar Bach, J.B. Marks, Edwin Mofutsanyana and Nikin Sobia believed in its socialist and class nature. The differences resulted in a heated debate on the existence of the African bourgeoisie. If the republic was not socialist then it could only be capitalist – but was there any African capitalist class to speak about?

This was by no means a purely academic question. If there was no 'native' bourgeoisie, then the 'native republic' could only be a socialist one – in which case the activities and influence of African nationalist (that is bourgeois) organisations, such as the ANC, ran counter to the goal of creating an independent native republic. If the African bourgeoisie did exist, then should the CPSA not establish closer ties with African nationalist organisations in order to build an independent native republic? The methods of the struggle were also a far cry from an academic debate: both factions were not short of words, labelling one another as 'left sectarians' on the one hand, and as 'right deviationists' on the other. Both sides accused one another of factionalism and of splitting the party and both complained to Moscow calling for sanctions against the opponents. The climax of this struggle came in 1934–5.

In a letter to the party dated 23 February 1934 Moses Kotane wrote: 'the Party is beyond the realm of realities, we are simply theoretical'.[14] He called on the leadership to do away with sectarianism, to get closer to the masses and to reject a mechanical transfer of the European experience of class struggle to South African soil. The ECCI which until then seemed to have had no preference for either of the factions decided in favour of the one led by Bach, Marks and Mofutsanyana. Both Marks and Mofutsanyana were at that time in

14. *South African Communists Speak. Documents from the History of the South African Communist Party, 1915–1980.* London: Inkululeko Publications, 1981, p. 120.

Moscow and, most likely, received instructions to remove Kotane from the position of party secretary – which was done by the end of 1934. In October 1934 the ECCI invited both Kotane and Bach to Moscow. Bach set off immediately and at the beginning of 1935 was enrolled as a student at KUTV. Kotane wisely postponed his visit.[15]

By the middle of 1935 almost all day-to-day work in the party stopped. Its newspaper was neither distributed nor sold. The party had only a few dozen members left – and its leadership still could not achieve consensus. In September Marks's faction used its majority in the Politburo to expel Kotane's following from the party. Had this happened a few months earlier it would have meant a final defeat for the faction and for Kotane personally. As it was, the situation in Moscow was changing dramatically by mid-1935. The 7th Congress of the Comintern, which opened on 25 July and lasted until 20 August, put forward a new and drastically different line for the movement. The Congress was convened at a time when fascist aggression had become a real and present danger, and the Comintern called on communists to work with all other anti-fascist forces, socialist and bourgeois parties included, in order to create a united popular front in every country. As before, the new line had to be applied everywhere from China to France to South Africa and with immediate effect.

As far as South Africa was concerned the slogan of an independent native republic was scrapped as sectarian – the only logic behind this, obviously, being that of the 'Buntingites', that is that the slogan alienated whites, whether workers or not. Left sectarianism was generally denounced at the Congress – no doubt much to the relief of Kotane's faction.

News of this change must have reached South Africa even during the Congress. On 14 September Kotane, Roux and Gomas sent a telegram to the ECCI: 'Please intervene South Africa sectarian leadership conducting mass expulsions ... we prepared help unity party basis seventh congress decisions'.[16] Marks's faction also sent a telegram but the expulsions were stopped. On 23 September the ECCI sent new orders to South Africa summoning two members of each faction to Moscow, Marks (at that time the secretary of the party) and Sobia from the Politburo, and Kotane and Roux from the opposition. This time Kotane arrived as bidden. Marks, on the other hand, having got as far as Paris, wisely decided not to proceed. Sobia and Roux found reasons to refuse the invitation, and the Politburo sent Maurice Richter, a South African communist of Russian origin, who was Bach's and Marks's supporter but not even a Politburo member.[17]

Soon after the 7th Congress the ECCI appointed a South African Commission with the task of reassessing the situation in the CPSA. André

15. RGASPI, 495/14/349/145, 162.
16. RGASPI, 495/14/347/3.
17. RGASPI, 495/74/11/3–4.

Marty, head of the Anglo-American Secretariat of the ECCI, was appointed its head but much of the background work was done by Robert Naumann. Judging by the volume of the materials that the commission studied and the detail with which it conducted its interviews with the available South African communists it really did a thorough job. At the end of March 1936 it produced a detailed programme of action for the CPSA which contained everything from new slogans to methods of party work. The programme was full of minute local details – yet it seems even further removed from South African realities (or any economic realities, for that matter) than other Comintern documents dealing with South Africa. Suffice it to say that it proposed the 'confiscation without compensation' of the land of big farmers and the repayment of funds that they had received from the government as subsidies, the provision of free grain for poor farmers, black and white, the provision of full employment and 'social insurance' for the whole population, the introduction of a 40-hour working week and so on. In the context of South Africa during the Depression years such demands were wholly utopian.[18]

Neither of the factions was allowed to triumph: the Commission decreed that the old leadership, irrespective of their stand in the party struggle, relinquish their positions and that new leaders be selected from amongst the comrades who had not been involved in the squabbles, preferably from amongst the trade union leadership. The names of particular individuals were proposed. The party was to stop its internal struggles immediately and to start working with the 'masses' through trade unions.

The Commission met well into 1937 and even after this Marty remained the final authority on South African affairs, although the British communist party was charged with the task of supervising the affairs of the CPSA. Late in 1937 Marty met the new leadership of the CPSA in Paris and at the beginning of 1938 reported on this meeting to Georgi Dimitrov. But the Commission was the swan song of the Comintern's involvement in South Africa. By 1939 there was nobody left in the ECCI to supervise the implementation of the resolutions of the Commission.

The conciliatory stance of the Commission was reserved for factions in general, viewed as abstract notions, but not for the personalities involved. It would have been extremely unusual in the late 1930s if a Comintern commission set up to look into an internal struggle within a communist party did not discover Trotskyist influence in its midst. And so it proved. Several South African communists fell victim to accusations of Trotskyism. The Trotskyist movement was, indeed, well entrenched in South Africa and during the 1930s Trotsky gave it much thought and sent two letters to his South

18. RGASPI, 495/20/662/137–48.

African followers.[19] But the Comintern's choice of 'Trotskyists' among the South African communists was totally unjustified.

Lazar Bach was the first to attract the attention of the Commission. During the 7th Congress Bach was in Moscow, at KUTV. He attended the sessions of the Congress as a delegate with a 'consultative vote'. There was only one South African delegate with full voting rights, Josie Mpama, another KUTV student. She sat on the presidium of the Congress and made a speech on behalf of the CPSA. In the eyes of the Comintern leadership the speech was a disaster, for although Mpama did mention the popular front it was, according to her, just a route to an independent native republic. Questioned by the Commission how such a serious political mistake could have occurred she revealed that the speech was written for her by Bach and Zusmanovich.

No communist would have consciously challenged the Comintern's line from its most public platform – certainly not by the middle of the 1930s. Both Zusmanovich and Bach were experienced politicians who could not have failed to understand what the consequences of such a move could be. There is hardly any doubt that if they did oppose the Comintern's line, they did so unintentionally. The turn in the policy of the Comintern was so abrupt that most probably they simply failed to understand fully what was happening. After all, even before 1935 a united front had been mentioned as part of the official policy of the Comintern – together with the slogan of an independent native republic – but it was never taken seriously. While preparing the speech for Mpama, Zusmanovich and Bach must have miscalculated the magnitude of the change and simply did not understand that the slogan of an independent native republic was to be scrapped completely.

Mpama escaped unscathed. Zusmanovich was removed from his position as head of the African department. Later that year he was dismissed from the Comintern for organising Sacks's lecture and thus escaped further sanctions. Bach, on the other hand, got into the net. He, together with the Richter brothers, was held in Moscow until the end of the work of the Commission.[20]

During his term on the Commission Robert Naumann wrote several reports accusing Zusmanovich, Potekhin, Bach and the Richters of Troskyism. A letter of 26 August 1936, for example, ran:

> I would like an investigation to be launched into whether a counter-revolutionary Trotskyist-Zinovievist group consisting of Zusmanovich, Potekhin, Yuzhin, Richter, Yugov et al. and connected with Madiar[21] and Safarov existed in the South African section of KUTV.
>
> The group defended Trotskyist-Zinovievist views on South African questions. These views have been stated in a number of articles ... in teaching materials at KUTV and in the Soviet press... They had regular meetings at the School. At the sessions of the Secretariat of Com. Marty which investigated the question of factional struggle in the CPSA they unanimously took a factional stand. A white general[22] and wives of Trotskyists[23] were employed at the African laboratory of KUTV. A lecture by a Trotskyist who came on Zusmanovich's invitation ... was organised there.
>
> The essence of their position was that they ignored one of the most important allies of South Africa's proletariat, the oppressed colonial peoples. They aimed at the immediate introduction of the dictatorship of workers and peasants and the creation of Soviet power ...[24]

19. B. Hirson. 'The Trotskyists of South Africa, 1932–48'. *Searchlight South Africa*, vol. 3, no. 2 (no. 10), 1993; '1932 Letter of Trotsky to South Africa'. *Think. A Review of International Struggles*, no. 5, April–May 1996. See also: A. Drew, ed. *South Africa's Radical Tradition. A Documentary History*, vol. 1. Cape Town: Buchu Books, Mayibuye Books, UCT Press, 1996.
20. RGASPI, 495/14/349/145, 162; 495/279/51.
21. Magyar.

The letter went on to say that Bach's father was a factory owner, that in 1931 Maurice Richter had left South Africa without the permission of the party, that Zusmanovich was expelled for inviting a Trotskyist, and that all five persisted with their dissidence. In the late 1930s one such text was sufficient to land the accused in the GULAG – and Naumann was a prolific political reporter. Fortunately for Potekhin and Zusmanovich they had already been ousted from the Comintern and were thus out of sight at the time when there were many more potential victims to keep the executions machine busy. But Bach and the Richters were still in the Comintern system, and the accusations against them mounted.

Paul Richter had had nothing to do with the South African factional struggle. He had spent only two years in South Africa in 1929–31 and then returned to the Soviet Union. He worked in several Soviet organisations in Moscow and had a family there. Yet it was he who became the main culprit, for it was he who had introduced both Bach and Maurice Richter to Jakov Berman, brother of the German communist Berman-Yurin, who had been executed together with Zinoviev and Kamenev. This acquaintance became the main accusation against all three but their 'factional' activities within the CPSA also weighed heavily against them.

On 28 October 1936 the case of Bach and the Richters was heard by the International Control Commission of the Comintern – a kind of internal Comintern court which considered the most serious cases of disciplinary action. The Commission pronounced Bach and the Richters guilty,[25] and on the night of 10 March 1937 all three were arrested. They were sentenced on the basis of the dreaded Article 58 of the Soviet criminal code that dealt with

22. The author meant G.Ye. Gerngross.
23. The reference is not clear.
24. RGASPI, 495/20/660/30–3 (Original in Russian).
25. *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional* (*Communist International*), 1937, no. 2. (English edition: *The Communist International*, 1937, no. 3–4, pp. 263–4).

participation in counter-revolutionary organisations, counter-revolutionary agitation and propaganda and assistance to the international bourgeoisie.[26]

Bach and the Richters were sent to the GULAG's concentration camps on the Kolyma river in the Far East. This was not, however, the end of the Richters' encounter with the Soviet law. The administration of the camp where the Richters were held discovered a 'secret terrorist anti-Soviet organisation' among the prisoners of which both brothers were allegedly part. In March 1938 they were both executed. Lazar Bach died in a camp on 10 February 1941.[27]

Bach and the Richters were not the only South African communists to disappear in the GULAG. A young communist, Joe Glazer, who had moved to the USSR in 1932, died in the camps in 1936. S.B. and S.G. Davydovs, a married couple, who had left Russia at the beginning of the century and lived in South Africa for 18 years, participating in the socialist and communist movement, returned to the Soviet Union in 1921 with a letter of recommendation from Bill Andrews, at that time chairman of the CPSA. They were sent to work in Archangel where somebody soon reported that they had accepted food presents from British sailors. This accusation, absurd as it was – particularly, in a starving country – was never proved but the Davydovs were expelled from the party. Their file in the archives ends in the late 1920s by which time they had become the subject of correspondence between the Comintern officials and the OGPU.[28] It is difficult to believe that they could have survived.

There is little doubt that a similar fate would have awaited John Marks had he proceeded from Paris to Moscow. On 15 June 1936 a closed meeting of the collegium of the International Control Commission discussed his case (referring to him by his alias, Raymond) and resolved:

> On the basis of the information at the disposal of the Apparatus of the ECCI [he] is suspected of ties with the enemy ... Raymond is at the moment in Paris ... Given that M. Raymond's presence is necessary for investigation of charges that are of serious importance for the whole CP of South Africa, the matter is to be postponed.[29]

This damning information at the disposal of the ECCI must have been old rumours about Marks being a police spy. Back in 1930 Marks had been

26. News about this reached the South African press. See: 'Union Nationals Face Death in Russia. Secret O.G.P.U. Coup'. *The Sunday Express*, 18 July 1937.
27. A prominent Soviet historian, Victor Moiseievich Dalin, told Apollon Davidson that he was Bach's fellow prisoner. In 1939 he was allocated a plank-bed next to Bach and got to know him well. Dalin said that Bach was extremely well educated. For example, he was able to tell Dalin about the latest fiction publications in the UK even though this information was not readily available in the Soviet Union. Dalin's opinion of Bach coincided with that of his comrades in the CPSA, i.e., that Bach was a very well informed but politically a very dogmatic person.
28. S.B. Davydov, S.G. Davydov. Personal file no. 48, the ECCI, Personnel Department.
29. RGASPI, 505/1/43/33, 35.

approached by the police who invited him to work for them. He had agreed because, in his own words, he 'was at that time unemployed and starving' – but never did so. Moreover, he had immediately reported the episode to the then leadership of the party. Since Marks's return from the Soviet Union in 1934 the rumours about his work for the police flared up, were discussed by the Politburo and dismissed.[30] Yet they must somehow have reached Moscow and put Marks's life in very real danger.

It is not clear if Marks found out the actual wording of the resolution of the International Control Commission about him or if he knew about its existence at all. According to him, he was strongly advised against proceeding to Moscow by several leaders of the French communist party. However, he did not return to South Africa either. Marks spent seven months in France and when he finally got back he immediately blew his cover, making a claim for a lost piece of luggage – a gramophone bought in France where he had had an illegal passport – in his real name.

An absurd absent-mindedness? Perhaps. It is more likely, however, that Marks had decided to make further illegal trips impossible for himself for some time to come, even though he ran the risk of detention on the one hand and of party sanctions on the other. He was duly expelled from the party for this breach of discipline and information about this was sent on to the International Control Commission. By then, however, not only the Anglo-American Secretariat but the International Control Commission itself had lost many of its staff to purges. Of the five members of the Commission who had taken the decision on Marks a year earlier, three had already been executed. Marks was reinstated in the party less than two years later by the same Politburo which had expelled him in 1937.

There is room for argument about the Comintern's role in the international communist movement in the 1920s. Perhaps one could even find arguments in favour of the 'bolshevisation' of the communist parties in the late 1920s and early 1930s. There is no doubt that the 7th Congress of the Comintern made a valid, albeit belated, contribution to the struggle against fascism. But there can be no doubt whatsoever that Stalin's 'great terror' was a campaign of self-destruction both for the CPSU and for the international communist movement in general. In 1937 the Red International of Labour Unions was disbanded. KUTV ceased to function in 1937 and was closed in 1938. The Comintern itself was officially dissolved ('dissolved itself') on 15 May 1943 but in effect it died much earlier. In 1936–8 it lost most of its staff. Its foreign officials were sacked, imprisoned and executed together with dozens of their Soviet colleagues and millions of other Soviet citizens. By 1938 the Comintern was not even a shadow of the formerly powerful organisation it had once been.

30. RGASPI, 495/64/145/43.

The saying that 'the revolution, like Saturn, must devour in turn each one of her children' could, perhaps, dismiss the fall of some of the leaders of 1917. But Stalin's purges, in which millions died, were something quite different. Nobody has a theory adequate to explain this phenomenon. Even more compelling is the question why the grim Soviet reality did not divert believers in the socialist system away from the Soviet Union. How could it be that, with millions executed or rotting in Stalin's prisons and camps, for many contemporaries Moscow still remained the hope of mankind? Not just communists, nor, indeed, just the uneducated 'masses' that could easily fall for the unsophisticated propaganda.

Thus the South African poet, William Plomer, who was by no means a communist, wrote: 'And ... Moscow, of all places, was the sole source of light.' Bernard Shaw, Romain Rolland and Leon Feuchtwanger thought of it in exactly the same terms. Why should South African communists have been any different? In the 1920s and 1930s Soviet ideals and hopes for a brighter future were the only utopia on offer in a world affected by fascism and depression. The rest of the world did not have them at all. The realities of the Comintern would seem surrealistic if one forgot about its ideals.

In the late 1930s foreign Comintern officials who lived in the Hotel Lux in the centre of Moscow could not sleep at nights. At three or four in the morning there would be a sound of a car stopping at the entrance and heavy steps of NKVD guards would echo in the long empty corridors leading to one or two doors and then returning with the arrested victims. People behind the closed doors sat fully dressed listening: whose door would they go to today? Sometimes their nerves gave way, and, unable to take the terrible waiting any longer, they shot themselves. Some jumped to their death from their windows into the courtyard far below. Always into the courtyard, never into the street where Soviet passers-by might see the suicide and get the wrong idea. Soviet citizens' ideals had to be protected at all costs, and the internal courtyard was safely surrounded by the hotel walls. In the end the courtyard windows were grilled, and the suicides stopped.

On the eve of the Second World War what little was left of the Comintern communicated with the South African party only through the British communist party. Small delegations from the trade unions and the society 'Friends of the Soviet Union' came to the USSR on visits organised by the CPSA. In October–November 1937 Bill Andrews, now forgiven, arrived for the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the October revolution. He was met by Naumann who tried to persuade him to rejoin the CPSA. By 1938 the pressure from Moscow completely ceased and the CPSA was left to its own devices and to the assistance of British communists. The Soviet leadership was no longer interested in 'colonial' questions for it was now mainly preoccupied with the threat of war.

The CPSA was plunged into a new crisis when a non-aggression pact was signed by the USSR with Nazi Germany in August 1939 – an act which the

leaders of the South African party chose to support. The majority of its followers neither understood nor supported this move, and the party's following dwindled even further. However, Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union and the Soviet struggle against the German invaders swelled the ranks of the CPSA and dramatically increased its influence. This was a clearly expressed comment on the fact that despite the collapse of the Comintern both the CPSA itself and the public at large saw the South African party as an expression of Soviet policy – and as Soviet prestige grew, so did the CPSA.

It was true, however, that from 1941 all contacts between the CPSA and the rump Comintern ceased and even the contacts between the Soviet party and the CPSA stopped. The congress of the CPSA, which took place on 4–5 January 1947, received greetings from the communist parties of Britain, France, Italy and some other countries – but not from the CPSU.[31] A different kind of link, diplomatic relations between the USSR and South Africa, came into existence in mid-1942. Some staff from the Soviet consulates met with South African communists, either covertly or on public occasions, and reported to Moscow about these meetings. The CPSA was useful in mounting campaigns of solidarity with the Soviet Union through such organisations as Friends of the Soviet Union, Medical Aid for Russia, and so on. It was obvious, however, that direct party ties were far from the centre of the attention of Soviet diplomats. The Soviet leadership focused entirely on the USSR's struggle for survival and victory.

THE DOCUMENTS

The history of relations between the Comintern and the CPSA is reflected in a number of publications on the history of the CPSA. First to appear were memoirs and biographical accounts. The most important of these were R.K. Cope's book on Bill Andrews, Edward Roux' book on Bunting and memoirs by Edward Roux and Wilfred Harrison.[32] Alex La Guma's biography of Jimmy La Guma is the most recent addition to this biographical–autobiographical genre.[33] Roux also published the first study of African nationalist movement in South Africa.[34] Sheridan Johns' doctoral thesis was the first academic study of

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31. *The Guardian*, 9 January 1947.
32. R.K. Cope. *Comrade Bill: the Life and Times of W. H. Andrews, Workers' Leader.* Cape Town: Stewart Printing Company, n.d. [1943]; E. Roux. *S.P. Bunting: A Political Biography.* Cape Town: African Bookman, 1944; W. Harrison. *Memoirs of a Socialist in South Africa, 1903–1947.* Cape Town: by the Author, 1947; E. Roux, W. Roux. *Rebel Pity: The Life of Eddie Roux.* London: Rex Collings, 1970.
33. A. La Guma. *Jimmy La Guma: A Biography.* Ed. by M. Adhikari. Cape Town: Friends of the South African Library, 1997.
34. E. Roux. *Time Longer than Rope: A History of the Black Man's Struggle for Freedom in South Africa.* London: Victor Gollancz, 1949.

the early history of the CPSA.[35] This was followed by books written by the South African communists, Jack and Ray Simons,[36] Michael Harmel,[37] Brian Bunting[38] and by Martin Legassick,[39] and E.T. Wilson.[40] Henry R. Pike's history of the CPSA written from an anticommunist perspective contains some very useful material, for the author, uniquely, had access to the South African security service archives.[41] The most important recent publication is Alison Drew's history of the Left in South Africa.[42]

Three publications of documents pertain to our topic: the documents of the South African Communist Party edited by Brian Bunting,[43] Alison Drew's documentary history of radical movements in South Africa[44] and the first two volumes of documents of African political movements edited by Thomas Karis and Gwendolen Carter.[45] However valuable for the history of the CPSA, Bunting's collection consists exclusively of the articles from official party publications and of a few official party documents. Drew has published a number of documents from the Comintern archives but as with Bunting, she does not focus on the relations between the Comintern and the South African communists. Karis's and Carter's publication is crucial for the understanding of the African political scene in the 1920s and 1930s but the communist movement is not in any way at the centre of their attention.

It is a pity that some of the most important studies of the history of the CPSA and of the relations between the Comintern and South Africa were published in Russian and are thus accessible only to Russian speakers. Apollon Davidson's book covering the early history of the CPSA was one of the first academic publications on this topic and was to a large extent based on the Comintern

35. Completed in 1965, the thesis was first published as a book only three decades later: S. Johns. *Rising the Red Flag. The International Socialist League and the Communist Party of South Africa, 1914–1932.* Bellville: Mayibuye Books, 1995.
36. H.J. and R. Simons. *Class and Colour in South Africa. 1850–1950.* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969.
37. A. Lerumo [M. Harmel]. *Fifty Fighting Years. The South African Communist Party. 1921–1971.* London: Inkululeko Publications, 1971.
38. B. Bunting. *Moses Kotane: South African Revolutionary.* London: Inkululeko Publishers, 1975.
39. M. Legassick. *Class and Nationalism in South African Protest: The South African Communist Party and the 'Native Republic'. 1928–34.* Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press, 1973.
40. E.T. Wilson. *Russia and Black Africa before World War II.* New York and London: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1974.
41. H.R. Pike. *A History of Communism in South Africa.* Germiston: Christian Mission International of South Africa, 1985.
42. A. Drew. *Discordant Comrades. Identities and Loyalties on the South African Left.* Aldershot, Burlington *et al.*: Ashgate, 2000.
43. Brian Bunting, ed. *South African Communists Speak. Documents from the History of the South African Communist Party, 1915–1980.* London: Inkululeko Publications, 1981.
44. A. Drew, ed. *South Africa's Radical Tradition. A Documentary History*, vol. 1. Cape Town: Bunchu Books, Mayibuye Books, UCT Press, 1996.
45. T. Karis, G.M. Carter, eds. *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1964*, vols. 1 and 2, Stanford, California, 1972.

archives.[46] After the opening of the archives a number of studies of the Comintern itself appeared[47] and several collections of documents were published which are of much interest to scholars of anti colonialism, revolutionary nationalism and related topics. The first selection of South African documents from the Comintern archives was included in a recently published documentary history of relations between Russia and Africa.[48]

This publication offers a comprehensive selection of documents that covers the full history of relations between the Communist International and the Communist Party of South Africa. The editors' goal was to present this history through the documents, to let the documents speak, rather than use them to illustrate the editors' text. Thus the editors' text, both in the introduction and in the notes, was kept to a minimum while as much documentary text was included as was possible and necessary to allow the documents tell their story in its entirety and diversity.

One of the main principles behind our selection was to cover, as far as possible, all major topics/periods in the Comintern's involvement in South Africa. There were several of these: the communication between the International Socialist League and the Comintern before the formation of the CPSA; the formation of the CPSA and its admission to the Comintern; the Rand revolt and the Comintern's reaction to this event; the adoption of the slogan of an independent native republic for South Africa by the Comintern; the internal struggle within the CPSA around this slogan and the 'bolshevisation' of the party which involved debates on race and class issues; the U-turn by the Comintern from the slogan of an independent native republic to the policy of a popular front and the consequences of this move for South Africa; the work of the ECCI's South African Commission; the collapse of the Comintern under the weight of Stalin's purges and the persecution of several CPSA members by the Soviet authorities. Some of these topics are better represented than others in the archives but we have included documents covering them all.

Our other priority was to present the different forms that the Comintern's involvement in South Africa took, from devising the strategy for the CPSA and imposing its general line to educating and selecting the leading cadres of the party, punishing them for deviations and dissidence and sending its own emissaries to check the implementation of its decisions. Documents presenting all these and other forms of the Comintern's activities in or towards South Africa are included in our selection. Among these are resolutions on South

46. A.B. Davidson. *South Africa: The Birth of Protest. 1870–1924* (in Russian). Moscow: Nauka Publishers, 1972. The archives were still closed at that time and the documents could not be either quoted or referred to but in most cases the source is clear from the contents.
47. One example of these is the book, *The Organisational Structure of the Comintern, 1919–1943* (in Russin) by G.M. Adibekov, E.N. Shakhnazarova and K.K. Shirinia (Moscow: Rosspan, 1997) – a publication to which we often referred in our work.
48. A.B. Davidson and S.V. Mazov, eds. *Russia and Africa. Documents and Materials. XVIII Century to 1960* (in Russian), Vol. II. Moscow: Institute of General History, 1999.

Africa passed by the Presidium and the Secretariat of the ECCI, by the Eastern and Anglo-American Secretariats and by the South African Commission. We also publish correspondence between the CPSA and the Comintern, reports by the Comintern's emissaries to South Africa, and so on.

Another side of the Comintern that we thought important was its internal functioning. There are several documents in our selection which show how meetings of Comintern bodies were convened, how decisions were taken, and at what level, who proposed resolutions and took decisions and how unofficial opinions were formed and rumours emerged in the Comintern circles. Among the documents of this type there are several in our selection that do not pertain directly to South Africa for we could not find their exact South African equivalents. These were selected because the procedure was obviously the same or very similar in all cases, and we wanted to show it. One such document is the minutes of the meeting of the ECCI taking the decision to send emissaries of the Comintern abroad.

The next group of documents selected for this publication presents minutes and resolutions of congresses and conferences of the CPSA. These documents are not necessarily connected with the Comintern but we reproduce several of them as fully as considerations of space and balance allow for the Comintern archives seem to be the only place where they have survived.

Finally, the history of relations between the Comintern and the CPSA is a human story – as much as any history is. We have selected a fair number of documents by, about or pertaining to the people, both the South Africans and the Russians, who formed the connection between the CPSA and the Comintern. Their correspondence, autobiographies, reports and stenos of their presentations that we include in this collection allow an insight into their ideas, perceptions and struggles – something which brings a flavour of real drama into the documentary narrative.

We have selected 183 documents. The first volume contains 90 documents covering the period of the 1920s (including 1930); the second, 93 documents covering the 1930s. This division is not mechanical but is defined by two distinctly different periods in the relations between the Comintern and the CPSA, as the documents clearly show. The 1920s were a time when South African communists enthusiastically embraced the Comintern and when the involvement of the Comintern in the affairs of their party was minimal. In the 1930s, the period of 'bolshevisation' of the party and of internal party squabbles, the intervention of the Comintern and its influence on the party became quite pronounced. This, however, was over by the late 1930s and the collapse of the Comintern. The last documents in our selection date from 1939, although formally the Comintern lasted for another five years, because there were very few documents on South Africa in the archives, let alone documents of interest, after this date.

We have attempted to make a balanced selection but this was not always possible. Some events in the history of the CPSA are covered by documents

from only one of the two factions within the party which means that the picture presented could be distorted. Equally, some important documents, such as the minutes of certain congresses of the CPSA, could not be found in the archives at all.

All our documents, except one, come from the Comintern archives housed at the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI) and all, with one exception, are published here for the first time.

The importance of this publication is heightened by the fact that the archives of the CPSA itself have not survived in full. Even before the Suppression of Communism Act was passed by the South African parliament in 1950 the party was always under the threat of persecution. The CPSA dissolved itself before it was banned under the Act. It is not clear what happened to its archives at this point. There is little doubt that the South African security branch had copies of at least some party documents but their archives are said to have been destroyed before the 1994 elections. None of the collections of party documents that we are aware of (files on 'communism' in the South African National Archives, Jack and Ray Simons' archive at the University of Cape Town, Brian and Sonia Bunting's archive at the Mayibuye Centre of the University of Western Cape, and the large collection of CPSA documents housed at the Hoover Institution of War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford University) contains a full or even a regular record of CPSA documents. The collection of CPSA documents in the Comintern archives may be not full either (some documents were lost in the archives or were destroyed and some were bound to be lost on the way from South Africa to Moscow; it is also important to remember that typical of the Stalin era the most important negotiations were conducted and the most important instructions were given verbally) but it is huge.

Our selection presents a diverse range of documents that we view as the most important for understanding the nature of relations between the Comintern and the CPSA, the process of policy making and decision making within the Comintern, and the history of the CPSA itself.

Besides this, our documents, together with other publications of documents from the Comintern archives,[49] help one to understand the strategy and tactics of the international communist movement between the two world wars, communist ideology and its mentality as a whole, the Comintern's approach to national and colonial problems and its attitude to questions of race and class as

49. See, for example, H. Klehr, J.E. Haynes, F.I. Firsov, eds. *The Secret World of American Communism*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995; H. Klehr, J.E. Haynes, K.M. Anderson. *The Soviet World of American Communism*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998. Several important publications appeared in Russian, most notably, *The Comintern and the Second World War*, part 1, Moscow, 1994; part 2, Moscow, 1998, *The Comintern and Latin America*, Moscow, Nauka Publishers, 1998, and *The Comintern and the Idea of the World Revolution*, Moscow, Nauka Publishers, 1998.

well as to other issues which preoccupied the communist movement between the two world wars.

South African documents from the Comintern archives also reflect the internal political struggle inside the Russian communist party. The consolidation of power by Stalin, his intolerance of any kind of non-conformism and his elimination of even the smallest, real or imagined, deviation from the official political line, be it 'left', 'right', 'opportunistic', 'Trotskyist' or 'revisionist' – all had a direct and immediate effect on the generality and movement of cadres within the Comintern, and on its activities.

Our documents also shed additional light on the activity of the communist parties of Great Britain and of the United States, for many of the contacts of the Comintern with South African communists went through these parties, and ideologically South African problems were often correlated and connected with the 'Negro problem' in the United States. Some prominent British and American communists were in different ways involved in South Africa. It has already been mentioned that Eugene Dennis spent several months in South Africa as a secret emissary of the Comintern. Harry Haywood, a prominent African-American communist, was also deeply involved in formulating the strategy for the CPSA in the late 1920s and early 1930s and William Patterson, another African-American, who later became a member of the leadership of the CPUSA, and his wife (both under the alias 'Wilson') worked on African affairs in the Comintern in Moscow.

The opening of the Comintern archives caused a sensation. Unscrupulous publications of selected documents immediately followed, leading to contentious, biased and often scandalous interpretations. In many cases this resulted in political clashes and litigation over ownership of and access to the documents and in the reclassification of some documents and of some parts of the Archive's collections. As for South Africa, the first journalist who looked through some documents in the Comintern archives published an article in *Izvestia*, the biggest Russian newspaper of the time, under the title: 'The Communist Party Would Have Introduced Soviet Power in Southern Africa Already 60 Years Ago. The Comintern documents published for the first time bear witness.'[50] Such sensationalism made our research more difficult both politically and practically.

The sensitivity of the materials with which we worked and the property rights issue led us to discuss our research with two late leaders of the South African Communist Party, the successor of the CPSA, Joe Slovo and Chris Hani. Both thought that the publication of the documents of the CPSA would be important and valuable, and Chris Hani confirmed his opinion in writing. Neither made any attempt to intervene in our work.

50. Boris Piliatskin. 'Kompartiia dolzhna byla ustanovit' na Iuge Afriki sovetskuiu vlast' ieshcho 60 let nazad'. *Izvestia*, Moscow, 30 May 1992.

МОСКОВСКИЙ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ
ИНСТИТУТ СТРАН АЗИИ И АФРИКИ
ЮЖНОАФРИКАНСКИЙ НАУЧНЫЙ ЦЕНТР
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South African Communist Party
Central Committee

April 26, 1992

Dear Friends,

Our Centre is working on the collection of documents "Comintern and South Africa. (1920-1937)".

We think that this publication is very important now that this theme is subject to all sorts of misinterpretation.

We would very much like to know your opinion about this idea.

Professor Davidson Apollon B. Davidson, Chairman.

Dear Professor,
Our party as in the past will benefit tremendously from the publication of the Collection of documents "Comintern and South Africa 1920-1937". I, therefore, support your present efforts to initiate this task and we are aware of your objective ~~approach~~ approach to these matters.
Chris Hani

Letter from Chris Hani to Apollon Davidson, 26 April 1992.

This project took us exactly ten years. It was started late in 1991 and completed in 2001. The major reason why such a protracted period of time was needed to complete our work was the magnitude of the project and the amount of work that we had to do. There are thousands and thousands of documents pertaining to South Africa in the Comintern archives, scattered in different collections. We found them, for example, in the files of the various secretariats of the ECCI (the Anglo-American Secretariat, the Eastern Secretariat, the Political Secretariat, and so on), and in the files of the Personnel Department and the Organisational Department of the ECCI, the Department of International Liaison (OMS), the Communist University of Eastern Toilers and the International Lenin School and in the files of various Commintern affiliates, such as RILU, the Krestintern, the International Red Aid, and so on. The biggest single collection of South African documents in the Comintern archives, many hundreds of them, is to be found in the files of the South African Commission. We had to locate these documents and go through them which was not at all easy, not only because the inventories do not indicate separate documents within the files (the normal archival practice world wide) but also because of various and multiple limitations of access and usage of different materials. A preliminary selection had then to be made, and we photocopied or copied by hand what we selected. Then we studied the selected documents in order to decide which of them should go into the first computer draft. The print out was then studied again and the final selection was made.

This was, however, just the beginning of our work. Some documents had to be translated from Russian and German (Irina Filatova and Valentin Gorodnov carried out translations from Russian and Christa Johns of Duke University has kindly translated the German originals). Often we found only the translations of documents, not the originals from which the translations had been made. These were often translations from Russian originals into English (in which case the quality of translation was usually poor) and from English or German originals into Russian (in which case names, geographic place names, names of organisations, and so on were often distorted to such an extent that sometimes we could not find out who or what was meant in the original when we translated these documents back into English).

We had to identify all the individuals mentioned in the documents, a tedious and difficult task. There were people who played an important role at the time but were later forgotten, so that in many cases it was not easy and in some cases impossible to establish their real names or find any information about them. Aliases were one of our biggest problem. As we have already mentioned, one person often used several aliases, and one alias could be used by different people. In some cases a Comintern official used the alias or the real name of another official for just one particular task. There were documents in which not only the signatures but also all the names in the text were completely inked or typed over, whitened out or even cut out. Many

documents survived only in copies, often hardly readable and sometimes unsigned.

The same is true about many events and places mentioned in the text. We have attempted to clarify as many as we could but in some cases this turned out to be impossible. The spelling of place names was often distorted beyond recognition and references to certain events could sometimes not be found even in the specialised literature.

Many documents in the archives are undated. In some cases exhaustive search would reveal that the date of this or that document was mentioned in related documents or in its copy or draft that was also to be found in the archives. In other cases either an exact or an approximate date could be established on the basis of the contents of the document or of the related documents.

Some documents could not be reproduced in full because of their length and because some of their contents was neither interesting nor significant. We had to decide what should be published with cuts or in excerpts and which extracts exactly should be selected. None of these cuts was made for political or ideological considerations; we have just tried to select the most important and most interesting materials out of a sea of documents.

Much of our time and effort went into the glossaries that provide background information on the organisations and personalities mentioned in the text. We view them as an important instrument for the readers' perusal of the documents. We have kept the glossary entries short, particularly in cases when information about a particular person or organisation can be easily found in any encyclopaedia or a reference book (for example, the African National Congress; V.I. Lenin, N.I. Bukharin, and so on). Where such information is less accessible or non-existent – that is when a particular entry is based entirely on our research – we offer all the information that we could obtain – which was often scanty in any case. In some entries we used materials from Russian encyclopaedias and other reference publications which are either unknown or little known in the West. An important source of our information were Apollon Davidson's interviews with several former staff members of the African department at KUTV, as well as the general 'oral tradition' about the Comintern that we have collected in Moscow.

Finally, even modern technology could not completely eradicate the problem of communication between four editors living and working on three different continents. We had our working sessions and editorial meetings in Durham (North Carolina) in the USA, in Grahamstown, Cape Town and Durban in South Africa, in Venice in Italy and, of course, in Moscow. This took a lot of planning, organisation and time. We hope that the final result of our work justifies the effort that went into it.

* * *

Our work would have been much more difficult without the assistance of several veterans of the South African communist movement who shared with us their reminiscences and information, particularly Brian Bunting, Ray Simons and Joe Matthews. We are indebted to a number of prominent communists who have passed away – John Marks, Moses Kotane, Edwin Mofutsanyana, Solly Sachs, Ruth First and Joe Slovo among them, as well as to several former Comintern officials and lecturers, most notably Alexander Zusmanovich, Endré Sik and Ivan Potekhin. In some cases their information helped to verify what we later discovered from other sources, in other cases it was unique.

The editors express their deep gratitude to Kyrill M. Anderson, Director of the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History, and to other archivists who helped us to locate and identify documents in the Comintern archives and were helpful in every possible way.

We are greatly indebted to Professor Robert Edgar of Howard University and Professor Woodford McClellan of the University of Virginia for their extremely thorough reading of our voluminous manuscript, for sharing with us their expertise and for giving us their valuable advice.

Without the financial support and the assistance of the personnel of various institutions on three continents this publication could never have been completed. The Josiah Charles Trent Memorial Foundation and the Arts and Sciences Research Council of Duke University provided crucial travel funding to the editors and support for translation services at the initial and concluding stages of the project. The International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) provided funding for a first visit by Sheridan Johns to Moscow for consultations and research in the archives. Major funding through a Collaborative Project Grant from the National Endowment for Humanities (NEH) permitted all the editors to devote more time to the project and provided travel funding for editorial meetings. The University of Durban-Westville contributed funds towards research support staff, travel and stationery and rendered other valuable assistance.

The editors' greatest debt is to Ludmila Kartachova of Moscow State University. Her indefatigable energy and patience while transferring documents and commentary, often scrawled nearly illegibly in three languages, from piles of notepaper to her computer for the use of the editors, was an arduous, painstaking but utterly invaluable labour. Without her this project would have been impossible.

DOCUMENTS

1
Report of M. Wolberg to Comintern, 15 April 1920[1]

A COPY OF THE REPORT SUBMITTED BY MICHAEL WOLBERG-VELMONT TO THE BUREAU OF THE 3D INTERNATIONAL IN MOSCOW ON 15 APRIL 1920

Strictly confidential

I, Michael Yakovlevich Wolberg, was born in Königsberg in 1891. (My parents lived in Kovno and my mother went to Königsberg specifically to give birth). I lived and was brought up in Moscow and spent a couple of years in a real schule[2] in Berlin.

I became interested in politics for the first time when I was 15 or so. I was member of the CC of a student organisation in secondary institutions of Moscow.

I was expelled from Morozov's School in Moscow for agitation even though the students there tried to support me with a strike, and therefore had to continue my education abroad. I first went to Brussels and then stayed in Liège (Belgium), at the University.

During my stay in Liège I began to publish a weekly newspaper, 'La Presse', in French but then had to stop the publication because of the lack of funds. The newspaper was published under the guise of non-partisanship but, clearly, I expressed my own ideas in it.

Obviously, several issues of this newspaper, particularly the issues with my editorial on Stolypin's assassination,[3] got to Moscow Secret Police Department through the Russian Consul and later, when I returned to Russia, I was arrested and put into prison in the town of Trubchevsk in Oryol Province on the

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1. This document was the first detailed information about the activities of South African socialists which the Comintern received. The report was immediately requested by V.I. Lenin. Volume XXXVII of the *Leninsky sbornik (Lenin Miscellany)* contains Lenin's note to the Secretary of the Council of People's Commissars, L.A. Fotieva, in spring 1920: 'Get me (through Klinger) Waltman's report on South Africa' (*Leninsky sbornik*, XXXVII, Moscow, 1970, p. 203). G.K. Klinger was Executive Manager of the Comintern. The editors' comment to this publication was: 'What report is referred to could not be ascertained' but it is safe to assume that Lenin referred to Mikhael Wolberg's report.
   The identities of many people mentioned by Wolberg could not be established.
2. A particular kind of school in Germany and Russia that taught 'practical' disciplines as opposed to Latin, theology, etc.
3. P.A. Stolypin, premier and minister of interior in 1906–11, was assassinated by Russian revolutionaries for his success in quashing revolutionary fervour by a combination of repressive measures and social reform.

instructions from Moscow Secret Police. Due to strenuous efforts on my behalf in Moscow I was finally released after 50 days' detention and deported from Trubchevsk.

Soon after this, in 1913, I served as a conscript in the 3d Don Infantry Regiment in Kovno. The Secret Police informed them about me and they began to persecute me and to threaten to send me to the penal battalion – with all the consequences. My situation in the Regiment became so intolerable that in August 1913 I had to escape and after a difficult fight I found myself in Germany.

It was extremely difficult to stay in Germany without documents and when I met acquaintances who were on their way to South Africa I decided to join them for a few months' holiday there and then to return to Europe and settle in Paris or another West European city. I spoke French and German fluently and I thought that upon my return to Europe I would take up politics. Fearing persecution from the authorities I changed my name to Henri de Velmont.

I came to Africa almost without means and without any knowledge of English, and at the beginning my situation was extremely difficult. I had been starving before I finally found a job as a book keeper in a small butchery in the Cape Colony Province. The war broke out and it became impossible to leave Africa.

After the butchery I worked as a photographer, then was employed at a tobacco factory, played the piano in a movie theatre, served as a commercial traveler and finally opened my own small business as a manufacturers' representative.

To my own surprise I discovered that I had a great talent for business. I managed to build up my business to such an extent that in October 1917 I moved it from Cape Town to Johannesburg already as a joint-stock company in which I was Director of the Board. I made good money and lived very comfortably.

Clearly, from the time of the revolution in Russia I longed to go home with all my heart but the Russian Consul, as well as the South African government, categorically refused to issue me departure documents for Russia despite my repeated strenuous efforts to get them.

Only now, in Moscow, did I discover that during Comrade Litvinov's term of office as Ambassador in London the British government at his insistence gave telegraphic instructions to the Governor-General of South Africa not to impede my departure for Russia. However, not only was I not informed about this in Africa but, on the contrary, all kinds of obstacles were put in my way, the advantage being taken of the fact that I had no Russian documents. I was also cavilled at for giving public lectures on the Russian revolution.

In Johannesburg I enrolled as member of the International Socialist League.

Enclosure No. 1 – Declaration of Principles of the League and its Statutes.[4]

At the beginning I worked without speaking officially at the meetings because my ostensible position as a 'bourgeois',[5] Director of a large firm, was very convenient for the Party. I could, therefore, disseminate literature, etc. from my office without arousing suspicions.

In Johannesburg I organised a Russian circle what was called 'The Russian Literary and Drama Circle'. The true aim of this circle was, of course, propaganda. To put this circle on a solid legal footing I, as Chairman, invited the wife of Mayor of Johannesburg to be its Honorary President. She was a very ambitious person and gladly agreed relying on me although, naturally, she understood no Russian at all.

For her sake we arranged a couple of charity concerts and the Circle came to be considered very reliable by everyone.

Enclosure No. 2 – Letterhead of the Circle.

Enclosure No. 3 – A Ticket for One of the Concerts.

At first there was a Labour Party in South Africa[6] that supposedly aspired to the ideals of socialism. When the war began the majority of the leaders of this party, i.e. Cresswell and others came out in its favour albeit under a certain 'pressure'. They began to campaign for war among workers and realised their goals, i.e. donned colonels' epaulets and led special workers' regiments to the 'glorious war in defence of democracy'. And this is when the final split in the Party occurred. The extreme left wing under the leadership of Member of Parliament Com. William Andrews, broke away and began a bitter struggle against the war.

According to the conditions of the treaty between the British and the Boers mobilisation in South Africa is prohibited. So the 'bourgeois' began 'economic mobilisation', i.e. men at the age of 18 to 40 were no longer employed for any service or work. On the instigation of the Unionist Party women came up to young men in the streets and insulted them in public.

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4. Enclosures to Wolberg's report could not be found in the archives. *The Declaration of Principles* passed by the congress of the International Socialist League on 5–6 January 1919 and delivered to Russia (most probably Wolberg's copy) was published in Moscow in the Comintern's journal *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional (The Communist International)* in 1920 (No. 11). According to another archival document (RGASPI, 495–64–5–1), the *Declaration* was translated by Wolberg.
5. Here and elsewhere Wolberg uses a particular derogatory form of the Russian equivalent of the word 'bourgeoisie' – 'burzhui', either in the singular or in the plural. There is no direct equivalent of this word in English.
6. South African Labour Party.

South Africa has a civil militia for the purposes of defense in case of an enemy attack. According to law it could not be used outside the colony. However, the law notwithstanding, it was sent to German West and East Africa where many of them were killed. Because of economic mobilisation people were hungry in the streets and willy-nilly had to enlist for military service.

It goes without saying that our party had to work hard in literally unbearable conditions but nevertheless we worked energetically, disregarding the danger.

The 'Labour Party' does not consider the Blacks ~~as~~ people at all; it does not admit them to trade unions and generally treats them as animals. Members of the Labour Party boycott employers who employ black workers, smash their windows, etc. And, incidentally, the fact that in South Africa unskilled workers are almost all dark-skinned has to be taken into consideration. Our Party does not recognise any kind of difference based on religion, nationality or skin colour, and it conducts particularly militant propaganda among dark-skinned comrades as it is evident from the enclosed declaration.

According to South African laws not only anti-government propaganda among the Natives but any kind of communication with the Blacks generally is subject to severe punishment by law, so our situation was very, very difficult.

But despite all the difficulties, despite the prosecution, we managed not only to agitate among Black workers but even to form a rather strong organisation among them as a branch of our Party.

Our central office is situated in Johannesburg; we have branches in almost all other cities, the largest, naturally, in Cape Town where our propaganda is very successful and where we gradually incorporate many members of the left wing of the Labour Party in our midst.

Our Party exists officially, or rather the government so to say passively tolerates us, although speeches and publication of proclamations, etc. often lead to arrests, etc.

However, the struggle against us is often waged by cruder weapons, i.e. gangs of drunken hooligans with sticks are stirred up against our meetings and during a fight the police zealously protects them.

Our best comrades and leaders, such as W. Andrews, S. Bunting, T. Tinker and others were more than once beaten almost unconscious and even I tasted a rubber baton, although only in 'small doses'.

According to a (secret) instruction nobody lets us a venue for our office in Johannesburg. Our good comrade Neppe (who is of Russian origin) allowed us to use his old, barely standing house, and this is where our office takes shelter. I was witness to a search there during which the police tore off the posters with portraits of Coms. Lenin, Trotsky and others from the walls and confiscated the documentation but in a few days the office resumed its work.

According to the same instructions from 'above' no hall, nor theatre were let out to us for our meetings.

But we did not lose heart. Every Sunday evening we hold our meeting in the square near the City Hall in Johannesburg. The speakers give speeches from upturned crates. The crowd that is present often numbers more than 2,000–3,000 people. Similar meetings are held in Cape Town, Germiston (the centre of gold-mining industry), Durban and other cities.

The police are also there but they do not dare to intervene, and our speakers openly call for following Russia's example, call for a revolution, etc. True, the speakers are often arrested later on at home. Thus, before my departure our active members from Pietermaritzburg, Jones and Green, were arrested, ridiculously judged and sentenced to prison and large fines.

In view of the above we had to work under the guise of literary circles, and so on. Two years ago when a large workers' demonstration was organised in the streets of Johannesburg the troops were brought and there were many killed and wounded.

The following incident which led to my exile from South Africa serves as a striking example of the tricks that we had to use and of the strong sympathy for the Third International which exists in workers' circles of South Africa.

The Lecture.[7]

When we spoke of the Russian revolution or of the Soviet system at our meetings we were often confronted with open distrust. 'How do you know?' 'You have not been in Russia for a long time and you have not seen the revolution there yourself', the comments could be heard.

And, to tell the truth, our information was rather scanty. We received only, so to say, 'leftovers' from England or Norway and even these very seldom.

Then, unexpectedly, two persons came to me and introduced themselves as Leo Markovich Lapitsky (said to be humorist poet Sasha Cherny) and Israel Sosnovik.

They told me that the former was Skobelev's secretary in the Provisional Government,[8] then something short of Deputy Finance Minister and later, after the coup, began to work with the Soviet Government as a public prosecutor in Lugansk (Donetsk Basin).

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7. The lecture described by Wolberg had the effect of a bombshell on the South African public. It was widely debated by the press (for example, in *The International*, 21, 28 March, 11 April 1919; *The Cape Times*, 15, 18, 22 April 1919; *The Cape Argus*, 18 April 1919). It was much remembered and mentioned later on both in official documents (for example, in the *Report of the Martial Law Inquiry Judicial Commission*. Pretoria, 1922, p. 24) and in memoirs by participants (for example, by W.H. Harrison in his *Memoirs of a Socialist in South Africa, 1903–47*. Cape Town: 1948, pp. 65, 67). However, only Wolberg's report explains how it was organised and why the authorities overlooked it.
8. Provisional Government in Russia was formed in the wake of the Second (February 1917) Russian Revolution on 15 March 1917. Ousted by the Bolsheviks on 7 November 1917.

Enclosure No. 4 – His Visiting Card.

Sosnovik told us that he was a military emissary in the same Donetsk Basin and presented me with a whole collection of certificates signed by various Soviet authorities in Lugansk.

They both told me that during the German offensive on Kharkov they were cut off from Central Russia in Lugansk, and so Lapitsky with his wife and Sosnovik whom they had met in Lugansk by chance made their way together to Persia and from there via Mesopotamia to India, by which time they had hardly any means left. In India they were advised to seek assistance from me as chairman of the Russian Society, and they came to Africa.

To tell the truth, as much as Sosnovik made an excellent impression on me as an honest person and an enthusiastic activist, to the same extent my impression of Lapitsky was unfavourable and from the first meeting I felt distrustful of him.

At any rate, these two men had left Russia only two months earlier and I decided to use them for the purposes of our propaganda whoever they were.

I sought advice from Com. Andrews and then asked the visitors to write and deliver a lecture on the Russian revolution, the Third International, the Soviet government, etc.

Sosnovik gladly agreed. Lapitsky, on the contrary, suddenly and unexpectedly declared that he was not a Bolshevik, that he only worked for the Bolsheviks, that he had to work for the Bolsheviks and that he was a Kerensky supporter. And generally he began to tell not only me but all and sundry all sorts of horrors about the Red Terror, etc.

I then told him categorically that if he wanted help he would write a lecture as I wanted it. To cut a long story short I decided to use him whoever he was because it was extremely important for us.

Lapitsky declared that he was afraid of being arrested and that generally he did not want any trouble. So he tried to dodge the lecture as much as he could but in the end I virtually forced him to consent. It was finally agreed that Lapitsky would write only the first half of the lecture, i.e. before the October coup[9] and Sosnovik would describe the coup itself, explain the reasons that had led to it and describe the Soviet Government, the III International, etc. in detail.

I put up Sosnovik at my place and Lapitsky and his wife found a place across the road, and thus the lecture was written at my place over several nights from dusk to dawn and then I translated it into English.

But the main question remained – where to organise the lecture. As I mentioned before, due to 'the instructions from above', nobody would hire out

9. 'October Coup' – Bolshevik or Third Russian Revolution on 25 October (7 November New Style) 1917.

a venue to us. I felt that this lecture was undoubtedly necessary and that because our underground movement was getting stronger from day to day it was essential to organise a public demonstration and to get our propaganda, so to say, 'into the streets'.

I thus decided to put myself and my personal well-being at stake. I decided that this was the moment when I could use my official 'bourgeois' status most effectively although I was sure in advance that the outcome of this for me would most probably be imprisonment for many years.

And then I went to the Mayor of the city, Allen, and told him that two persons 'on the run from the Bolsheviks' had come from Russia and were telling all sorts of horror stories about the Soviet regime, and that I strongly advised Mr. Mayor to use the fortuitous occasion of their arrival in order to organise a lecture about the horrors of Bolshevism, etc. This would serve as a useful counterweight against Bolshevik propaganda which was spreading in South Africa from day to day.

The Mayor of the city was very pleased for he had been much annoyed by the Left-wingers during the elections. As he had met me as director of a well-known firm and as a member of the Main Committee of the Red Cross he accepted my deposit and allowed me to use not only the main hall of the City Hall seating about four thousand people but also his name as the 'Honorary Patron' of the lecture.

I told the same story to the 'Imperial Russian Vice-Consul' who was clearly glad to offer his 'high patronage' to a lecture at which Bolsheviks would be denounced.

Finally, I visited all newspaper editors and told them the same story with even more 'details'.

In two days the papers were full of sensational news about 'two noble Russian aristocrats who fled from Bolshevik terror and intended to deliver a lecture in the Johannesburg City Hall about the Russian revolution and the Soviet government'. The papers vied with one another in advertising the forthcoming lecture and 'seriously advised the public not to fail to attend it in order to hear the real truth about the situation in Russia at last', etc.

We produced fancy posters advertising the lecture 'under the sponsorship of the Mayor of the City, Mr. Allen, the Imperial Russian Consul, Mr. Moore, and the Chairman of the Russian Society', your humble servant.

Some Party members were much surprised by this strange combination but, fearing provocation, we were afraid to tell even the Party members what the situation was, for it was the first time since our Party came into existence that we succeeded in obtaining the City Hall for a meeting and clearly we valued this very much. And so some of our comrades came to the lecture with spoiled tomatoes, rotten eggs and other 'fragrant foods' in their pockets, thinking that the lecturers were some provocateurs or agents of the Russian or British Secret Police.

Enclosure No. 5 – A Ticket for the Lecture.

On the evening of the lecture about six thousand people gathered in the hall which usually seated about four thousand and near the doors outside there was a crowd of several hundred people for whom there were no seats.

In my capacity as Chairman I opened the lecture with a short speech stressing particularly that now the citizens will at last learn the truth about Russia and the Russian revolution and will finally see what despicable lies were spread by bourgeois newspapers. Lapitsky said a few words in Russian and I instantly translated them into English. And then our comrade Beer,[10] the owner of a booming voice, started to read the text of the lecture which lasted for 3 hours and 10 minutes.

There were representatives of all classes in the hall. There were representatives of the government, bankers, directors of gold mines, but primarily an enormous number of workers. A copy of Comrade Chicherin's letter to President Wilson, five hundred copies of which we had typed beforehand was lying on each seat, and our literature and our weekly newspaper, 'The International', were sold in the hall.

As the lecture continued the faces of the bourgeois became darker and the faces of our comrades began to light up with joy. After the inspired concluding words of Comrade Sosnovik, a splendid orator, which I translated into English, and after my concluding speech, several thousand voices rang out with the 'International', accompanied by the huge City Hall organ, instead of the British national anthem for which the bourgeois who were present had risen from their seats.

According to a prior arrangement with me, our comrade Andrews came down to the podium and amidst thunderous applause asked for my permission to vote a resolution. Of course, I gave him the permission (everything had been agreed upon beforehand) and it was unanimously decided to cable a letter to parliaments in Cape Town and London stating a protest of the citizens of Johannesburg against the intervention of the British Government in the affairs of Russia, Hungary, Germany and other countries and calling for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from these countries.

We dispersed loudly singing 'The International' for the second time and long afterwards crowds walked along Johannesburg streets singing revolutionary songs.

The next day the papers were dead silent for they were too 'flabbergasted'; just a day before the lecture they had urged the public 'to listen to the truth about Russia' and all of a sudden the lecture turned out to be purely Bolshevik.

However, on the subsequent days the papers were concerned solely with us. All the lead articles were devoted to us. All kinds of dirt were poured on us.

10. The identity of Beer could not be established.

The demand was to arrest us immediately. The questions raised were: 'What was the Municipality doing, giving them the City Hall for Bolshevik propaganda?', 'Is the Mayor of the city a Bolshevik?', etc.

To cut a long story short, the matter reached the point where a question in Parliament was raised by the Unionists and other bourgeois parties.

Unimaginable scandal began. The government was alarmed and ministers did not know how to respond to the questions. Minister for Home Affairs answered that he had no idea about the contents of the lecture, 'because nobody could understand Russian'. The funniest thing was that our lecture was delivered in English. And in Parliament demands continued for our immediate arrest and exile.

At that time a strike of municipal workers of Johannesburg (tramway, water and electricity services, etc.) took place. The workers had set up a Soviet,[11] took the management into their hands, and for about ten days the Soviet managed everything, ignoring the municipality completely. Frightened ministers flew from Cape Town, negotiations began, the 76 sacked workers were re-employed, the demands of the workers were satisfied, and the Soviet gave the power back to the Municipality.

It was, so to speak, a test.

Then carpenters, bricklayers and others went on strike. In a word, the government was in trouble up to its neck and on top of it the workers declared that if the government arrested us they would call a general strike all over South Africa and 'The League of Returned Soldiers' directly threatened to start disturbances in the event of our arrest.

The situation of the government was very 'delicate' and unpleasant. On the one hand they were afraid of disturbances in the event of our arrest but on the other hand the Unionists and others demanded our arrest and started an enormous row in their newspapers. Even in the 'Labour Party' the mood was undoubtedly in our favour.

Meanwhile we still walked freely about the town and were greeted with applause everywhere, even if we dropped into some cafeteria, and I, having once openly shown my 'colours', began to make speeches at all street meetings, etc. Finally we started to get 'polite' summons to the police department; each time they sent a luxury automobile to fetch us and treated us with extreme politeness.

The talks were conducted in a very friendly tone. The head of police, Colonel Grey, declared that he 'could not guarantee our life and security; because we had allegedly stirred up the citizens against ourselves, etc., etc'. We politely asked him 'not to worry about our security because if need be we could defend ourselves'. But after several days of futile talks Colonel Grey, on behalf of the Council of Ministers, categorically offered us to leave

11. Soviet – 'Council' in Russian.

Johannesburg within 2 days, and South Africa, by the first departing ship. Our comrades decided that it would be best for us to leave because we had achieved whatever we could in Africa and we would be prevented from doing any further work, and in Russia we would be able to work effectively.

At first they wanted to exile us to Madeira, and the Russian Consul Moore made special efforts to achieve this but then, after we made a whole row, we were issued passports for a passage to Russia.

Meanwhile Lapitsky drank unrestrainedly, borrowed money right, left and centre, although he had received half of the income from the lecture, and was almost on the verge of opening a herring shop with somebody. He went on talking about the horrors of Red Terror in private homes and generally behaved in such a way that Comrade Sosnovik and I decided to get rid of him at any cost.

One of the best Party comrades in South Africa, Sophus M. Pettersen (a Norwegian), lives in Durban. He does much business with sailors, delivers provisions on ships and donates a lot of funds to the Party. Pettersen offered to get us on some Scandinavian boat as sailors or stokers, whether we had documents or not, and in this way to get us across to Europe and Russia. He also gave us a list of his friends, Swedish and Norwegian comrades, to whom we could turn for help. Pettersen is very well connected, he is a former head of Sailors' Union, etc.

Enclosure No. 6 – Statutes of this Union.

Enclosure No. 7 – Cd. Pettersen's Portrait.

You will notice a scratched out spot under his signature; he enthusiastically wrote the word 'Bolshevik' under his surname and I, clearly, had to scratch it out for security reasons.

Lapitsky declared, however, that 'it did not suit him to travel as an ordinary sailor' and demanded that the Government issued first class tickets from Cape Town to Lisbon, Portugal, for himself and for his wife, as well as a special first class compartment from Johannesburg to Cape Town, a room in a first class hotel in Cape Town at the expense of the Government and even a special license to take on board his monkey which he had brought from India. Thus, newspapers wrote later on that 'Mister Lapitsky sailed off with his monkey and his wife'.

To get rid of him the Government agreed to everything, and finally he left for Portugal after he, once again, collected money both from the Party and from other people in Cape Town, and this after the Party in Cape Town had to pay his bills at the Royal Hotel restaurant where he drank all the time with all kinds of spies assigned to him for protection.

He left drunk, having made a shameful speech before his departure while he was barely standing on his feet. In it he threatened the African[12] government that 'the Bolshevik fleet' would appear soon near South Africa's shores and destroy South Africa. Later a comics magazine called him an 'admiral of the Bolshevik fleet'.

And so Com. Sosnovik and I decided to go via Durban with the assistance of Comrade Pettersen. It became impossible to stay in Africa, and generally comrades had decided that, once I had an opportunity to get to Russia, I should go because I would be able to work much more productively in Moscow for the Soviet Government, and furthermore, it was extremely important for the Party to establish a direct link with Moscow and my departure indeed offered a good opportunity for this.

Accordingly, the Party commissioned us:

1. To tell in Moscow about our Party and its activities.
2. To request most urgent support in the form of propaganda pamphlets, newspapers and, generally, literature, direct instructions, etc.

As I have said above, we have absolutely no material for propaganda in Africa and nearly everything had to be created by ourselves. For instance, right before our departure our lecture was sent to printers to be published as a pamphlet.

3. To establish direct communication with the International. And if possible to receive monetary assistance as well because the Party is very poor and the propaganda is very important in South Africa because this colony is the most important after India.

In Johannesburg our Party publishes a monthly newspaper, the 'International', which is edited by Com. Bunting, a remarkable activist. The collected issues of this newspaper for the last couple of years were bound in hard covers and we were entrusted with handing them in as a present from the Party to Coms. Lenin and Trotsky, to the III International and to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. Appropriate inscriptions were made on each volume and the members of the Party's Executive Committee signed them.

Before our departure the closest Party workers took a special group photograph. I sat at the chairman's place in the middle and by my side were Cds. Sosnovik, Andrews, Bulding,[13] Tinker and others. To our regret, Lapitsky also appeared in this photo.

The above mentioned volumes of the 'International' with gold stamped inscriptions stood in front of our feet. One of these photos with all the signatures we were also to hand in in Moscow, and another one, to Com. Litvinov as a keepsake from Com. Andrews, who had met him in London.

12. South African.
13. Bunting.

The Party also gave us letters of recommendation and I received a special letter from Com. Andrews which was addressed to me and stated that I had worked in Africa, and expressed the hope that on arrival to my native country, in Moscow, I would be able to work productively for the good of humanity.

Thus, Com. Sosnovik and I accompanied by a very good comrade, Simon Yakovlevich Geidler, who also aspired to go to work in Russia set off to Durban, to Com. Pettersen, after a warm farewell at the railway station in Johannesburg with a red flag and the singing of the 'International'.

Clearly, I had to leave my business, and my partner, taking advantage of the fact that I was forced into exile, did not pay me anything, although a couple of months earlier my share in the business had been estimated at about 6 thousand pounds sterling. And so in twenty four hours I only just sold the furniture from my apartment, etc., and with this money we departed. Sosnovik still had a little money, the remainder of his share from the lectures, although very little. Geidler did not have a kopeck.[14]

We did not take anything from the Party because it is very poor, and in addition just before our departure it had to pay two big fines for Comrades Green, Jones and others in court.

Com. Pettersen received us with open arms and we remained in Durban waiting for a Swedish or a Norwegian ship. Unfortunately for us, after the truce had been signed with Germany Scandinavian ships that used to call at Durban during the war on their way from Australia began sailing via the Suez Canal without calling at Durban. So after more than a month's stay in Durban (we stayed at private homes because hotels refused to put us up) we still had to leave for Cape Town in order to attempt to arrange a passage via Africa or any British territory. Incidentally, all foreign consuls refused to issue me visas for I was really a marked man and my passport stated that I was being deported from Africa. Therefore, upon my arrival in Cape Town I appealed to Boydell, MP, (the far left wing of the Labour Party) and he together with other members of his faction persuaded Home Affairs Minister De Wet to issue me a new, more appropriate passport.

Enclosure No. 8 – This Passport.

Our comrades in Cape Town welcomed us with a festive banquet and wanted us to repeat our lecture in Cape Town. But it was absolutely impossible, for on our arrival in Cape Town a Special Branch detective Evans met us at the railway station and on behalf of the Council of Ministers warned us that if we gave any speeches anywhere we would be immediately put to jail.

So, we had to refrain from public speeches, and only at private meetings arranged by the Cape Town Committee Sosnovik, who had already learned a

14. Russian coin.

little English, spoke. And I gave a speech only once, at a big street meeting a day before our departure when the tickets for the boat were already in our pockets.

Our Cape Town comrades told us a lot of nasty things about Lapitsky. They refused his request to give him recommendations and to have a group photograph with him taken. We asked them to hush up all the unpleasant talk about Lapitsky in order not to make it known to the public at large to prevent spoiling the general impression. We asked them not to inform even the Johannesburg Committee about Lapitsky's behaviour.

Before our departure from Cape Town a group picture of us with the local Committee and with the best local activists, Harrison, MacManus and others was taken and we got letters of recommendation from them. When we were leaving the comrades organised a wonderful demonstration on the pier despite the presence of a special detachment of police and detectives.

Before the departure Sosnovik became severely ill and began to spit blood but he had to leave all the same.

Thus, we had to go to Madeira, and to report to the British consul there for permission to proceed further. When we came to him he received us very brusquely and in his visa on the back of my passport he added that the passport was only valid for travel to Russia and underlined the word 'only'. Of course, he had been informed about us beforehand by a telegram. On the very same day we were sent off to Lisbon on board a small dirty Portuguese steam boat.

Upon our arrival in Lisbon we were arrested by a whole detachment of armed police led by Bellem, Head of the Political Investigation Department of Portuguese police, and were taken to Home Affairs Department. There Sosnovik and I were thoroughly searched but Geidler began to protest and made a row saying that he was a British citizen (he had become naturalised in Africa) and that he would complain to the British government. We said that my suitcase which contained the volumes of the International and other dangerous documents also belonged to Geidler and it was not searched.

At that time a British, a French and an American officer came to the Department to interrogate us. Geidler produced a document that he had served in the South African army, Sosnovik was completely ill and thus we were not put in prison but rather the police took us to the most expensive hotel and left us there with guards at our doors.

A strange surprise for us was that unexpectedly Lapitsky turned up at Home Affairs. He told us that when he arrived in Lisbon he was arrested but then was allowed to move freely in the city. He became friendly with Detective Bellem, drank with him, and did not have at all a bad time, although the police still bothered him sometimes.

We were somewhat glad to meet an acquaintance for he had already learned Portuguese a little and could be useful to us. And even during the search he selflessly took the risk of being caught and surreptitiously carried

Sosnovik's bag with compromising documents out of the Department. This certainly saved us from big trouble.

It turned out that Lapitsky stayed at the same hotel, and although we considered him to be a low quality person we still stuck together. We were kept under custody at the hotel for a long time. But we managed to meet a member of the Portuguese Parliament, Orlando, at the hotel, and he raised a question about our house arrest in Parliament, and due to his and other MPs' intervention we were allowed to walk in the streets unguarded, although, naturally, we were under constant surveillance by detectives.

Meanwhile, our names were often bandied about in the newspapers and we learned from these newspapers most sensational news about ourselves, for example, that the government had decided to deport us to a Portuguese penal servitude colony. But Orlando and his friends stood up for us again. Then there was a report in the newspapers that we would be transported to Australia by a British cruiser, but once again the deputies stood up for us. In view of the fact that the police did not allow us to leave the hotel in which they placed us and because this hotel was terribly expensive my money ran out completely and we owed the hotel for a fortnight's stay.

Our situation was desperate and we decided to risk everything and to try somehow to make our way via Constantinople and through Denikin's front, although we knew that the odds were 99 to one that we would be executed by Denikin's forces. So, having obtained a recommendation from Deputy Orlando, we went to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and I explained to him that if we were considered to be such dangerous people for Portugal it would be in his own interest to help us leave. I also explained to him that steamers sail from Italy to Novorossiisk via Constantinople and that therefore I ask him to give us a letter to the Italian envoy in Lisbon with the request that he issue us a visa for a couple of days' stay in Italy in order to get a steamship sailing to Constantinople. The Chairman of the Council of Ministers was glad to get rid of us and gave us an obliging official letter in which he wrote that the Portuguese government allowed us to go to Russia via Constantinople, that we also had the permission of the British government, and that he had asked the Italian envoy to give us a visa.

Enclosure No. 9 – This Letter.

Unfortunately, when I returned to the Italian envoy I found there Yevgeny Vasilievich Popov, Chargé d'Affaires of the Russian embassy in Lisbon. He whispered something to the envoy, after which the envoy shouted at me, invalidated the letter of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and declared that he would give us the permission to enter Italy only if the Chairman of the Council of Ministers wrote to him that we are banned from Portugal as dangerous Bolsheviks and asked Italy to accept us.

Clearly, I did not return to the chairman of the Council of Ministers with such a 'provocative' errand, and, because all consuls of other states who had learned about us from the newspapers categorically refused to issue us visas, we lost all hope.

Meanwhile Sosnovik was getting steadily worse and I took him to a professor who discovered that he had tuberculosis in its most desperate form. We were able to persuade the Lisbon Jewish society to take him, under its protection and at its expense, to a little hamlet in the mountains close to Lisbon.

And Popov, as well as the Russian consul, did all kinds of dirty tricks and reported us almost daily to the police.

Our financial situation was most desperate; we owed the hotel for a fortnight, the money was rudely demanded from us and we had nowhere to get it from. Lapitsky still had quite a bit of money which he had managed to collect everywhere in South Africa. In Lisbon he began to play roulette in the clubs and he was extremely lucky. So he lived relatively well. It turned out that one Lipshitz, a rich Russian Jew in Johannesburg, being a 'sympathiser of the movement', gave him about 100 pounds sterling for himself and Sosnovik before their departure from Africa. But in Lisbon, when Sosnovik asked for his share, Lapitsky stopped short and declared that Lipshitz's cheque allegedly had not been paid by a bank. Later on we found out that this was not true and that he had received the money.

To get away form this awful indigence I placed an announcement in a newspaper on the off-chance that 'an experienced businessman and former director of a joint stock company with excellent recommendations from British banks and manufacturers seeks a position in a Lisbon commercial firm'. I was lucky and got a job as a partner and manager of the import-export department in a large Lisbon firm, 'Gilman and Santiago, Ltd.'

Enclosures No. 10 and 11 – My Contracts with this Firm.

Having made commercial enquiries about me in London, they gave me a very high salary on top of the commissions from the business, and the three of us lived decently on my salary.

Meanwhile we were able to get in touch with Doctor Costa and other party comrades in Lisbon from whom Lapitsky again immediately borrowed money, and we started to assist them in their work, supplying them with information. I also translated various articles for them from French and English.

The situation of Communists in Portugal is very bad. They are persecuted dreadfully and thrown into jails. At the very time that we were there many were deported to a penal servitude colony in Portuguese Africa.

Trade unions are almost non-existent and workers are generally more exploited and persecuted than anywhere else.

Following my insistent complaints Deputy Orlando and his friends raised a question in Parliament about Detective Bellem and his gang, and he was fired from service for bribery etc. but British representatives immediately employed him at the British political intelligence service. He is still in Lisbon, getting a salary from the British mission.

During my stay in Lisbon railway workers, driven to despair by atrocious exploitation, declared a strike. The government replaced engine-drivers and conductors with soldiers, trying thus to break the strike. But workers began throwing bombs at trains, blowing up bridges on the line, etc.

Then the 'Government of the Democratic Republic of Portugal' devised a new Machiavellian way of breaking the strike: in front of each departing train, in front of the steam engine, they put a goods wagon with workers' leaders shackled in irons and under armed guard. Thus, by blowing up trains or bridges the workers would first of all kill their own comrades. In this fashion the strike which had lasted for two weeks was suppressed.

Nevertheless, propaganda is conducted rather well and there is even a newspaper, La Batalia, and in addition some leaflets.

Portuguese comrades need the same things as South African comrades do, that is literature for propaganda, direct instructions, and, most of all, monetary help. As I was told by one of the Portuguese comrades, with some ten thousand pounds a revolution could be organised in Portugal in a few months.

I advised him not to go for a purely Portuguese revolt until Spain rebels, because otherwise Spanish troops from one side and the British navy from the other would crush Portugal completely.

I promised the Portuguese comrades to pass on their message about the above as soon as I manage to get to Moscow.

I found out that Popov was a great lover of music and because I am also musical I was finally able to make friends with him on these grounds. We began to meet rather often and I even succeeded in part to persuade him that I was considered a Bolshevik 'by mistake'. I needed him because of his influence on the Russian consul Laksman so that he would give me a permit to leave Portugal.

Popov had not received his salary for several years and had a lot of debts. Only once did he get ten thousand francs from Kolchak with which he barely managed to . . .[15] the worst gaping holes in his budget. He still had some of the jewelery of his wife who lived in Holland, and he wanted to send it to her very much so that she could sell it but he was deterred from this by the high duties levied in Holland.

I offered to bring these things for him to Holland if he arranged an exit permit for me. He agreed and asked Laksman to do it. He gave me the permit after making me sign a pre-filled in form stating that I had nothing in common

15. The verb is absent in the original.

with the Bolsheviks and with the Soviet government and that 'I stand for a unified Russia under the supreme government of Admiral Kolchak'.

I thought that I was not in the position to stand on principles and signed the paper after which I got the exit permit.

Meanwhile I worked hard in my office and gained the complete confidence of the managers of the firm. Thus I persuaded them to send me to Germany to start trading relations and to obtain German representation.

The Spanish and French consuls refused point-blank to give me transit visas for Spanish and French territories but my firm succeeded in getting me on a small cargo steamer loaded with our own goods (cocoa) heading for Holland.

The Dutch consul also refused to give me a visa, but one of my partners, Santiago, was a friend of the Portuguese Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Doctor Gonzales Texeira, and he referred me to him. Texeira officially asked the Dutch envoy to permit me entry into Holland. The latter wired to the government in the Hague that the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs specifically requested a permission for me to enter Holland. A positive answer came immediately by telegraph.

Popov gave me his jewellery in a sealed courier parcel and a certificate of a diplomatic courier from the embassy.

Thus I set off on my journey to Holland. We had not yet reached Amsterdam when a motorboat with policemen approached our steamship and they wanted to search my room. It turned out that Bellem had already sent a telegram to the Dutch political police informing them of my departure. However, after I produced my courier document, my firm's attestation that I was going to Holland as a partner in their business, the letter of recommendations from Popov to Baron Fersen, the Russian consul in the Hague and Rotterdam, and after my negative answer to the question of whether I knew the Dutch communist Wynkoop and others, the police left me alone.

I handed the parcel in to Baron Fersen and then went to the German embassy in Amsterdam with the letter of recommendations from the Amsterdam agent of our firm, Van den Berg, who enjoyed a considerable influence in Amsterdam.

I told the German consul my full surname, i.e. the real one, 'Wolberg', and the illegal, 'de Velmont', and explained to him that I had had a double surname but that there was only 'de Velmont' in my passport because Wolberg was a German surname and it was not convenient to be called that in Portugal at a time of war with Germany and that this was the reason why only the first part of my surname was in my passport. This circumstance, as well as the fact that I speak German fluently and, moreover, that I was born in Königsberg, and that, in addition, I was going to buy goods in Germany on the account of my firm, had an effect on him and he gave me a passport with the double surname and wrote in the visa that I was going to buy goods in Germany for a warehouse in Lisbon.

Enclosure No. 12 – This Passport.

That is how I got to Germany.

Having got to Germany, I considered it to be my moral duty to work for my Portuguese firm since I was travelling on their money, and in three weeks' time I got several first-class representatives for them.

In Berlin I met some comrades, i.e. Sergei Matveiev and others, who told me that the only way to enter Russia is through Lithuania. I applied to the Lithuanian embassy for a visa, allegedly for business, but was turned down.

At that time I met the artists of the local Russian theatre in Berlin who told me that part of their company was going to the Kovno City Theatre in Lithuania and that all the artists were promised visas by the Lithuanian embassy. The financial situation of the artists was, however, desperate, and not only did they not have the means to leave but some had even been evicted from their boarding houses for non-payment.

Then I recalled that I had once been drawn to the stage at Adashev's drama course in Moscow and even performed professionally.

I 'got in' the Russian theatre in Berlin and even played the role of Andrei in Chekhov's 'Three Sisters' under my old stage name 'Onegin' with great success and brilliant reviews in all newspapers.

Enclosure No. 13 – The Program of the Performance – for Fun.

I had to give financial assistance to many artists and even arranged a special charity performance at which they earned more than 600 marks each. As a sign of gratitude I received a silver cigar case with a signature which I still have.

As an artist I immediately received a visa from the Lithuanian embassy and came to Kovno with the company which I supported by my own means on the condition that, after the first two or three performances, I would get my money back from the kitty and be absolutely free from any obligations to the theatre.

I must mention that when leaving Portugal I did not take the risk of taking, for example, the volumes of 'The International' with me. I only took the letter of recommendation from the South African Party, my membership card, the Party statutes and the Johannesburg group photo. Before my departure from Berlin I thought that I should show these papers to Comrade Sergei Matveiev who communicated with the Com. For. Af.[16] in Moscow, and to Comrade Boris Schneider who had formerly worked in the Soviet Bureau in Berlin. I requested these comrades to pass on my assignments to Moscow if something were to happen to me on the way.

16. Commissariat of Foreign Affairs.

Through a party member 'Comrade Leva' (Garfunkel) I met one Manusevich in Kovno whom 'Comrade Leva' recommended to me as a comrade in the Party. According to Manusevich, he had to leave for Moscow in a couple of days on Sovnarkhoz business. Just in case I showed him my documents and asked him to pass on to Moscow that I would be in Moscow soon with my commissions.

Now, in Moscow, I have discovered that he had not been here and I have not yet found anyone who knows him.

A few days after my arrival in Kovno my lodgings were searched and I was arrested. During the search I managed to destroy the letter of recommendation and eat my membership card, so only the group[17] and a receipt from the African[18] Party together with some other insignificant documents got into the hands of the counterintelligence. My money was also confiscated as well as my British[19] passport.

Enclosure No. 14 – Receipt from Public Prosecutor Prushakevich.

I was detained for 40 days in prison together with comrade Rotkegel from the Moscow German Soviet, and we agreed that whoever was the first to get out of prison would pass on the assignments of the other and make efforts on his behalf. Rotkegel was kept in prison for about four months.

One of these days I shall write a special report about prison conditions, the general situation in Lithuania, and the government-instigated Lithuanian revolution of 20th February, etc., for I consider it to be necessary to give a detailed account of these matters. I can only say now that the whole of Lithuania is in the hands of former Russian gendarmes, policemen and spies and that 'white terror' rages there with might and main.

It turned out that Minister for Byelorussian Affairs in Lithuania was Joseph Voronko, my cousin's fiancé. He and other acquaintances began to make efforts on my behalf and after 40 days I was released and ordered to leave Lithuania within 24 hours. The counterintelligence refused to return my money and my British passport.

Enclosure No. 15 – Certificate from Kovno City Prison.

I did not want to leave Kovno without my British passport, and my money was confiscated, and so I decided to do what the English call a 'bluff'. I set off for the British diplomatic mission and complained that my British passport was confiscated. The Head of the mission, Colonel Ward, felt insulted; he thought it

17. Group photo.
18. South African.
19. The origin of this British passport is not clear; the author had not mentioned it before.

to be a great insult to Britain that they had dared to confiscate a British passport.

He went to the counterintelligence and demanded that my passport and money be returned. He was promised that the next day a clerk from the counterintelligence would bring my money and passport to the railway station a quarter of an hour before my departure.

Clearly, I appealed to him as I was sure that he would not contact South Africa because of the long distance.

He advised me not to leave the city until I received my passport.

The following morning the Public Prosecutor Prushakevich himself, personally, instead of a clerk, came to the station with a guard and declared that he would not return my passport and that 'the British are not the rulers here', and that if I did not leave for Germany by train in 10 minutes I would be arrested and would 'rot in jail' for another several months and than would be deported to Germany under guard.

Relying on Colonel Ward's words I refused to leave and was again arrested at once and led, with swords drawn, to the counterintelligence. A girl who was seeing me off at the railway station immediately took a cab and went to the British mission. When I was brought to the counterintelligence, the mission had already been on the phone for me. Prushakevich declared to me that I was under arrest but that he gave me twenty minutes to go to the mission and inform them that 'he gave me the opportunity to leave for Germany and I refused to go' and that in twenty minutes I should come back and go to jail. He sent a soldier with me. When I came to the mission Colonel Ward was furious that the counterintelligence had deceived him. He provided me with a document which stated that 'until my British document is returned to me the mission insists that I stay in Kovno without interference from Lithuanian authorities'. My photo was pasted on the document.

Enclosure No. 16 – This Document.

Colonel Ward ordered the soldier who was accompanying me out and told me that I should not worry and go home on his responsibility.

Upon learning out about this, Prushakevich became furious and immediately issued an order to the City Major Mikutzky to detain me wherever I was to be found. In fact the police came later to my apartment but they did not dare to arrest me with that document.

On 17th February I was released from jail, and on the 20th the revolution began in Kovno. The Lithuanian government did not dare to touch me but wanted to get rid of me very much, for they were afraid of my 'activities'. At last my passport and money were returned to me through the British mission, although some letters, papers and the group photo were still kept, the certificate of the Russian consulate in Lisbon and Popov's courier certificate among them.

Voronko gave me a letter of recommendations to the Byelorussian mission in Berlin in exchange for my promise to find my cousin – his fiancé for him in Russia.

Rotkegel left a day before me and was waiting for me in Berlin.

I received a very warm welcome in the Byelorussian mission in Berlin and was given a certificate stating that I was going to Revel through Denmark and Finland on a diplomatic errand of their mission.

Enclosure No. 17 – This Certificate.

With this certificate I easily got Danish, Swedish and Finnish visas. The Estonian consul denied me a visa but told me that I could easily get one in Helsingfors.

In Berlin Cd. Rotkegel arranged for me to be received by Com. Kopp. I did not manage to see him in person but spoke with his secretary Com. Reich who impressed me as a person with whom it is difficult to deal. He stated straight away that he was too busy and just put down my telephone number promising to call. He spoke only a couple of minutes to me and did not even let me tell him anything and so I decided not to get back to them.

Comrades from Berlin advised me to go instead to Comrade Litvinov in Copenhagen to whom I had a calling card from Phillips Preis.

Enclosure No 18 – The Calling Card.

I also provided myself with a good letter of recommendations to Wilhelm Bucholz, representative of the Soviet Red cross in Copenhagen.

On the German-Danish border I was detained by a German policeman who, as it turned out, had followed me from Berlin. But he let me go when I produced my Byelorussian diplomatic document, informing me that such a document was sufficient for 'departure' from Germany. Obviously, German police succeeded in getting information about me from Portugal or Lithuania.

I went to Com. Bucholz who was very kind to me and immediately informed Com. Litvinov about me. He passed on to me a reply that it would be best to take my business to Frederick Ström in Stockholm where I then went.

I wrote a detailed report for Com. Ström in English which was translated for me into Swedish in the Stockholm branch of 'RosTA'[20] and enclosed the same documents that are enclosed herewith.

My report was discussed at a meeting of the Stockholm group of the International and Com. Ström promised to try to establish without delay direct contacts with South Africa and Portugal through the addresses I gave him.

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20. Russian Telegraph Agency.

In view of the fact that Com. John Reed had just been arrested in Finland and that white terror is generally reigning there Com. Ström did not recommend that I go via Finland and Revel. But, having given me a Soviet passport and a letter of recommendations to Com. Thomson in Varde (Norway), he advised me to go there.

The Norwegian consul was not willing to issue me a visa but I produced my Byelorussian document and told him that I was going to buy fish oil for a Byelorussian company in Norway and he gave me a diplomatic visa.

At Com. Ström's I met Alexander Billan who told me that he was going to Russia as Chairman of the Committee of the Workers' Party of America.

Comrade Ström also gave me some parcels to take to Moscow.

I had travelled under my own steam to Stockholm all this time, and I only had to take 300 crowns from Com. Ström for further expenses.

Soon after I crossed the Norwegian border the customs examined my luggage and found the parcels from Com. Ström. They immediately arrested me and brought me to the police department of the city of Trondheim where I was detained for several hours. I understood that my salvation would be a 'bluff', so bursting with arrogance, I began to shout at the Head of the Police Department waving my diplomatic certificate in front of him and threatening that he would lose his position for the arrest of a diplomat. I frightened the poor old man to such an extent that he was glad to release me. Thence I went to Com. Thomson and gave him the letter from Com. Ström, and he gave me the necessary recommendations and transported me to Murmansk together with Alexander Billan (who came to Varde a coupe of days after me).

Billan informed me that a message from Com. Litvinov had been received in Stockholm, with the information that a day after my departure from Copenhagen Danish police were looking for me everywhere but, naturally, to no avail. I must mention that for some reason the Murmansk-Varde link is rarely used although there is nothing easier than to transport parcels and couriers by this safest way through Murmansk to Varde, and thence further. Andro, chairman of the municipal council of Varde (and editor of the newspaper Finmarken) is our comrade. We also have comrades even in the customs and police. The Norwegian government allows steamers and motorboats from Murmansk to come to Varde under the Soviet flag in order to receive and to deliver mail.

A shining example of how easy it is to transport even contraband from Norway is the fact that we smuggled in three large boxes of medical supplies as a gift from the Scandinavian Workers' Parties to a Murmansk hospital. The boxes were sent to sea on a fishing boat while we left on a motor boat a few hour later. In the middle of the sea we reloaded the boxes from the fishing boat onto our motor boat.

But for some reason this only 'window to Europe' is treated in Murmansk very negligently. This is blamed on the lack of coal, but it is possible to send motor boats. When I was there Com. Thomson did not have any news from

Murmansk for two weeks while the former Russian 'white consul' in Varde and the rest of the 'white community' who are cooped up with him receive news and letters from Murmansk almost daily. Various 'whites' and their wives with masses of baggage often come from Murmansk and Alexandrovsk allegedly with the permission of the Murmansk Soviet.

I earnestly advise the dispatch to Murmansk of a special person or a special commission to maintain a regular contact with Com. Thomson and other comrades abroad.

I am happy that finally, after 10 months of wanderings and suffering, I have this opportunity to hand in this report and thus to carry out the assignments entrusted to me.

Now I consider myself free and eagerly hope that I will succeed in my fondest wish to render a useful service to the Soviet government and to the idea that is so dear to me.

I must add that recently, in Berlin, I received a letter from Comrades Gendler[21] and Sosnovik. They write that Gendler has a position in the office of a commercial firm and barely makes ends meet. Sosnovik, contrary to all fears, has allegedly recovered but has no means of existence. Both ask for financial assistance and dream of making their way to Russia. They still have the documents, a few volumes of the International, etc.

I consider it my duty to add to this that it became clear that I had been arrested in Lithuania due to a telegram from Germany and to a personal report of Alexei Sergeievich Volin, a former Petrograd actor. It turned out that he was a close friend of a counterintelligence investigator, Orzhekhovsky, a former Petrograd police officer; both were sentenced to death at the time of the Soviet Government in Lithuania. It turned out that when I was out he searched my baggage and found in a chest a group photo with the inscription 'International' etc., and immediately reported me to the counterintelligence.

When I was in jail he stole my suitcase with belongings and ran away to Riga where he 'hung out' with the theatre company with his mistress Sophia Nikolaevna Dorian, identified in her passport as 'Volina, born Kantkovskaia from Petrograd'; but actually she was Sophia Kagan, the daughter of a watchmaker from Dvinsk.

It is noteworthy that it was I who dragged them out of poverty in Berlin, paid for their trip to Kovno and lent them DM2000 in cash.

To get in touch with comrades Sosnovik and Gendler it is necessary to write to the address of Gendler's firm.[22]

Through them one can communicate with our Portuguese comrades, but naturally not by post, and parcels must be sent somehow with the sailor

21. This name was spelled in several different ways in the original.
22. Break in the text.

comrades. Many boats go from Scandinavia to Lisbon. Naturally, it is necessary to be very careful, since my comrades are still being watched in Portugal.

Communicate with the South African comrades at the following address:[23] However, Comrade Ström received all the details from me and pledged to arrange a direct connection from Sweden.

RGASPI, Personal file no. 49. ECCI. Personnel Department.[24]
Original in Russian.

1a Appendix to no. 1[1]
Report of Informant of South African Police, 5 April 1919[2]

Confidential.
JOHANNESBURG.
5.4.19.

re: – Lapitsky and Sosnovick.[3]

I beg to report that keeping an appointment with Mr. Traub I proceeded to the Balcony Tea Room at 9.30 p.m. last night to meet Mr. Lapitsky. At 10 p.m.

Doc. 1

23. Break in the text.
24. A. Davidson copied this document while working in the Comintern Archives in 1966. The only reference on the file that he received at that time was: 'ECCI. Personnel Department. Personal File No. 49 (Wolberg)'. The original Comintern stamp ran: 'The Archives of the Comintern, No. 136. Moscow.' After the Comintern Archives were opened in 1991 this file could not be found and, consequently, can not be precisely identified. Despite this the editors decided to include this document into the volume in full because of its importance. Not only does it describe the most prominent event in South Africa connected with the Russian revolution and the arrival of the first emissary of South Africa's left to Soviet Russia but it also contains a detailed description of the route that Wolberg and other Socialists and Communists used and the problems that they encountered. No other documents of similar nature have been discovered in the Archive.

    Wolberg's file contained only one other document, besides this report: his request to allow him to leave Russia because he could not adjust to life there. The outcome of this request is not clear.

Doc. 1a

1. This is the only document in this selection that does not come from the archives of the Comintern. The editors decided to publish it as a supplement to the previous document because it contains the information supporting the authenticity of Wolberg's report, proves a deep interest of South African police in personalities involved and shows police methods.
2. The original has no indication of authorship.
3. See document no. 1, vol. I.

Traub, Miss Benjamin,[4] Jones, several others whose names I could not catch on introduction, and the Secretary of the League of International Socialists,[5] whose name I understand to be Aubret or O'Bell[6] arrived. I was given to understand that all of them had just left a meeting of the Executive of the League. The Secretary had all his books with him. Lapitsky himself was for some reason prevented from coming.

Traub introduced me as Mr. Hirschman to all present and Miss Benjamin took me by hand and wanted to know my intentions as regards Socialism. I gave her to understand, that being anxious to join the League and take an active part in their propaganda, but before doing so I would like to be enlightened as far as their Native Policy is concerned, as being a man who has been living amongst natives for sometime, I would never bring myself to acknowledge absolute equality with them.

Miss Benjamin, saying that she had nothing to do with Native Propaganda, turned me over to Jones and to the Secretary who outlined their policy as regards Natives to me in detail.

Put in a nutshell it simply amounts to this: The present native trouble is engineered by the League, who by inciting the natives to strike for higher wages, hope that when the time comes when the natives achieve their object, wages of the white men will rise as a matter of course as no white man will work for a lower wage than natives. The destruction of their passes is merely a side issue which appeals to the native mind.[7]

Jones admitted that they were only using the natives in a selfish way to further their own ends. That their policy might lead to serious trouble does not seem to concern those people in the least, as to their mind 'the end justifies the means'.

Joining in the general conversation Miss Benjamin remarked that even if Lapitsky and Sosnovick were deported, they, the League were quite competent to carry on Bolshevist propaganda and that no doubt I too would prove a willing helper.

South African Central Archives: SAB; JUS; 267; 3/1064/18.
Original in English.
Typed.

4. The identity of Miss Benjamin could not be established.
5. International Socialist League.
6. The identity of this person could not be established.
7. There is a single line in the left margin opposite the paragraph starting from 'Put in …'.

2
Report of J. Den Bakker and S. Barlin to ECCI, (Extracts from Minutes of Meeting, ECCI) 25 January 1921[1]

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON 25 JANUARY 1921.
[. . .] THE REPORT OF THE TWO MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF ACTION,
THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE OF SOUTH AFRICA,
TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL
IN MOSCOW. THE PRESENTER – BAKKER.

Dear Comrades,

We would like to explain to you that we have not been mandated by the afore-mentioned organisation to speak in Moscow on its behalf but being young and curious we have come to the decision to visit Russia.

We feel that objective theories that can be offered by Russia exceed the sum of all previous theoretical knowledge.

Fully comprehending that unfolding historical events in Russia represent our future step in the social revolution we ask you to give us a chance to witness personally the colossus of development of the gigantic movement which has been started by the Russian proletariat [. . .]

In view of the fact that the situation in South Africa is almost identical to that in Russia we are coming to the conclusion that we shall be able to apply the knowledge that we get in Russia for the benefit of African movement. We are forwarding to you the following report about the situation in the labour movement in South Africa and about the origins of our League and its relative strength.

Our press organ The International [. . .] But we are facing new technical difficulties. Print foundries refuse to supply us with letters. Paper is very expensive and it is difficult to get it in South Africa. The prices go up all the time but the price of our newspaper is the same as five years ago. We would not like to raise the subscription price.

The newspaper and the press are the property of the Party and are controlled by it. The contents of the paper are clear due to the fact that it never gets any advertising [. . .]

The paper is supported by members because with its price of 10 shillings it does not cover the expenses. The weekly print run is about 2,500–3,000 copies. We have about 1,500 permanent subscribers.

1. In 1921 an abridged version of this report was published in Russian in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional (The Communist International)*, No. 16 under the title 'Revoliutsionnoie dvizheniie v Yuzhnoj Afrike' ('Revolutionary Movement in South Africa'). The publication was signed by 'A delegate of the League'. We publish parts of this report that are omitted from this publication.

The election results. The main election of 1915 brought three delegates from the South African Labour Party to Parliament, all of chauvinistic orientation. They have solemnly committed themselves not to embarrass the government during the war. It was during this election that the South African International League[2] made its appearance on the political arena. Its candidates W.H. Andrews and J.A. Clark suffered a heavy defeat, they only got 67 and 73 votes. From that time on the League participated in Municipal, Provincial and Parliamentary elections with variable success [. . .]

In May 1919 our two comrades in Natal[3] were sentenced to a fine of £ 75 or four months imprisonment and £ 10 or one month's imprisonment for the publication of the leaflet The Bolsheviks Are Coming. After the appeal the verdict was cancelled. To our great pleasure we are able to state that this time all trade union movement was on the side of the League, otherwise we would not have won the case.

Such consolidation of trade unions around the League prevented the passing of a number of bills aimed against the League. These advantages seem very small in comparison with the suffering of our European comrades but we mention them to note that it was considered necessary to suppress us both with arms and in courts [. . .]

Despite the existence of the developed organisation among white workers they are at present very far from political movement. The ties between trade unions and the Labour Party were very insignificant even before the split which resulted from the war. Road workers have never had any ties with the Party. Miners only joined the organisation in 1912. Among other associated trade unions are printers, joiners and carpenters, boiler-makers and other small groups. The Labour Party consisted and still consists of branches of associated trade unions. At present none of the above-mentioned unions is attached to the Labour Party with the exception of one or two small groups of joiners and printers. The growth of class consciousness among the best elements of industrial proletariat is particularly obvious from the fact that 10 out of 13 members of the Action Committee of the International Socialist League are real farm labourers and adherents of the idea of the utmost necessity of spreading the notion of proletarian solidarity amongst Native comrades-workers without the distinction of race and colour.

During the war our League found kindred in the Zimmerwald group.[4]

2. International Socialist League.
3. D.I. Jones and L.H. Greene.
4. Militant left-wing socialists, including V.I. Lenin, who met in Zimmerwald, Switzerland, in September 1915, splitting from the Second International and denouncing its leadership for their support of their corresponding governments' war efforts. Lenin considered the International Socialist Commission created at the Zimmerwald meeting to be the start of a new, Third International.

It had corresponded with the leaders of Russian proletariat and got more inspiration from them, as well as from the Italian Party, from Comrade Grimm,[5] than from our British comrades, despite the fact that the Union Committee consisted mainly of the British. At its fifth conference the League has attached itself to the Third International which was greeted by singing The Red Flag. Coming to the end of this part of our report we inform you that in 1917 Comrade W.H. Andrews was sent on a mission to Europe for participating in the Stockholm conference as a delegate. According to instructions he was elected a delegate of the afore-mentioned conference. A special meeting that appointed Comrade Andrews as its delegate to Stockholm passed the following resolution:

'It is necessary to send a delegate on a mission of participating at the International Socialist Congress in Stockholm or any other place where it may be convened with the purpose of uniting Socialists of all countries, both fighting and neutral, for the creation of a new International. The delegate should be instructed to stand up for peace and vote for it on the basis of destroying the capitalist system and of the creation of the Socialist society.'

As you know, this Conference never took place. Comrade Andrews has done a valuable work in England. Despite his perfect credentials (confirmed by Arthur Henderson) our comrade was not allowed to attend the united Socialist conference in London. The South African Labour Party was represented at this conference by Colonel Cresswell although at that time the Labour Party did not exist. This shows the arrogance of the afore-mentioned conference. Industrial movement nominated two candidates, Comrade Andrews and Tom Mann from England to stand for its delegate to Stockholm. Tom Mann got two votes more than Com. Andrews and was confirmed as the delegate. The industrial movement, however, was not supposed to be represented by a member of the British Labour Party [. . .]

With fraternal greetings to all comrades at the
Third International we remain united with
you in the revolutionary struggle.

J. Bakker and S. Barlin

* * *

Zinoviev:[6] I think that it is expedient to organise a commission to study the question about the Blacks. This question has been superficially discussed twice but because of the absence of comrades from Africa this has not led to any

5. The identity of Comrade Grimm could not be established.
6. G.E. Zinoviev chaired the session.

conclusions. I ask to devise a document on this issue and to discuss the South African question together with the comrades.

A Finnish comrade from Stockholm: I would like to propose to unite all Parties in Africa, Australia which are subordinate to Britain in one Central Committee and to place it under the Executive Committee. It should, however, be transferred to another European city for Moscow is too far removed from these comrades.

Zinoviev: I propose Quelch, Jansen, Varga for this commission.

Quelch: I propose the fourth, Comrade Roy.

Zinoviev: The proposal is accepted. Both African comrades are invited to participate in the work of this commission. So the question is settled for the moment.

RGASPI, 495/1/22/31–53.
Original in Russian (Comintern translation of an English original text that has not been found in the Archive).
Typed.

3
Letter from J. Den Bakker to ECCI, 12 March 1921

Tashkent
12th March 1921

The Secretary
III International
Moscow.

My Dear Comrade Kobetsky,

I don't know when I will be back in Moscow. The delegates intend to extend our trip from here to Baku.

I intend to return to South Africa soon after my return in Moscow, unless the International Socialist league or the Building Workers Industrial Union gives me definite instructions to do otherwise.

I expect to hear from both these organisations at any moment.

As far back as August 1917, before the Russian communists had actually taken power into their hands, the I.S.L. issued a leaflet under the name of the 'Call of the Bolsheviks'. An appeal to the workers of Africa to adopt the revolutionary methods of the Russian Communists. Ever since, it has supported the Soviet government whole heartedly.

At our fifth Conference Jan. 5th 1920, we affiliated to the III International.

If the III Int. gives me full instructions, as to how to act in S.A. I feel confident that these instructions will be carried out by the league and that it will also secure the formation of one big Communist party.

What is the attitude of the III Int. towards the League? Does it accept its affiliation?

The S. African report should constitute a suitable basis for the III Int. to draw up a policy for the SA communist movement.

So far the League has not been able to branch out to agricultural districts. There are great prospects of making headway among the agricultural workers if we could only reach them.

We also intend to start a Dutch weekly in addition to 'The International'.

Arrangements should also be made, to furnish me with a set of photographs, literature etc.

Hoping that arrangement will be made to enable me to leave as soon as possible.

I remain
Fraternally Yours
J. den Bakker
M.C.[1] International Socialist League SA.

RGASPI, 495/64/2/1–2.
Original in English.
Handwritten.

1. Probably, Member of the Committee.

4
Letter from J. Den Bakker to M. Kobetsky, [March–April 1921][1]

The Secretary
III International

Dear Comrade Kobetsky,

Yesterday, I received £150 pounds for my journey to South Africa, which I will fully require.

It takes about three months to report to the political movement in the coast towns, Durban, East London, Port Elesabeth and Capetown. Train fare are expensive in S.A.

The Trades Union movement will pay my expensive,[2] but the political movement may not be in financial position to do so.

Personally I have no financial means, being a worker. I have spent all I had to come to Russia, therefore I apply for another 150 pounds for propaganda purposes.

I also will buy out of that pamphlets in Holland as the majority in S.A. are Dutch.

Is the affiliation of the International Socialist League been accepted? If so please give me a document to that effect, so that the League will have some official standing in calling the Unity conference.

I remain
Fraternally yours
J. den Bakker.

RGASPI, 495/64/2/3.
Original in English.
Handwritten.
Inscription: 26.

1. The date established on the basis of the contents of the document.
2. Expenses.

5
Letter from W.H. Andrews to S. Barlin, 27 April 1921[1]

Johannesburg,
April 27th 1921

Mr. Sam Barlin,
Hotel de Luxe[2]
Moscow.

Dear Sam,

Your letter of March 2nd has just arrived by the mail and also one from Comrade D. Ivon Jones and other Comrades in England. I am trying to answer them all therefore I shall have to be very short in order to get them away by the mail to-day.

I am glad to hear you are well and that you are in the centre of things in Russia. Regarding credentials they have been already sent also to Den Bakker and Comrade Jones, whichever two of the three who have the credentials can attend the Conference with full power from the I.S.L. as Delegates from S. Africa. Probably before you get this the I.S.L. will have ceased to exist and will have merged itself into the United Communist Party of S.A. Section of the Third International with the 'International' as the official organ and headquarters in Johannesburg. Harrison is the Secretary of the United Party in Capetown and H.W. Haynes will probably function as Secretary of the United Party in Durban.[3] We have had a meeting with Dunbar and five other delegates of his Party to discuss the question of joining up, I think the major part of his Party are anxious to fall into line on the twenty-one Points,[4] but Dunbar is as

1. This letter was sent during preparations for the founding conference of the CPSA which was to unite different organisations in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. A Communist Party of South Africa had already been created in September–October 1920 by a group of communists led by A. Dunbar who opposed any participation in elections. To avoid confusion it was proposed that the adjective 'United' be added to the name of the Party. However, during the founding conference in Cape Town on 31 July and 1 August 1921 it was decided to call the new party Communist Party of South Africa, omitting the word, 'United'.
2. Hotel Lux where many foreign Comintern officials and visitors stayed.
3. 'United Party' in both cases here refers to Communist Party of South Africa.
4. Twenty-one conditions of admission to the Comintern were stipulated at its 2nd Congress. The main thrust of these regulations was full compliance of member parties with any decisions, policy or otherwise, passed at Congresses or taken by the ECCI. Only one national communist organisation could be recognised by the Comintern; no splits were allowed; no dissent from an adopted policy was tolerated. Some conditions outlined tactics that could be used by member parties (e.g., participation in parliamentary elections which was often unacceptable for ultra-left organisations). For the full list of points see: '"The Twenty-one Points-Conditions of Admission to the Communist International" as adopted at the 2nd Comintern congress in 1920 and appended to the constitution of the Communist Party of South Africa by its founding conference in 1921' in: *South African Communists Speak. Documents from the History of the South African Communist Party, 1915–1980.* London: Inkululeko Publications, 1981, pp. 58–62.
5. T.W. Thibedi.
6. There are typed over words after 'last'.
7. The identity of Max could not be established. Perhaps the author meant Max Joffe.
8. Jack – probably, J. Den Bakker.

impossible as ever and it is doubtful whether if he is willing to join ~~whether~~ we would have him in the Party as he is a pure and simple anarchist saboteur. Norrie I do not think will accept the twenty-one Points although probably his Party will cease to exist and the more genuine members attach themselves to the new organisation.

Things are looking better now generally so far as the communist movement is concerned in S.A., the Natives have formed what they call a 'Little Group' at Natal Spruit and wish to become a Branch of the new Communist Party, Thibidi[5] is at the head of it.[x] The International circulation is beginning to rise again after having a slump for the last[6] twelve months. We are busy with May-Day arrangements, no trams will run on May-Day but the demonstration and procession will be on Monday, the Federation has taken no lead in the matter, but the Miners took the bull by the horns and decided to demonstrate on the Union ground after a procession round the town on Monday morning. Our Social will be held on Saturday evening, the reason for this being that we could not get the Town Hall on Sunday. You will see the programme in this weeks paper, and generally you will get more information in the paper than I can give in a letter.

We shall not be able to send a Native Worker to Russia, there are great difficulties in the way of this, it might be possible next year; one difficulty is this that there is no Native Worker we know in S. Africa in whom we have absolute confidence, the educated ones are as you know under the influence of the Missionaries or the Church or the Native Affairs Department and one is just as likely to send out a spy as a genuine comrade.

Max[7] is well and in business for himself and anxious to hear from you personally, he is in Johannesburg. The papers from the Free State arrive regularly also those from Benoni, they are eagerly sought for. We received No.15 (French and German) of the 'Communist International' I must now conclude in order to get letters written to the other comrades.

With kind regards to yourself, Jack[8] and the Russian Comrades. Particularly

x I have just received a note from him to the effect that he is threatened with the sack if he does not leave the I.S.L. He is a govt. school teacher as you know.

if you have the chance convey my regards to Comrades Litvinoff and Fineberg whose acquaintance I made in England.

Yours for Revolution.
W.H. Andrews.
Secretary. I.S.L.

RGASPI, 495/64/5/38–41.
Original in English
Typed on the letterhead of the International Socialist League. Copy.
Stamped: 1) General office, No. 4.
2) Literature Department, No. 6.
Inscription: 26.

6
Report of S. Barlin to Comintern [April–June 1921][1]

THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE AT WORK FOR UNITY

At its annual conference held on the 2nd of January last, the League invited all socialist parties and groups to send delegates for the purpose of discussing the question of uniting all communist elements into one South African Communist Party. A hundred delegates attended the conference, representing the International Socialist League, Poali-Zion, Communist Party (anti-political),[2] various Indian industrial unions (Natal), and individual members of the South African Labour Party, Federation of Trades, native workers unions, and unattached socialists.

On the question of communist unity the delegates agreed to the following as a bases for unity.

a. No desire for unity should be allowed to have any influence in the direction of admitting any elements which do not accept the principle of and agree to affiliation with the Third International.

b. A decentralised system of feebly connected revolutionary groups is no improvement of the present position of affairs. A strongly disciplined and centralised party and with no whining for local autonomy of branches, is the only change worth aiming at.

1. Neither the date nor the addressee are indicated in the original. Judging by the contents of the document, it is S. Barlin's report to the Comintern submitted between April and June 1921.
2. The Cape Communist Party created in Cape Town in 1920. It did not accept Comintern's conditions for membership (see footnote 4 to document 5, vol. I).

c. Whatever declarations, program and constitution can be agreed upon should be submitted for approval to the Third Communist International and the party shall be bound by its decisions.

A sub-committee was appointed to draw up a report of the proceedings to be submitted to all bodies represented, with an invitation to unite into one organisation on the lines outlined.

The second unity conference was held in March. The delegates present agreed upon to form a united Communist Party of South Africa (section III Communist International) based upon the 21 points laid down at the second congress of the III International.

The newly formed Communist Party will include the International Socialist League of South Africa, Poali-Zion, the Social-democratic Federation (Cape), The Communist Party (Cape), The Jewish Socialist Party (Cape), the Marxian Club (Durban), the Socialist-Democratic Party (Durban), and individual members of the South African Labour Party. Another split was intended in the Labour Party but it appears that the time is not quite ripe yet. The newly formed United Communist Party[3] will command a membership of about two thousand.

There is a broad field for propaganda to be done in South Africa in the direction of establishing a joint machine in the British colonies for united action in its struggle against British imperialism, and with the recent affiliation of the Cape Federation of Trade Unions to the Red Trade Union International the U.C.P. of South Africa[4] is going to be a strong force in the South African Labour movement.

This congress should consider the question of two mentioned organisations and should at once proceed to establish such a machine and lay down a definite line of action for such a body which will be the driving force for a speedy British revolution.

SAM BARLIN.

RGASPI, 495/64/5/28.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: Archives of the Comintern (in Russian)
No. 3896
Moscow
Inscription: 10.

3. Communist Party of South Africa (see footnote 1 to document 5, vol. I).
4. Communist Party of South Africa.

7
Letter from W.H. Andrews to G. Zinoviev, 17 May 1921

Johannesburg,
May 17th 1921

Mr. Zinoviev,
President,
Communist International.
Moscow.

Dear Comrade,

A movement was initiated at a meeting in Johannesburg on January 2nd this year, with the object of linking all Communist and revolutionary Socialist sections in S. Africa in one Communist Party. Negotiations have proceeded from that date and a meeting was held on Easter Sunday to discuss Socialist unity, at which were represented the International Socialist League, South Africa, the Social Democratic Party, Durban and the United Communist Party, Capetown (which latter is an amalgamation of the Social Democratic Federation of Capetown and the Communist Party of Capetown), and the Jewish Socialist Society (Poalei Zion) Johannesburg. All these sections have agreed to unite on the basis of the twenty-one Points (conditions of admission) to the third International)[1] with the exception of the Social Democratic Party, Durban which remains faithful to the social patriotism and reformism of Hyndman and Co. in England and distributes his organ 'Justice'.

It is intended to call a general Congress of delegates from the various sections on or about August 1st this year in Cape Town, when there is no doubt the new Party will be definitely launched. We therefore desire to have the ruling of your Executive as to the eligibility for membership of the United Communist Party of the Johannesburg Branch (of Poalei Zion). We have attached a memorandum herewith which was handed in to the meeting on Easter Sunday which will explain the position taken up by local representatives of Poalei Zion. We have provisionally decided to accept them as a branch of the United Communist Party pending a decision from your Executive.

I believe the general question will be discussed at the meeting of the International in June and probably the decision there arrived at will be sufficient guide for us in South Africa.

I hope by the time this reaches you that you will have made the acquaintance of Comrade D. Ivon Jones, who with Comrades S. Barlin and J. Den Bakker officially represent the International Socialist League of South Africa in Russia.

1. See footnote 4 to document 5, vol. I.

Trusting that the Congress will be a great success and that the International Proletariat will be immensely strengthened by the deliberations which will take place in Moscow.

We are Yours for the Social Revolution,
W.H. Andrews.
Secretary, Socialist Unity Committee.

RGASPI, 495/64/5/42–4.
Original in English.
Typed on the letterhead of the International Socialist League. Copy.
Stamped: 1) General office, No. 4.
2) Literature Department, No. 6.
3) Archives of the Comintern (in Russian)
No. 3520
Moscow
Inscription: 26.

8
Letter from D.I. Jones to L. Trotsky, 2 June 1921[1] (Extract)

REPLY OF THE DELEGATE OF SOUTH AFRICA, COM. TOM JONES[2]
(TO C. TROTSKY'S QUESTIONNAIRE. 29.IV.21)

[...]

Dear Comrade Trotsky.

I have answered some of your questions from the point of view of the general British situation. Now I shall discuss the situation in South Africa.

Your questions mainly deal, of course, with America and Europe. As far as South Africa is concerned I feel that they are not quite applicable to the conditions there and that you would have formulated them differently.

True enough, we in South Africa have a vast gold mining industry, concentrated in Johannesburg, based on completely new modern foundations and strongly centralised, with capitalised value of 500 million.[3] Nevertheless all

1. This letter was enclosed with Jones' response to L.D. Trotsky's questionnaire about the economic crisis in Europe and the USA, circulated to the delegates of the 3rd Congress of the Comintern.
2. Jones could have used the name 'Tom' instead of his own (David Ivon) for conspiratorial reasons.
3. Most probably, pounds: British currency was used in South Africa at that time.

crises hit London and Paris first and only after that roll to South Africa. At the same time a national capital is coming into existence. But generally South Africa, as well as India, is only a fractional factor of the British capitalist hegemony, the field of cheap labour for England. Our proletariat fully depends on the fluctuations of the London stock exchange and it feeds the White Guards of West End,[4] rather than the South African bourgeoisie.

We have in Africa a relatively small well paid white proletariat and a relatively big poorly paid native proletariat. They co-exist side by side in the same way as it can be seen on the world scale: a united European industrial proletariat and huge masses of African and Asian producers of raw materials.

Economic crises that you mention in your questionnaire do not exist in South Africa as an independent phenomenon of its capitalist economy because there is neither the capital nor the slaves subordinate to it.

In Britain the awakening up of the proletariat is the result of the economic crisis.

In South Africa economic and political crisis will be the result of the awakening of the black proletariat.

In Britain workers will be awakened by the bankruptcy of capitalism.

In South Africa capitalism will go bankrupt because of the awakening of the proletariat.

South African natives are cheap labour. All the gold mining industry rests on this cheap labour. Their ludicrously small salaries of 2 shillings a day cannot be in any way substantially raised without a panic on the London gold shares market.

This mass of cheap workers owns no property whatsoever and has no desire to own any. The emancipation of white workers of South Africa depends upon the awakening of the native proletariat which will also be a significant factor in advancing the collapse of the world capitalism. These native workers are a perfect material for the Socialist revolution. But they are all illiterate and for this reason they are out of reach of the Communist propaganda. Their mental awakening demands educational institutions of either Capitalism, or Communism – whoever will be the first.

The white proletariat of South Africa is for the most part impenetrable for the revolutionary propaganda, while the native masses are still sleeping. The Chamber of Mines facilitates political, economic and mental development of the natives to increase their chances to compete with white qualified workers. But it is afraid of any radical reforms in this direction. It is afraid to balance living conditions of white and black proletariat the result of which could be the creation of a homogeneous toiling mass and giving white leaders to the dispossessed native masses.

4. This phrase refers to the British bourgeoisie.

But the Comintern should not have any doubts. Native workers are beginning to understand and master the idea of a Workers Organisation (see the report to the Congress[5]) abandoning their hunting and military valour and their spears and javelins as weapons of emancipation. But a workers organisation in the midst of the dispossessed can only be revolutionary. All they need is Communist education and then their awakening will become a powerful factor in the World Revolution.

With greetings from South Africa
Yours D. Tom Jones.
2/6.21

RGASPI, 495/64/2/4–6.
Original in Russian (Comintern translation of an English original text that has not been found in the Archive).
Typed. Copy.

9
Letter from S. Barlin and D.I. Jones to M.V. Kobetsky, 11 June 1921

Hotel Lux, No. 284,
Moscow.
11th June 1921.

The Secretary,
Communist International.

Dear Comrade Kabetsky,

In accordance with resolutions passed at yesterday's meeting of the Executive of the Comintern we wish to state that Comrade Ivon Jones will serve on the Executive Committee for South Africa with decisive or consultative vote according to the decision of the Bureau, (the strict meaning of the resolution provides a decisive vote for South Africa, but we do not press the point if the Comrades consider it disproportionate).

5. Jones's report to the 3rd Congress of the Comintern.

2. Comrade Ivon Jones will also serve for South Africa on the Oriental Committee.

3. Comrade Barlin will sit on the Theses Committee on the 'World Crisis'.

We remain
Fraternally yours,
Sam Barlin
D. Ivon Jones
South African delegation for The Communist Party of South Africa.

RGASPI, 490/1/35/18.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: 1) Archives of the Comintern (in Russian)
No. 380.
Moscow
2) 32.

10
Statement of South African Delegation to Comintern, 16 July 1921

MEMORANDUM TO THE SMALL BUREAU OF THE COMINTERN ON THE SITUATION IN AFRICA

The South African Delegation has already submitted a report on the state of the Communist movement in that country. Suffice it to say here that a United Communist Party[1] has now been formed by the linking of the ~~the~~ various groups with the International Socialist League, which was the Left Wing of the South African Labour Party that broke away from the latter body in 1915.

In the reports and articles already submitted by us to the International comrades, we have tried to emphasize the peculiar conditions of the South African Communist movement, namely:

(1). The presence in South Africa of two streams of the proletariat, white and black, performing complementary industrial functions, with two widely different standards of life.

(2). The very primitive character of the Negro race, just emerging from the tribal system, and the consequent exclusively white character of the Communist Movement.

1. Communist Party of South Africa (see footnote 1, document no. 5, vol. I).

(3). The Communist Party is forced by the logic of the class struggle to place the question of solidarity with the native workers in the forefront of its propaganda among the white workers. This principle is the touchstone of Communism for us. Nevertheless, owing to the slow development of the Native Labour Movement, the occasions on which this slogan can be made a burning issue are not so frequent as they otherwise might be with an accelerated native movement. A native strike gives the Communists ideal opportunities ~~of~~ placing the revolutionary test before the white workers, either to side with their masters ~~or~~ with their black fellow workers. But while the native workers remain unorganised, the white workers lag at the stage of Class Collaboration; and between the two, the Communist movement hangs fire.

(4). Normally, all the activity of the South African Communists is among the whites, although the subject matter of propaganda largely includes the native labour question. Our members and supporters find themselves in white Trade Unions, and are preoccupied with the fight against class collaboration there. There are hardly any native linguists among the white Communists.[2] The common medium of expression between whites and natives is 'Kitchen Kaffir', a very inadequate kind of native esperanto. On the occasions when we have issued leaflets in the native languages we have had to depend on native translators. All Communist activity among the native Africans has to be mainly illegal. For this, the Communist Party organisation, besides ~~being~~ inadequate, is wholly unsuited.

(5). South Africa is the entrance to the great territories further north. We have to consider not only the negro population of the Government of South ~~Africa~~. The railway line runs right up for two thousand miles to the Belgian Congo. Members of the South African Communist movement are to be found there also, although no Communist Group; and one member was recently expelled from the territory for Trade Union agitation. For this vast native population, however, the Communist movement can only draw on white sources for financial and other support. All natives are under the strictest passport control. The few educated natives are easily lured away by the enticements of social equality and an assured existence equivalent to their education. Thus, as the native population of South Africa, (to say nothing of territories outside the Union), outnumbers the whites by six to one, the task of the Communist Party is beyond its resources at least in that proportion; in addition the presence of a slave cast side by side with white skilled labour makes the latter an unfavourable recruiting ground for obtaining the necessary minimum of Communist workers.

We would therefore suggest that, in a country like Africa, the small white working class should be regarded more as a purchase-hold for the direct action of the Comintern, than as wholly responsible for the Communist movement

2. White communists with the knowledge of African languages.

among the Africans. We white colonists are a shifting population. For some of us, the only tie with South Africa is the Communist Movement itself.

(In passing, we may point out that the presence of a small class of white skilled workers in India who have already given proofs of militancy by coming out on strike with their Indian fellow-workers, offers a good opening for the education of possible Communist elements, powerful and influential in proportion to their numbers, in India also.)

We consider that these conditions entitle us to urge upon the Comintern that the African Negroes, like the Indians, should come directly under its initiative. We have already shown in our Report that the South African natives, the most advanced in Africa, offer good material for the Communist movement. They have already given proofs of their willingness to fight against oppression.

We submit that the matter of the African Negroes is sufficiently important to send a Comintern representative to South Africa to survey the whole Negro question and its relation to the Communist Party. Comrade Rutgers, for instance, has taken a keen interest in the Indian and African movements. Incidentally, his Dutch nationality would make him a competent judge of the Dutch Nationalist movement in South Africa in its bearings on the negro question and its relation to the Communist movement.

In Comrade S.P. Bunting, of Johannesburg, the Comintern representative would find a member who has devoted his whole energy to the movement among the native Africans, so far as his work for daily bread allows. This comrade has been most active in forming education groups of young natives, and organising a native Union. But he is continually driven back by lack of funds and the pre-occupation of his fellow members in the work among the whites. He has tried to start a newspaper in the native languages. But the Party could not come to his aid without jeopardising the funds of its official organ, 'The International'.

Owing to their miserable conditions, the natives are not able to give financial help for the necessary preliminary work. What is required is to assure economic sustenance to a few native workers as agitators and organisers, such as Cetiywe,[3] Mashabala[4] and others who have already made attempts, some successful, to organise their brothers. This primitive mass is waiting to be stirred. Given the necessary funds and a comrade like Bunting who is a capable administrator and journalist, we are convinced that great results could be achieved. A Communist newspaper in the native languages is a crying need; also schools for illiterate workers. The bourgeoisie are beginning to realise the need of satisfying the Negro's craving for education. It remains for us to decide

3. A. Cetiywe (Cetyiwe), an ANC organiser in Johannesburg, was arrested and charged with incitement to violence after African sanitary workers' strike (1918) in Johannesburg.
4. Masabalala.

whether that education shall be given to him in a Capitalist or in a Communist medium.

We trust that the Comintern will take into consideration, and give us their instructions on the movement among the Africans. We hope that the Comintern will not content itself with Manifestoes from Moscow, which, owing to the lack of local machinery, will not reach the masses to whom they are directed. The pre-occupations of an early European revolution should not create an atmosphere of laissez-aller towards the Negroes. It should rather be an argument for forestalling the bourgeoisie against any attempt to use Africa as a base for the counter-revolution. Conversely, the idea of a prolonged lease of life for European Capitalism should also be an argument for action in the work of forming proletarian parties among the Indian and African populations to accelerate the world revolution. There is above all the supreme revolutionary duty of rallying all peoples to Communism irrespective of motives of strategy.

We hope that the Comintern will give us an opportunity for exchange of views on the matter before our return to South Africa.

With Communist Greetings,
D. Ivon Jones
Sam Barlin

16 July, 1921.

South African Delegation to the Third Congress of the Communist International.

N.B. The word 'Negro' is never used in South Africa, except its corrupted form 'Nigger' in an insulting sense. Technically, the Negro is the more northern native. The Southern race of Africa is known by their own term 'Bantu' to ethnologists. But we have used the better known word 'Negro' to cover the lot for the sake of clearness.

RGASPI, 495/64/25/24–7.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: Archives of the Comintern (in Russian)
No. 3895.
Moscow
Inscription: 26.

11
Letter from D.I. Jones to M. Rakosi, [July–August 1921][1]

PROPOSED COLONIAL BUREAU OF THE COMINTERN

The Secretary,
Comintern

Dear Comrade Rakosi,

I have spoken to several Colonial delegates regarding the advisability of forming a Colonial Bureau of the Comintern; and I should be obliged if you would place the proposal before the Small Bureau or the Executive Committee.

In the present state of things the Colonial delegates feel that they have no plan of work, and no adequate scope for their activities. We feel that we could best contribute to the work of the Comintern by the formation of a Colonial Bureau, and thus feel of some use to the International movement.

We propose that such a Bureau should gather together all matter pertaining to the Colonies, Colonial exploitation, and the Colonial movements in India, Africa, Java, Palestine, Egypt, etc.

The collection of data and statistics, literature, etc., would be the task of this Bureau. It would also be its duty when called upon to advise the Secretariat regarding the various aspects of the Colonial movements. It would also keep watch over social and political developments especially affecting the Colonial working masses where there is no Communist movement or where it is too weak to make its voice heard.

For example, John Harris[2] the Negrophile liberal, has succeeded in making an issue in the British liberal Press of the repressive measures of the British Administration in Kenya, where the natives have been subjected to compulsory labour and land expropriation. Such matters might also receive the attention of the Comintern, giving a lead directly or through the British Communist Party, and thus enhance its prestige as the defender of the unprotected working masses of the Colonies.

It is suggested that the Negro question as it surges up in its most frenzied form in America would also come within the purview of the Colonial Bureau to

1. The document is not dated. The date was established on the basis of another document, 'Minutes of the Preliminary Meeting of the Bureau of Colonial and Semi-Colonial Countries at ECCI' (RGASPI, 495/154/76/1). K.M. Troianovsky, M.E. Yaroshevsky, A.I. Tenenbaum and D.I. Jones participated at the meeting that took place on 24 August 1921. The meeting resolved to create a Department of Dominion Countries and Negro Peoples within the Bureau and to appoint Jones as head of this Department, thus fulfilling Jones's request.
2. The identity of John Harris could not be established.

collect information for the Executive Committee and make proposals on developments from time to time. And the immense amount of matter arising out of the Indian movement, the necessity of collecting data on present political developments, non-cooperation, Swadeshi,[3] etc. and the part played by the young Indian proletariat in Gandhi's Boycott movement, as also the struggles of the proletariat in its own interests, where it clashes with the Nationalist movement and how far the two march together, – all offers a wide field for work which only the Comintern can do.

This work would of course require a Secretary and a Russian typist. An office fitted out for statistical work with a card system for the work of reference to all the collected data, and bookshelves with catalogue system for the collected literature. The Colonial Delegates, with any other comrades which the Executive might consider it advisable to add, would form an advisory Committee to control the Bureau and advise the Executive Committee on Colonial developments. The Colonial delegates would apportion out the work of reading up and collecting the material for current literature and journals etc., make a collection of same and advise the Archives Department what to order from abroad. Literature on the Colonial question now in the Library might form a separate section as part of the Colonial Bureau.

Trusting these suggestions will not be unwelcome to the comrades,

I remain, fraternally yours,
D. Ivon Jones.
(South Africa)

RGASPI, 495/64/8/8–9.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Inscriptions: 1) Jones
2) '8'
3) 48B

3. Swadeshi (Sanskrit for 'local', 'national') movement in India in the late nineteenth century for the development of national industries, against British goods.

12
Official Report of First Congress, CPSA. 30–1 July–1 August 1921 (Extracts)

OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS. HELD AT NO. 20 PLEIN STREET, CAPETOWN ON JULY 30TH, 31ST & AUGUST 1ST 1921. ISSUED BY THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE OF THE PARTY.

The Congress met at 20 Plein Street, Capetown and Comrade D.H. Dryburgh welcomed the following delegates: –

International Socialist League.

W.H. Andrews, S.P. Bunting, M. Barlin, A. Goldman, R. Rabb, F. Robertson, J.J. Hornstein, C.H. Traub, M. Youngelson.[1]

Communist Party, Capetown.

J. Pick, C.F. Glass, W. Green.
W.H. Harrison.

Comrade W.H. Harrison was elected to represent the members of the I.S.L. and United Communist Parties who are not attached to any branch.

Comrade D.H. Dryburgh was elected Chairman of the Congress and W.H. Andrews minute taker.

The report of the unity committee which had already been circulated was taken as read, and Comrade S.P. Bunting explained that the Marxian Club Durban and Jewish Socialist Society (Poalei Zion) Johannesburg, had not been able to send delegates owing to the expense.

The Unity Committee Report was then adopted.

The following resolution was then moved by Comrade C.F. Glass and seconded by J. Pick.

That this Congress of delegates from the United Communist Party Capetown, Marxian Club Durban, International Socialist League (S.A.), Jewish Socialist Society (Poalei Zion) Johannesburg resolves to form and hereby constitutes itself the United Communist Party, South African Section of the Third International.

1. The identities of several people mentioned in this document could not be established. For additional information on some founder-members of the CPSA see document 14, vol. I.

It was pointed out by Comrades W.H. Andrews and S.P. Bunting that the passing of this resolution would involve certain financial commitments by the parties who were about to amalgamate.

Comrade M. Barlin then moved and A. Goldman seconded that the word 'united' be struck out of the motion. It was pointed out that a group in Johannesburg existed which was called the Communist Party which fact might lead to confusion.

The amendment was put and carried.

Comrade S.P. Bunting pointed out that although the I.S.L. was already affiliated to the Third International it would be necessary if the resolution is passed for the new party to apply for affiliation.

The motion was then put and carried without dissent, all standing and singing 'The Red Flag'.

Rules of the Party.

The draft rules and amendments were then considered.

Rule 1. was moved by Comrade C.F. Glass and seconded by J. Pick and carried unanimously.

At this stage it was agreed that all members of the party present should have the right to take part in the discussion but only delegates to vote.

2. Adoption moved by A. Goldman and R. Rabb. An amendment by C. Glass and J. Pick that sub-section (a) be deleted was lost.

An amendment to sub-section (b) moved by M. Barlin and R. Rabb. 'That candidates be not admitted to the party until they had been approved by the Central Executive was lost'.

Sub-section (c) The Marxian Club amendment to this sub-section was moved by S.P. Bunting & M. Barlin but was lost.

Sub-section (d) The amendment in the name of the United Communist Party (C.P.) was moved by J. Pick and C.H. Traub and considerable discussion took place. The necessity of an assured income to the official organ being emphasised.

The amendment was lost by eight to three.

[...]

The Party press.

Under this heading a long discussion took place on the question of the official organ and many useful suggestions were made. It was decided on the motion by J. Pick seconded by M. Barlin that the 'International' should be the official organ of the Party and retain its name with the addition of words, Official Organ of the Communist Party of S. Africa (Section of the Communist International).

Elections of officers.

Comrades W.H. Andrews, C.F. Glass and S.P. Bunting were nominated for office of editor. The two latter declined and Comrade Andrews agreed to stand pro tem hoping to be relieved at an early date, and was elected.

The financial position of the I.S.L. general and printing press funds were given by S.P. Bunting and of the U.C.P. by C.F. Glass.

The literature department I.S.L. was explained by Comrade R. Rabb.

Their reports were accepted.

Chairman of the Party.

S.P. Bunting and C.B. Tyler nominations.

Comrade Bunting was reluctant to stand and hoped not to be elected. On a vote C.B. Tyler was elected by eight to five.

Secretary of the Party.

W.H. Andrews was the only nomination and was declared elected.

Treasurer.

S.P. Bunting was unanimously elected.

It was resolved to recommend to the C.E. to take into consideration the payment of £35 to the Secretary.

Central Executive.

The following were nominated Comrades:

G. Arnold, Mrs. Bunting, J. Den Bakker, R. Gelblum, H. Glaser, A. Goldman, J. Kearney, H. Lee, J. Benjamin, E.M. Pincus, J. Snadler, A. Feldman, R. Rabb, E.R. Roux, T. Chapman, G. Somerville.

A ballot was taken resulting in the election of the following: –

A. Goldman, R. Rabb, Mrs. Bunting, J. Den Bakker, T. Chapman, E.M. Pincus, G. Arnold, R. Gelblum, H. Lee.

The representatives of the three provinces other than the Transvaal to be elected by the members residing therein.

Manifesto.

The manifesto of the Party with a few minor amendments was passed for publication.

A wire from the Jewish Socialist Society (Poalei Zion) was read conveying greetings to Congress and pledging itself to join the new party.

A resolution re credentials was moved by S.P. Bunting, seconded by J.J. Hornstein and agreed to, as follows: –

Credentials from the Party to the Communist Party of any other country shall consist of a letter on official party paper signed by the secretary of the branch of the party to which the accredited member belongs, stating how long he has been and continued a member in good standing of that branch, and of any branch or body incorporated in the Party, to which he may previously have belonged: such letter to be sealed with the seal of the branch if it has one, and countersigned by the secretary of the Party, and sealed with the seal of the Party if it has one. The secretary of a branch shall not so sign until thereto authorised by a vote of the branch secretary and the secretary of the Party shall not so countersign until thereto authorised by a vote of the Central Executive.

Provided however that in the case of a member not attached to a branch the signature of the secretary of the Party authorised thereto by a vote of the Central Executive shall suffice.

Next Congress.

It was on a vote decided that the next Congress shall be held in Durban at Easter 1922.

Native propaganda.

Under general business a long discussion took place on the question of how best to organise and do propaganda amongst the native and coloured workers.

At 1.30 p.m. the Congress adjourned till August 1st, 9 a.m.

August 1st.

Delegates to Third International.

Business was resumed at 9.20 a.m. Letters from Moscow were read from Sam Barlin and D. Ivon Jones, the I.S.L. delegates to the Third International, and received with applause.

Parliamentary elections.

A motion was moved by S.P. Bunting, seconded A. Goldman 'That the Central Executive take into consideration the advisability of contesting a parliamentary seat in a native constituency'.

Considerable discussion ensued and all points of view were advanced, and on the question being put it was carried by 8 to 2.

General propaganda.

It was further, on the motion of C.F. Glass and J. Pick, resolved 'that the Central Executive be requested to draw up a statement of the methods of propaganda to be followed by the party till the next Congress'.

Congress closes.

At 11.40 the Chairman in closing the Congress, expressed the opinion that good and useful work had been done in the past three days by the Congress and he believed that the year to come would mark a great advance in the revolutionary Socialist movement in S. Africa.

After singing the Red Flag the Congress dispersed.

W.H. Andrews.
Conference Secretary.
C.D. Tyler
Chairman of the Party

RGASPI, 495/64/3/9, 10, 12–15. For the full text of the document see: RGASPI, 495/64/3/9–15.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.

13
Letter from W.H. Andrews to Comintern, 10 August 1921

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF S.A.

4 Trades Hall,
Rissik Street.
P.O. Box 4179
Johannesburg S.A.
August 10th 1921

The Secretary,
Executive of the Third Communist International.

Dear Comrade,

I am instructed by the Communist Party of South Africa, which was formed on the 30th July by the amalgamation of the International Socialist League, S.A.

Social Democratic Federation, Capetown, Communist Party, Capetown, Jewish Socialist Society Capetown, Jewish Socialist Society (Poalei Zion) Johannesburg, Marxian Club Durban, and which has accepted the '21 Points', conditions of affiliation to the Third International and adopted the constitution and rules, to apply for affiliation to the Third Communist International.

W.H. Andrews.
Secretary,
Communist Party of S.A.

Manifesto and Rules attached
WHA[2]

RGASPI, 495/64/210.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Inscription: 48B1 (in Russian)

14
Report by D.I. Jones to Comintern, 13 August 1921

SOUTH AFRICA (SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT, 13 AUGUST 1921)[1]
UNITED COMMUNIST PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Am awaiting latest particulars of the Party statistics etc.
Re leaders:

W.H. Andrews. Secretary, and Editor 'The International'. Best known Labour figure in South Africa on the radical side. Before split of Labour Party in 1915 on war question, was its chairman, and its chief founder. Combines steady going characteristics of British Trade Unionist with a large grasp of the class struggle. Age 51. Mechanic (fitter or turner).

S.P. Bunting A lawyer in his leisure time! A graduate of Oxford. Son of Sir Percy Bunting, 'Contemporary Review'. Comrade of great energy. Came into

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Doc. 13

1. See footnote 4 to document 5, vol. I.
2. Andrews's initials.

Doc. 14

1. This document is an appendix to 'Report on Workers' Organisations in S.A.' (RGASPI, 495/64/4/14–19), stamped 'No. 487, 10.V.1921' and signed 'J' under the words: 'Remarks: This report has been prepared by a S. African Comrade, not wishing to be in a limelight'.

Labour Party in 1911, and was among the first to denounce Labour participation in War of capitalists. Has suffered much Economic stress through boycott owing to International Socialist Activity. Man of great energy. Inclined to Leftism in question of Parliamentary elections,[2] and advocates devoting Communist activity solely to the Negro workers. Age 46.

C.B. Tyler: A member and most prominent figure in the Building Workers Industrial Union. Came into Communist movement through S.L.P.[3] group of Campbell (now left S.A.) Tyler works at his trade of shop fitter. Main activity consists in furthering Communist methods and propaganda in the Trade Union. Age 38.

Colin Wade: Dentist. Chief promoter of War on War League at outbreak of war, from which sprang the International Socialist League and now Communist Party. A lecturer on Russia and keen collector of all matter relating thereto. Best authority in Transvaal on Municipal Socialism and Town Planning Reform.

Charles Dines: Fitter, 30. Communist propagandist, with S.L.P. training.

H.W. Haynes: 40. Miner, now office worker. Collaborator in 'The International'. A Comrade of great experience in strike movement. Chairman of the Kleinfontein strike Committee which initiated the general strike movement in 1913. Keen student of Marxism, and leader of Marxian Club, Durban. Advocate of anti-parliamentary action, now he joins the Communist party under 21 Points.[4]

D. Ivon Jones: Office worker, 37. Was Secretary of the Labour Party at time of split. Was first Secretary and Editor of 'The International' 1915–1920.

W.H. Harrison: Capetown, Secretary of local Branch of Communist Party. Previously secretary of Social Democratic Federation, now merged in Communist Party. Was arrested several times for anti-militarist propaganda. Called himself 'philosophical anarchist' before formation of C.P. Cabinet maker.

D.L. Dryburgh: Capetown, previously S.L.P. student, member of Industrial Socialist League. Arrested with his father (70) for 'criminal slander' of Government in connection with recent massacre of natives at Bullhoek. Trial pending.[5]

W. Green: Cape Town. Propagandist, also arrested with above.

J. Chapman: Benoni. 40. Blacksmith. Communist worker & propagandist. Chairman of Executive Committee CP. Persistent advocate of revolutionary political action on lines now laid down by 21 Points.

Other propagandists & workers in the Communist Party. S.A.

H. Barendorgh: fitter.

2. See footnote 4 to document 5, vol. I.
3. Socialist Labour Party created in 1902. Became part of the International Socialist League.
4. See footnote 4 to document 5, vol. I.
5. Bulhoek massacre: the shooting by the police of members of the Israelit movement on the Bulhoek commonage near Queenstown in the Ciskei in May 1921. One hundred and sixty-three people were killed and 129 wounded for their refusal to move from the ground and a charge against the police who surrounded them. Two Cape Town socialists Dryburg and Harrison were prosecuted for spreading 'slander' about the massacre in their leaflets.

E.J. Brown: Experienced strike leader. Recently expelled from Belgian Congo for agitation there.

Sam Barlin: Party worker, and organiser of coloured tailors and other coloured workers. Member of E. Committee.

Ralph Rabb: Organiser of literature activity of the International Socialist & Communist movements. Great believer in printed word.

Ben Sigamoney: School teacher. Indian. Organiser of Indian workers in Natal.

Abe Goldman: Tailor. Propagandist and educator in Marxist theory. Prominent figure in Tailors Union.

W. Blake: Secretary of Building workers Industrial Union.

Gideon Botha: Tramwayman. Dutch propagandist of Communism.

Thibedi: Negro school teacher. Propagandist of Communism among native (negro) workers.

Manuel Lopez: 25. Capetown. Tramwayman. Communist writer and agitator.

Tom Nortye: Dutch propagandist of Communism. Tramwayman. 33.

Jack Williams: Engine driver. Pretoria. Branch Secretary.

Tom Mathews: Fitter. Member of A.E.U.[6] Executive. Communist speaker.

South African Labour Party:

This Party has never recovered the shock it received in the 1915 split. In order to please the jingo press it expelled its left wing members who had formed themselves into the International League of the S.A.L.P. Its parliamentary representation was reduced from 8 to 4 members in the 1915 election. One by one the Trade unions disaffiliated from it. In the 1920 election however it increased its Parliamentary representation to 21 on the cost of living issue. In 1921, its members in Parliament were again reduced to 10 members on the Industrial Issue. Its leader is F.H.P. Creswell: One time mine manager. A most conservative type of Labour leader. Was defeated at the last election. Does not function as Party leader except through Parliament.

Thomas Boydell: member of Parliament since 1912 for Durban. Railway worker. Most painstaking worker in Labour Party, and adept at handling revolutionary phrases.

Kentridge, Waterston, Madeley.

The name Labour Party should not mislead one to associate this Party with the British Labour Party. No Trade Unions are affiliated to it. Even its open Branches are moribund, and only function for elections and at elections, – small groups gathered round the Parliamentary members as personal following. It survives on the prestige given it in the militant days before the ejection of the Socialists. Any proposal for affiliation of Communist Party should be viewed with these differences in mind. Moreover, the Labour Party

6. Amalgamated Engineering Union.

has alienated the Dutch workers, hence in past deaffiliation of Unions. A broadening of the functions of the Communist Party would soon knock out the Labour Party in the industrial[7] centres.

The South African Industrial Federation.

This Federation includes most of the Trade Unions of the Transvaal, and is aiming to bring in the other provinces. It functions in the Orange Free State, and is gaining over the Natal Unions. So far it has not been able to win over the Cape Federation owing to the radical difference of attitude towards the Coloured workers in the two Provinces.

The old Federation of Trades in the Transvaal which took up a militant revolutionary policy culminating in the uprising of 1913, was smashed up by the debacle of the 1914 movement, when Smuts brought 60,000 armed burghers into Johannesburg and deported nine Trade Union leaders to England. Crawford was one of the deportees. He was then a noted exponent of Anarcho-Syndicalism. On his return to Africa at the outbreak of war he took up the honorary duties of the almost defunct Federation, and was in office when the resurgence of the Trade Union movement took place. He hitched on to the Chamber of Mines from the stand, and carried on the policy of class collaboration until today to an almost open champion of capitalist interests. There are spasmodic revolts against his policy, but since it is not yet bankrupt of results, the revolt has not yet taken definite shape.

Archibald Crawford has few other colleagues of importance. The opposition to his policy is reflected by the Communists, with Andrews, a metal worker, as its chief spokesman.

The Federation includes about 60,000 workers. The Railwaymen, loosely organised, & Coast Unions, not yet in the Federation, round number about 40,000. Statistical details to follow on receipt of same from South Africa.

D. Ivon Jones
for South African Delegate

RGASPI, 495/64/4/20–4
Original in English.
Handwritten.
Inscriptions: 1) Archives of the Comintern (in Russian)
No. 4009.
Moscow
2) 26.

7. There is a crossed-out word before 'industrial'.

15
Statement by D.I. Jones to ECCI, [September–October 1921][1]

THE CRISIS IN COLONIAL NATIONALISM.

To the Chairman and members of the Executive Committee of the Committee[2]

Comrades,

I wish to urge the formation of a COLONIAL BUREAU OF THE COMINTERN on the lines of my proposals placed with the Secretary, Comrade Rakosi.

A crisis is at present discernible in the Colonial National Movements which calls for the unremitting attention of the Comintern. Right and Left wings are emerging, and the dangers of compromise of Right Nationalists with the Imperial domination becoming more imminent.

Egypt. In Egypt, the Adly Pasha official delegation is gaining adherents and Zaghloul Pasha in the Nationalist Centre seems prone towards more pacific methods under pressure of the Capitulatory Powers. A left wing movement is appearing, calling itself Socialist, under Dr. Hussein, and the Communist Group has an important function to perform in keeping up the uncompromising struggle through the Left Wing Nationalist elements.

India: In India, Gandhi's boycott movement is gaining huge proportions, but is reactionary in its economic results as far as the movement back to hand spinning goes, although the native mill owners are meanwhile reaping the benefits. The recent rising of the moplahs[3] reported last week indicate the lower mass struggle against both Indian and Imperialist exploiters, and Gandhi, with Mohammed Ali, the Moslem leader, have been requested by the Government to go and pacify the rebels. The need of a Communist Party right on the spot in India is very urgent.

Ireland: The Republicans in Ireland have concluded a truce which has produced a Left Wing movement among the fighting Brigades, which are composed almost wholly of working men. The Left Wing elements have turned towards the Communist Group for guidance and aid in renewing the struggle should any form of compromise take place. Unfortunately, the data at the

1. This document is not dated. The date has been established on the basis of its contents (2nd Pan-African Congress that took place on 28 August–6 September 1921 is mentioned as a 'recent' event).
2. Obviously, the Comintern.
3. The mophlah – Moslem part of the population of Malabar in India's Madras province. The mophlah uprising against the British and the local feudal landlords in 1921 was one of the biggest peasant uprisings in India.

command of the Comintern is meagre, and a joint delegate from the Communists and the Brigades who spent a week here on urgent business had to return empty handed owing to the danger of provocateurs and the lack of the necessary information in our archives to confirm credentials, which information it would be the task of a Colonial Bureau to collect.

Africa: A Pan-African Congress of the Negroes of the world was recently held in London, Brussels and Paris, promoted by Americans.[4] The negroes of Africa have no bourgeoisie. This Pan-African movement has therefore no progressive traits like the other Colonial National movements. The African Negroes are beginning to move along class lines. The Governments are using the Pan-African idea to divert them from it. The great COLONIAL AND SUBJECT NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS are unprovided for the technical apparatus of the Comintern, and it is my duty as a Colonial delegate to plead for the Comintern to place itself as the only co-ordinating head of these movements, not only in word, but by the formation of a COLONIAL BUREAU, at first to gather data and watch events, later to be extended to any function that may be deemed necessary.[5]

D. Ivon Jones,
Communist Party of South Africa.

RGASPI, 495/64/160/44.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Inscription: Archives of the Comint (on the back of the page) (in Russian)

16
Minutes of Meeting, Presidium of ECCI, 10 January 1922 (Extract)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PRESIDIUM
OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMINTERN

Present: Cds. Zinoviev, Radek, Thomas, Kuusinen, Lozovsky, Rákosi, Guralsky, Humbert-Droz, Remmele, Bela-Kun, Brandler, Safarov, Souvarin, Tsigler, Brichkina.

4. Second Pan-African Congress (1921) convened by W.E.B. DuBois.
5. According to 'Minutes of the Preliminary Meeting of the Bureau of Colonial and Semi-Colonial Countries at ECCI' (RGASPI, 495/154/76/1) such a Bureau had already been created (See footnote 1 to document 11, vol. I). It would seem that Jones was not satisfied with the fact that it existed only on paper and wanted a stronger body with a better technical support.

[...] Discussed:	Decided:
18. About the South African united Communist Party.	To take cognisance of the information about the unification of the old party of South Africa with several other groups and inform the ECCI about this.

General Secretary of the Exec. Com. of the Comintern
O.V. Kuusinen

RGASPI, 495/2/11/5, 6.
Original in Russian.
Typed.
Stamped: 1) No. 691 12 Jan. 1921 (in Russian)
SECRETARIAT
Exec. Communist Internat.
2) ARCHIVES OF THE ECCI (in Russian)
Inscription: To Com. Zinoviev (in Russian)

17
Report of D.I. Jones to ECCI, 15 March 1922

MEMORANDUM ON SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION TO THE PRESIDIUM
OF THE COMMINTERN.

(per Comrade Kuusingen, Secretary)

15 March, 1922.

Comrades,

The news in today's 'Pravda' indicate a state of bloody civil war in South Africa, arising from the strike in the gold mines.[1] I have submitted several notes on the Press reports of the situation. I shall only repeat here that the issue of

1. The strike of thousands of white gold miners began on 10 January and was joined by white workers in related industries. The strikers protested against wage cuts and against the employment of black workers whose wages were much lower. On 10 March, after the strikers mobilised armed commando support, the Smuts government called in the army and the police and suppressed the strike, subsequently called the 'Red Revolt'.

the strike is the attempt of the Chamber of Mines, (which is all-powerful in the Government of South Africa) to break down the 'colour bar', that is, introduce native (negro) labour at cheap rates into the skilled industrial operations. But this is only the form which the international attack of capital on labour has taken in South Africa. It has been the function of the Communist Party of South Africa and the International Socialist movement preceding it to preach this fact in and out of season for the last six years. It is a tribute to the persistent efforts of the Party in this regard that, in spite of the pernicious form in which the strike issue has been put, a form best calculated to arouse race hatred between the two sections of the working class, and in spite of the stage of armed conflict into which the struggle has passed, not a single instance has been cabled in the reports of attacks by white workers on the negro working masses, the unwitting occasion of the conflict. This splendid result is wholly due to the work of the Communist Party.

Our paper 'The International', which has been doing the work of the Third International in South Africa from the Zimmerwald days,[2] is the only working class paper in the country. The Labour Party in South Africa, though it has 11 members in Parliament, has no official press. The sacrifices made by our members to keep this paper going for over six years have been worthy of the cause, and have succeeded in keeping the paper alive against heavy odds without any outside help up to the present date. In our work on the negro question, and our efforts through the paper to achieve a rapprochement of the black and white working masses NO PARTY COULD WITH GREATER JUSTIFICATION APPEAL FOR OUTSIDE AID,[3] but, with the exception of five minutes discussion with the Budget Committee eight months ago, no consideration has been given to the matter by the Comintern in spite of repeated memorandums on the subject by myself. The negro masses have no votes to give us, no militants or funds to lend to the cause; they are new from the tribal state, and cannot do more at present than form rough and ready industrial organisations. Our work among these masses is therefore a missionary work, and our responsibility towards them is only slightly greater than the responsibility of the International in general. We came to Moscow with the idea of reporting to a General Staff of the world movement, but find that it requires 'diplomatic' qualities to push one's case,[4] and in these diplomatic arts the revolutionary movement in South Africa has equipped us very poorly!!

Our Secretary, Comrade Andrews, has been arrested in connection with the strike, on the charge of 'inciting to violence'. He is a mechanic by occupation. Before the world war he was the acknowledged leader of the South Africa

2. See footnote 4 to document no. 2, vol. I.
3. Changed from lower case to upper case in the original.
4. A blacked-out word before 'and'.

Labour movement and chairman of the Labour Party. This position he sacrificed by his denunciation of the war from the class point of view. Nevertheless, although thrown into the background by the Jingo leaders during the war, and later by Communist propaganda on the question of Negro labour, he has never ceased to be the most respected Labour leader in South Africa, and his arrest is a sure sign of the progress made by the Communist solution of the present problems of South African Labour. If the present bloodshed results in a Republican-Labour block in the Government, Andrews is the one man who commands the unbounded respect of both the Dutch Republican farmers as well as Labour, and is the one man who by his record can restrain the pogrom proclivities of the Dutch farmer class against the negro masses, by any such coalition. In this matter I should be glad if the Presidium could find time to tender advice to the Party ~~on this matter.~~

Owing to the return of a number of our most militant comrades to England, the Party was not so strong numerically of late. The unemployment crisis also brought the funds for carrying on our paper into low water, so that latterly[5] 'The International' has been kept alive by the profits of our printing press. Now, however, owing to large printing credits to the Trades Unions during the strike, and the impoverishment of the Unions, our printing shop is also in financial difficulties, and the paper must collapse without outside aid.

I feel it my duty to proceed without delay to South Africa, (although I had definitely returned to England when I was instructed to proceed to Moscow). I should therefore be glad of an early consideration of these matters by the Presidium.

With Communist greetings,
D. Ivon Jones

RGASPI: 495/64/10/1–2.
Original in English.
Typed.
Inscription: 26a.

5. lately.

18
Letter from F., member of CPSA, to D.I. Jones, 16–20 March 1922[1]

March 16th Thursday.

Dear Ivon Jones,

There will be no-one at liberty to write to you this next mail but myself. The letter may be incoherent & rambling for I am worn out & half diemented with anxiety for all our Family in the grip of the thugs, & imprisoned in the Fort. The past week seems[2] like seven years, not days – a tragedy for each day.

Must try to get down the facts. – Martial law was proclaimed last Friday at 9.45 a.m., half an hour later a large posse of mounted police surrounded the Trades Hall. The detectives poured into our office arresting all that were there but myself, – Comrades Andrews, G. Mason & Ernest Shaw; when they took them away, I had to look on while they ransacked the office. This time seemed the signal for all the shooting that went on continually for five days throughout the town – aeroplanes, bombs, machine & Lewis guns. On coming to the office on Saturday I had the news that the Printing Press was wrecked, parts removed, the motor smashed, & type scattered. On Sunday morning I went to the Rabb's flat & heard from the caretaker the awful news – they had both been arrested while distributing leaflets in the Market Square the evening before. From there I slogged up to Yeoville to give the news – but to find the detectives' motor car at the Buntings house – I was only there to see him taken away. I tramped back to town to find our comrades – to tell them all. Monday – a terrible day of waiting & receiving messages from comrades that came & went from & to the fight.

On Tuesday the bombing over Fordsburg was terrific – it shook the office – then a voice came from down below – 'By order of Colonel Truter everybody out of this building'. I came out of the office, & the police shut all doors, about a hundred of us were huddled on the stairs, & the gates of the building shut – 'Everyone of you will be searched before leaving this place' which was proceeded with. When we were all out the offices were again raided throughout the Hall & the gates locked. On coming the next day I found that the locked bar on our desk had been wrenched off, the wood splintered, and the cash box with contents (about £7) gone. And it had been left in my charge! I cannot tell you all there was to fear. On Wednesday we knew that the brave & resolute Percy Fisher & Harry Spendiff had shot themselves. (This was later contradicted – killed by shrapnel).

1. The identity of the author could not be established. The inscription on the document states only that she was Andrew's typist in the Party headquarters in Johannesburg.
2. There is a crossed-out word before 'seems' in the text.

Thursday – to-day – a Sergeant of police with rifle[3] much in evidence came into the office & said he wanted to phone – without phoning – he then said 'Give me that letter you are typing', he then phoned Marshall Square[4] calling for the officer in charge & said 'I believe there is matter here for an arrest'. He read the letter over the phone. Then we both waited about 20 minutes – a message came, and then he marched out saying – 'you are not to be shot this time – you can go home'.

Friday, March 17. To-day could not get into office, Trades Hall guarded, not allowed to pass in. There was to be an executive meeting at 10 a.m. regarding ballot for return to work.

Yesterday as many of ourselves as could muster & a crowd of workers – a goodly length of them – followed the bodies of Fisher & Spendiff to their graves. The undertakers must have had their orders – they whipped up the horses & galloped the hearse away from us to the cemetery. We all slogged on, not disorganised – to Brixton – not a bit of red allowed to be seen on anyone or thing (except our[5] little soviet badges on dear devoted Mrs Margren, & myself. Over both graves we sang the 'Red Flag' & from the speeches I quote – 'the names of Percy Fisher & Harry Spendiff must be inscribed on the Red Flag in every land'. Their resolution & 'no surrender but to death' shall inspire us – forward.

You must have known Spendiff, his name is written by you on his subscription card. Doubtless you have read of Percy Fisher in the papers. He was only thirty-one. These two have been the militant lights of the Council of Action all through previous to the arrests. The 'unknown unnamed' rank & file that went down with them under the Red Flag hoisted at Fordsburg must have been shovelled into graves where they fell.

Comrades in Russia – a band of Workers here with but a few pistols, a little ammunition between them – have stood up to the Chamber of Mines with its infantry, cavalry, maxims & aeroplanes and defiantly passed away.

I cannot get news of friends in Benoni yet; feel anxious Comrades T.C. & E.J.B. Was relieved & glad to see Comrade F. this morning, he is anxious about H.B.[6] I have been to the Fort with food etc. twice – no one is allowed to see Comrades there not even their wives. We cannot locate S.P. Bunting they refer us to Marshall Square from the Fort and back – Mrs B.[7] ill with anxiety. A little note was received from Andrews – written on biscuit paper to say he was well.

3. The word 'rifle' is written above the crossed-out 'gun'.
4. Marshall Square – location of police headquarters.
5. There is a crossed-out word before 'our' in the text.
6. The identities of people whose initials are mentioned here could not be established.
7. Mrs B. – Rebecca Bunting.

Strangely enough your letter came through – like a draught of life giving wine in the midst of this welter of hopelessness. Let me express relish &[8] appreciation of your remarks concerning Youngelson – what a doughy specimen, not a spot of yeast in him. So many of his kind come for credentials to Russia, so well dressed & shiny. Perhaps paid 3 months branch subs![9] Oh, always bought the paper if not a regular subscriber. After this late bloody sacrifice of super men it seems the great Lenin would say to any man [of sense] coming to Russia – you would have done well to have remained in the land you came from. As for the lice men they should have the sanitary work to do.

Regarding your valuable & valued self we are all so thankful you are in Harbour & not at the Fort.

Our foreman Printer was 'wanted' I do not know whether he is still at liberty. At one time the Press was in danger of being smashed (before Martial Law was proclaimed) by a certain element – you can guess the instigators – who said we were 'scabbing' when printing strike leaflets. All the printers came out loyally, except the 'Star' and S.T. & R.D.M.[10] who stayed at work to print that the workers were 'riff-raff', 'a sorry lot' bandits, assassins. 'Bolshevik plot discovered!' 'Immense sums of money from overseas for ammunition', etc.

Poor Mrs Margren's room was raided at 2.45 am the day before yesterday.

I am collecting the daily Press & will cut the most necessary columns out to send to you as you say do not send bulky papers. I trust the others reached you which I sent regularly up to last week.

Saturday March 18th. Trades Hall still guarded, soldiers inside & out.

The Govt is talking about its friendship & protection for the Black Workers against the strikers banner for a 'White S. Africa'. You will know how our tiny ship 'Communism' has been tossed about from rocks to heavy seas. Is it to sink? As I approach some of our well dressed members à la Youngelson they say 'Oh the Party is finished now, quite finished in this country'.

But [again] Communism approaches as a dusty dishevelled Worker you have hardly seen before comes & grips your hand with 'By god, Comrade, we've got some organising work in front of us now'.

Sunday, March 19th – A little better news, the wives have been allowed to see prisoners for the first time since arrests and S.P.B.[11] is in the Fort. Another comrade's house raided. H.B. not yet found.

Monday 20th, Trades Hall still full of armed men, what will the office be if I see it again? I am taking the correspondence from the P.O. Box to my room of course.

8. There is a crossed-out word after '&' in the text.
9. Subscriptions.
10. The *Sunday Times* and the *Rand Daily Mail*.
11. S.P. Bunting.

I must post this now as must send it to Capetown Comrade to post for mail. Can you give me anything to do?

F.

RGASPI, 495/64/159/218–23.
Original in English.
Handwritten.
Inscriptions: 1) Letter from Comrade Andrews' typist, Party member.
(The hand-writing is different from that of the text)
2) South African insurrection
(The hand-writing differs both from that of the previous inscription and of the text).

19
Statement of D.I. Jones to ECCI, 25 March 1922

FURTHER STATEMENT ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION.

25th March, 1922.
Moscow

To Comrade Kuusingen. Secretary, Comintern

The latest news by mail from Africa tend to modify my previous statement that there had been no outbreaks of violence between black and white workers. It appears that several tragic conflicts of minor character occurred between Black and white workers side by side with the main struggle with the Government forces.

These incidents are all the more tragic in that they make the task of the Communist Party far more difficult in the future, unless a great change of attitude takes place in the minds of the white workers as a result of the present events.

It is precisely because of the new political alignments that will result from the conflict that it may be wise for me to await some report from the Party before returning to South Africa, especially if in the meanwhile the proposed Anglo-American-Colonial Bureau will be formed.

The strike and insurrection was not officially led by the Communist Party, although participated in by Communist speakers. Comrade Andrews, our Secretary, was arrested with five other members of the Left Wing Movement, on a charge of 'inciting to[1] violence'. Meanwhile, the actual leaders of the

1. There is a crossed-out word after 'to'.

Commandoes, especially a member of Parliament named Waterston[2] who has no fixed principles and disclaims any revolutionary intent, were left unmolested by the police right up to the open conflict. The Government seemed to have welcomed an armed clash, as long as it was[3] led by volatile, non-Communist elements, in order to settle once for all with the white workers, and gain a free field for the exploitation of cheap native labour.

The Communist Party office, in common with that of the Trade Unions in the same building, is occupied by the police; and there is no doubt that our printing press and Party newspaper 'The International' are suppressed. The charge against Comrade Andrews and the others will no doubt be now changed into one of High Treason, making it a question of life and death. The best of our membership will have suffered terribly in the conflict, and the whole organisation shattered.

It remains to ascertain whether the conflict is the last revolt of a non-revolutionary white working class driven to arms by the very insecurity of their economic position over against the native masses. In that case the conditions for a Communist Party based on white militants have disappeared, and the Comintern will henceforth have to take over the direct responsibility for the native masses.

On the other hand it is possible that[4] along with the discouragement of the workers on the economic front, a political revulsion may ensue which will result in a Labour-Republican block. In such a block, Comrade Andrews, by the universal respect which he commands with the rank and file, would play an important role for the Communist Party; and the anti-Imperialist forces, hitherto divided by chauvinist cries, would be for the first time united. This implies an extension of the principle of the United Front to include the Anti-Imperialist farmers Party.[5] But in Colonial questions the Comintern has already recognised this tactic in principle.

It is for the Comintern to decide whether[6] these Colonial movements play any part in the general revolutionary process, whether the world revolution is not all one piece and not a European or Central European affair, whether these outbreaks at the periphery of capitalism are not as essential to its general collapse as those at the centre. It is to be regretted that by working on the opposite theory the Comintern takes an interest in these movements after the crisis, and when[7] it is already too late. Moreover, the absence of clear

2. 'Bob' Waterson (Waterston?) – an MP on the ticket of the South African Labour Party. During 1922 Rand strike he proposed a 'Republican Resolution', calling on the Nationalist and Labour MPs to proclaim an independent republic and form a provisional government. The resolution was met with enthusiasm at a meeting of the strikers but was rejected by the Parliament.
3. There is a crossed-out word after 'was'.
4. There is a crossed-out word after 'that'.
5. Reference to the National Party.
6. There is a crossed-out word after 'whether'.
7. There is a crossed-out word after 'when'.

knowledge as to the place of the Colonial movements in the Comintern strategy leaves Colonial delegates and revolutionaries undecided. For example, I have no personal ties with South Africa apart from the Comintern, and my home is England equally with the Colonies.

The whole of English speaking society, especially American and Colonial, is afflicted with a festering sore in the question of the negro race. Whether Colonial movements play a part or not in the revolutionary movement, the Revolution will later on be confronted to its peril with this terrible incubus of colour hatred implanted in the breast of the English speaking peoples by generations of slave dealers. Apart from the immediate strategy of the Revolution, the Comintern has a universal human appeal to make also, (in other words, grand strategy), especially in regard of the Negro Race. In South Africa we have tried hard for the last seven years to concentrate on the issue, for in our complex Society it is immediately bound up with the issue of the Revolution. We were too weak however to bring about the desired rapprochement of the Black and White workers in time to influence the present crisis. After this and the aftermath of animosity aroused between black and white I am afraid we shall be weaker. The Gold Mining Capital of the Rand, which Walton Newbold[8] declares to be the fulcrum of world finance capital, enters upon a new era of further expansion in Africa as a result of the crushing of the White workers' revolt.

There remains the need for agitating and informing the Labour movement in London in order the check the ferocity of White Guard Justice.

1. The Presidium should decide whether this should be done, either by myself or someone else.
2. To decide ~~whether~~, if the Smuts Government maintains its political as well as military position, and the milieu for Communist Party still further narrowed as a white workers party, whether it will take on direct work through a South African Bureau among the Native masses.
3. To decide, in the event of a political revolution, the role of the C.P. in an Anti-Imperialist block.
4. To decide the question of financial support.
5. The formation of an Anglo-American-Colonial Bureau.

D. Ivon Jones.
(South African delegate.)

RGASPI, 495/64/6/5–7.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Inscription: 48B

8. The identity of Walton Newbold could not be established.

20
Letter from D.I. Jones to O. Kuusinen, [April 1922][1]

STATEMENT REGARDING APPLICATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATE TO PROCEED HOME.

Dear Comrade Kuusingen,

With reference to our conversation today regarding the situation in South Africa, and my desire to return home without delay, I have the following points on which I desire the advice of the Presidium.

1. ...[2] The critical situation in the South African movement, the armed uprising and its suppression by the Government ... The arrest of Comrade Andrews, our Secretary, who is also one of the most respected Labour leaders there. The probable smash up of the Communist Party, the police having occupied the premises, and the armed conflict scattered the membership, and made open activity impossible ... Also the need from the International point of view to stiffen the white workers to resistance in order to prevent Imperialist Capital from breaking through into wider spheres of Negro exploitation which is necessary for its existence, – ALL THIS BACKS UP OUR APPEAL FOR FINANCIAL AID FROM THE INTERNATIONAL TO CARRY ON THE FIGHT.

2. ... The necessity for me to immediately proceed to London on my way to South Africa in order to acquaint the Labour Movement in England of the true merits of the colour issue which started the conflict, and which is liable in English circles to be construed to the disadvantage of the white workers of the Rand now in the struggle. White Guard justice will follow the conflict, and ruthless suppressions and executions are most probable. It is necessary for me to move Press and Trade Unions in England to come to the aid of our comrades.

3. ... I am now engaged with Comrade Borodin and Andrews in drafting an appeal to the International movement on the question for submission to the Presidium.

4. ... I also wish to have the advice of the Committee[3] on the application of the United Front in Africa after the present events. Comrade Andrews, who was up to the war Chairman of the Labour Party and member of Parliament, by his

1. This undated letter was written after discussions about the Rand Revolt in Moscow. Jones apparently intended to return to South Africa but did not do so. He remained in the Soviet Union until his death in 1924.
2. The breaks in the text in this document [...] appear in the original.
3. The ECCI.

denunciation of the war forfeited these positions and his leading place in the Labour movement. The present struggle is calculated to restore him to leadership, at least of a very considerable section of the left wing and militant elements. He is also much respected by the Boer Farmers or Nationalists for his stand in the war and his defence of the Boer rebels in Parliament. He is a champion of the negro Labouring masses, and this has still further kept him out of official position. But he is the one man who combines the sympathies of all these three sections of the anti-imperialist forces to any degree. It seems impossible that the Smuts Government can retain power after these events, even in the case of a Labour defeat in the field. A Labour-Republican block[4] is probable. HOW FAR SHOULD ANDREWS AS A REPRESENTATIVE COMMUNIST TAKE OFFICIAL POSITION IN SUCH A BLOCK FOR THE COMBINED ANTI-IMPERIALIST CONFLICT? This question carries us forward to the idea of participation in a left bourgeois Government with Labour in the centre, which is more than anything contemplated in the United Front under European conditions.

5. The status of Colonial or consultative delegates also might be considered by the Committee for report, as I consider that under present conditions our position is not sufficiently well defined.

D. Ivon Jones

RGASPI, 495/64/159/69–70.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy. Corrections in D.I. Jones' handwriting.
Inscription: 26b (in Russian)

4. Jones meant a block between the South African Labour Party and the National Party. He called the NP 'Republican' because of its anti-British, anti-imperialist and pro-republican legacy and stand which led it to support the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 and which was not exhausted in 1922. The block materialised in 1924.

21
Letter from D.I. Jones to V.I. Lenin, 5 April 1922[1]

Room 7, Lux Hotel,[2] Moscow.
5th April 1922.

Comrade N. Lenin,
Kremlin.

Dear Comrade Lenin,

I am sending you herewith copies of memorandums[3] on the South African situation, thinking you may be interested to know the state of affairs disclosed therein. Also copy of an article on the recent conflict of the Johannesburg miners,[4] as well as the draft of an appeal that was ordered by the Executive Committee. This appeal was not sent for some reason; but as it gives an idea of the operation of the colour issue, I enclose it also.[5]

I am leaving Russia in a few days. Comrade Wilkinson, the Australian delegate, and myself, would feel very grateful for a short interview with you before our return home,[6] if your health and the great pressure of your public

1. A Russian translation of this document was published in *Izvestiia Tsentralnogo Komiteta KPSS* (*The News of the Central Committee of the CPSU*) in 1989, No. 5, p. 213. A mistake was made in the translation: D.I. Jones wrote about 'copies of memorandums', while the translation mentioned only one memorandum.
2. See footnote 2 to document 5, vol. I.
3. Only one of the memoranda mentioned by Jones was found in the archives. It is dated 27 March 1922 and is entitled 'The Labour Revolt in South Africa'. The document consists of seven pages and contains the same ideas and facts that Jones published in the Soviet, South African and British communist press.
4. D.I. Jones must have meant one of the two articles which he had prepared and which were soon published in Russian: 'Vosstaniie rabochikh v Yuzhnoi Afrike' ('Workers' Uprising in South Africa') – *Kommunistichesky Internatsional profsoiuzov (The Red International of Labour Unions)*, 1922, No. 4 (15).
5. This appeal has not been found in the Archive.
6. No documents have been found in the Archive to confirm that Lenin met D.I. Jones. However, Lenin paid much attention to the Transvaal miners' uprising. On 18 April 1922 he sent a phone message (telephoned telegram) to the Comintern's chairman, Zinoviev, suggesting that the ECCI examine the 'question of sending a special correspondent or several correspondents from the Comintern to South Africa to collect detailed data and the fullest complement of local literature, both legal and illegal, on the recently suppressed workers' uprising'. Lenin thought that this 'should be done as soon as possible but with maximum precautions', for South African authorities were sure to have taken all measures 'to prevent any possibility of links between us and those miners who are not yet shot or imprisoned'. Lenin wrote that broad conclusions should be drawn from the experience of the uprising for the work of the Comintern: 'And we have to introduce at any cost the practice of Comintern representatives being able to appear secretly wherever such uprisings occur to collect in a timely fashion all materials on the history of the uprising.' The telephoned telegram was stamped 'Strictly confidential. Typing prohibited'. It was published several decades after Lenin's death (V.I. Lenin. *Polnoie sobraniie sochinenii (Complete Collected Works)* Moscow, vol. 54, p. 243).

duties would permit. The revolutionary movements of Australia and South Africa have problems in common on which we should be glad of your advice, and we know how keen is your interest in the Colonial movements.

We earnestly hope that your health will be completely restored.

With Communist greetings,
D. Ivon Jones.
(Delegate for the South African Communist Party)

RGASPI, 5 (V.I. Lenin's Archive)/ 3/135/1.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: Archives of c. Lenin (in Russian)
File No. 22/47 d.
No. 2035
Inscription: Jones (in Russian)

22
Letter from D.I. Jones to Comintern, 9 May 1922

REPORT REGARDING BUDGET FOR COLLECTION OF MATERIAL ON SOUTH AFRICAN REVOLT.

9th May 1922.

The Secretariat,
Comintern.

Dear Comrades,

Comrade Rakosi has conveyed to me the difficulty which has arisen regarding the budget submitted by me in connection with my journey to South Africa to collect information on the South African workers revolt.

I am asked to report regarding the possibility of (1) organising the collection of this material from Moscow through London; or (2) in the alternative to state the minimum expense on which the journey could be made.

ORGANISING FROM MOSCOW. The drawback to organising the collection of the information from Moscow is that the comrades on the scene of the revolt who could efficiently do the work are in prison. But there are two or three comrades available at Durban and Capetown who could be engaged to go to

Johannesburg to collect and forward the material. The London comrades are out of touch with the movement and its personalities in South Africa, but the Labour Research department[1] might be engaged to direct the work from London, and we would supply the names and addresses from here. In the alternative I might be sent to London to direct the work. It would require about 50[2] pounds sterling to enable Comrade Haynes to leave his work in Durban and make a thorough collection of material in Johannesburg, under the direction of the Labour Research Department. If the Presidium decides to send me to London to direct the work, it would involve a total expenditure of 125 pounds.

If the Presidium thinks that either of the above methods are likely to prove unsatisfactory, and that the best results would be obtained by sending me to South Africa, the MINIMUM cost would be the cost of the travelling expenses to South Africa and back, leaving the local comrades[3] to bear the expense of my work there.

RESUME. In the order of efficiency the respective methods would cost as follows.

(1) Organising the work from Moscow through Labour Research Department, London . . . 50 pounds.

(2) Sending Jones to London to direct work (50 + 75) 125 pounds.

(3) Sending Jones to South Africa, travelling expenses there and back . . . 200 pounds.

With communist greetings,
D. Ivon Jones

RGASPI,495/64/10/4.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Inscription: 26 b. (in Russian)

1. Jones may have meant The Labour Research Bureau, closely linked with British communists.
2. '0' is typed over '/' in the original.
3. There is a typed-over line that breaks the word 'comrades' in the original.

23
Letter from I. Amter[1] to D.I. Jones, 10 May 1922

NEGRO QUESTION (DISCUSSION IN ANGLO-SAXON GROUP MEETING 10TH MAY 1922).

Comrade Ivon Jones,

Comrade Katayama says that the Negro question has been repeatedly brought forward and discussed in Comintern circles,[2] and nothing came of it. Now we have the proposal for a Negro Congress in Moscow. We should ask ourselves 'Why has nothing come of it?'. I think it is because we approach the question from the wrong side, we approach it as a race question. We propose a Negro race Congress in Moscow. You say, 'No, a Congress of negro communists'. Nevertheless, it is a race congress. Negro militants drawn from various parts of the earth, Communists drawn from various parts of the earth because they are Negroes. Now, why has nothing come of this proposal? Because the Negro race question is not a revolutionary factor. No race questions can be a revolutionary factor. After the revolution, no doubt, when the world has settled down to an International Soviet Republic, we shall have our hands full of such work, sending 'missionaries' out to the backward peoples and cleaning up the mess made by capitalism, or continuing on the plane of humanity the revolutionary role of capitalism. But now, before the revolution, what vitality has this question of the negro race as such for the attack on capital. Very little. It is true that the Negroes are mentioned in the thesis on Colonial and National questions. But we have many opportunities of intervening and demonstrating for the Comintern as a universal human champion such as we tried to do in our draft appeal on the South African revolt. In this way we can intervene in the Negro question. But that appeal was never sent out.

As an abstract race question we are trying to do something quite new in the present proposal. This is not on a par with the Chinese question or the Indian question. The Chinese question is not a race question. The Indian question is not a race question. These are national questions. This is a question who shall rule India, the Indian people or the British Imperialists; who shall rule China,

1. The letter is unsigned but the name 'Amter' appears on the back of the original.
2. The 'Negro question' was part of the debate on the 'national and colonial question' at the 2nd Congress of the Comintern in 1920. The discussion focused on the United States. At the 3rd Congress in 1921 D.I. Jones raised the 'Negro question' again. On Jones' initiative the Congress passed a motion requesting the ECCI to devote attention to 'Negro movements and proletarian movements among Negroes as an important part of the 'Eastern question'. It would seem that this debate led to the 4th Congress of the Comintern adopting 'Theses on the Negro Question'.

the Chinese or the International Capitalists. The issue of this question is a vital factor in the revolution. But the negro race question has no such basis. The negroes everywhere find themselves more or less intermixed with white populations, and are drawn into the white class movements on one side or the other. The Negro race question is of doubtful revolutionary value, and can be of distinct counter-revolutionary effect like Zionism. 'Back to Africa' is the racial slogan used in America to divert the Negroes from their class interests. 'Remember your brothers in America, don't listen to these Communists', that is the counter-attack to our propaganda among the Bantu workers in South Africa. Race solidarity is used for counter-revolutionary purposes among the Negroes, and differs radically from Indian, Chinese, Egyptian, Korean National solidarity against Imperialism.

Because of this I feel that a Negro Race Congress in Moscow at present before the preliminary work has been done by the local Communist Parties, would have a retrograde effect. What we should do is to endeavour to include negroes in the Communist delegations to the Comintern Congresses. We should approach this question as a Colour question. As a colour question dividing the working class and bringing sections of the working class into conflict with each other to the detriment of the general movement, it is a question that demands the immediate attention of the Comintern. When approached from this side all that has been said by Comrade Katayama and others on the racial aspect of the Negro question falls into the right place. We see in the South African revolt how the capitalists managed to camouflage their attack on the standards of the workers under the colour issue, and to pose as the champion of the Negroes against the white workers, instigating pogroms of natives in the slum areas. Here we had an apparent clash of two sections of the workers with right on their side, and the capitalists placing both in the wrong. This Colour question is going to become more acute. We have it looming up also in Australia. Here is Barwell the South Australian Premier coming out openly for the importation of cheap coloured labour into the Northern territory. The Australian capitalists are beginning to feel the intolerable pressure of the good conditions enjoyed by the Australian workers upon their profits in the present crisis of capitalism. In the past the old sectarian Socialists have derided the cry of a 'White Australia', and on the basis of a pseudo-Internationalism they have refused to take a stand against the capitalist proposal to import cheap coloured labour under indenture to Australia. What is behind this slogan of 'White Australia', it is a demand for the maintenance of decent standards of life. And this is behind all the colour prejudice affecting the Negroes among white workers in America and Africa, producing colour slogans. The very men who stand for a 'White Australia', the Australian Seamen's Union for instance, have no colour bar in their membership. They allow Lascar and other colour seamen to sign on under Union conditions. We as Communists should have a clear line on this issue in Australia, South Africa and America, and not put the weapon of Internationalism on the side of the

Capitalists, and identify Communism with an attack on the workers conditions of life. The most militant leaders in the Johannesburg revolt for example were the most noted champions of the negro workers among the white workers.

I believe that the Negro race question is peculiarly one for the local sections of the International, to draw in the negroes into the class movement – irrespective of colour. This is the slogan on this question for both Negroes and whites, 'The solidarity of labour irrespective of colour'. That is the line we have taken in South Africa. When a Trade Unionist in the Transvaal takes up this slogan he thereby declares himself a revolutionary, and renounces all hope in capitalism, for the idea is not realisable under capitalist conditions. And I am glad to say that an increasing number of white workers are accepting the principle, and more will come to it as a result of the last events. Comrade Katayama mentions that the Communist Party in America cannot so easily approach this question as the Comintern, because it will prejudice itself in the eyes of the workers especially in the South. But this slogan, irrespective of colour, will prejudice no one that is with us, or is not against us in principle already. In South Africa we found it a very good way of separating the sheep from the goats. It is a good slogan for finding out the Mensheviks.[3] The Reform Pacifists, although they like to pose as Liberal Negrophiles, they shrink from the idea of class solidarity with the downtrodden black masses, who have no votes. Perhaps we should make an inquiry as to how much the respective parties, working near Negro populations actively take up this question, and use the question to judge of their soundness. The African Blood Brotherhood in America is a pro-Bolshevik organisation of Negroes working in touch with the Communist Party of America and combating the influence of Garvey. I think we have to encourage these movements, although they are tinged with racialism, the racialism of the oppressed. So long as they are directed against the Capitalist class and not against the whites, as the Garvey organisation is. The Negroes are a race of labourers, and their race solidarity is not necessarily opposed to class solidarity if controlled by the Communist motive.

I think that as a colour question which divides the working class the matter demands the immediate attention of the Comintern. But not as a race question uniting the Negroes.

RGASPI, 495/155/3/9–10.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.

3. Part of the Russian Social-Democratic Party which split into two groups, the Bolsheviks (the majority) and the Mensheviks (the minority), in 1903. The Mensheviks who later on constituted the majority of Russian Social Democrats were non-Leninists, while the Bolsheviks constituted Lenin's following in the Party which in 1918 finalised the split emerging as a separate Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik). Here: a euphemism for socialists or communists who did not support the Comintern or the Bolshevik methods.

24
Letter from D.I. Jones to G. Zinoviev, 11 May, 1922

11th May 1922.
Lux.[1]

Dear Comrade Zinoviev,

Owing to the very serious character of the matter claiming your attention at the last Executive meeting, I did not care to worry you about the South African question. Especially as I knew that the Presidium had dealt with the matter, but the result had not been conveyed to me.

I would not worry you further did I not know that Comrade Lenin and yourself are still as anxious as ever to gather the full details about the revolt.[2] But the whole of the arrangements for carrying the idea into effect seem in a state of confusion, and the latest communications from South Africa show that the matter is urgent.

It is now a month since it was decided to send me to Africa, and today my departure is held up. According to Comrade Rakosi there are no funds for the project. Comrade Brandler gives other reasons.

I have therefore given a report on other methods for gathering the material, copy of which I enclose. I have also suggested that, if Presidium decides that only by sending me to Africa can the work be done efficiently, the expenses for this might be reduced by getting the South African comrades to bear part of the expense.

But I now see from the latest issue of the London 'Communist'[3] an appeal from the Capetown Branch of our Party to the British movement for financial aid in the present crisis.[4] Although the organisation has been smashed up the comrades killed and imprisoned, almost the whole membership in Johannesburg, they are determined to keep the flag flying.

Smuts has ordered a Commission of Inquiry which will sit concurrently with the trial of comrades. It is urgent that our enquiry should proceed at the same time, in order to avail ourselves of all material, and while the matter is fresh. Two months have already passed since the events.

I feel that now or never the Comintern should give some token of solidarity with comrades, no matter how distant, in the tragic position revealed in the letter to 'The Communist'. The Comintern lost a great opportunity, for some reason not yet explained, when it suppressed our draft appeal ordered by the Executive.[5]

1. See footnote 2 to document 5, vol. I.
2. 'Red revolt' on the Rand. See documents 17–19.
3. Most probably, the London journal, *The Communist Review*. D.I. Jones was member of the editorial board.
4. There is a typed-over word before 'Although'.
5. The text of the appeal, mentioned in several documents, has not been found in the Archive.

I urge that we do something in connection with the appeal in 'The Communist'. In any event, I feel it my duty to return to encourage the remaining comrades.

With kind regards, and communist greetings,
D. Ivon Jones

RGASPI, 495/64/10/5–5 reverse.
Original in English.
Typed. Corrections in a red pen in D.I. Jones' handwriting.

25
Letter from D.I. Jones to M. Rakosi, 23 May 1922

THE SOUTH AFRICAN QUESTION.

23rd May, 1922.
Room 7, Lux,[1]

Dear Comrade Rakosi,

Regarding your suggestion over the telephone to draft another appeal for South Africa, I have thought it over and consider the time inopportune until we know definitely the state of affairs there.

I moreover confess to a lack of enthusiasm for drafting another appeal after the suppression of the one drafted by Comrades Borodin, Bell and myself immediately after the revolt, addressed not exclusively to South Africa but to British Labour as well and attempting to embrace the vital issue of colour prejudice in general. You will remember that the reasons given for suppressing that draft was that it was unsuitable and not understandable to working men. I could only repeat the general tenour of that draft.

I would urge that the new appeal can wait until we make enquiries through Comrade Borodin[2] as the state of things in South Africa. It is to be regretted that, though a Party Branch[3] has appealed to the English ~~aid~~ Party[4] for support

1. See footnote 2 to document 5, vol. I.
2. M. Borodin was at this time on a secret mission in Britain.
3. Communist Party of South Africa.
4. British Communist Party.

in the present crisis, no responsible comrade has written to me or the Comintern since the revolt. There has been no lack of communications on my part, with continual articles to our Party organ. But the feeling of a real bond with the Comintern has dwindled perceptibly among the South African comrades since Comrade Barlin's return, and I can only attribute it to a general discouragement that our Party, the most active of British Colonial parties as events have proved, has been so far ignored in the allocation of material and moral support. By the suppression of the original appeal[5] and the change of plan regarding my journey I am in ~~a~~ the position of having failed to do anything for my Party in the most serious crisis of its existence. That is why I wish the Comintern to do something as an expression of solidarity with the South African section.

1. I propose that the application for a subsidy of 250 pounds to our Party organ 'The International' already made to the Finance Commission be considered by the Presidium. The comrades in Johannesburg are endeavouring to revive the paper in spite of the reaction.

2. A Party message from Comrade Zinoviev as head of The International (or if possible, Comrade Lenin, whose interest in the Colonial movements is so great), would give the South African comrades a valuable sense of a bond with the International, and would be the best expression of the Comintern's solidarity now that the opportunity for a general appeal is past.

3. That Comrade Borodin be asked to get information as to the course of the trials, especially as to the fate of Comrade Andrews.

4. Owing to the repercussions of the South African conflict in Australia and Egypt, I urge that these questions be also hurried up for report in order to cope in time with the situation.

An article in the current New Statesman attributes the inspiration of the revolt to 'The Marxian Socialists'.

A letter from a Johannesburg Mine Manager in The Daily Telegraph forecasts a recrudescence of unrest at an early date.

The Minister of Defence, speaking in the Capetown Parliament, attributes the leadership of the last stages of the strike conflict to Andrews (our Party Secretary), and Fisher (Left Trade Unionist and Red military leader). After eight years exclusion from leadership of the mass movement through his devotion to the International during the war and after, Andrews was called upon to resume it in the middle of a disorganised conflict at the greatest possible personal risk,

5. See footnote 5 to document 24, vol. I.

from which he did not flinch. For this reason I feel that the Comintern should take a special interest in Comrade Andrews' case.

With kind regards and Communist Greetings,
D. Ivon Jones
(South African delegate.)

RGASPI, 495/64/8/3.
Original in English.
Typed.
Inscriptions: 1) 'Copy Com. Bell' (in red ink)
2) 48B1 (in Russian)

26
Letter from S.P. Bunting to General Secretary, Comintern, 1 January 1923

The General Secretary
Communist International
Moscow

9 Torrington Place
London W C (1)
1 January 1923

Dear Comrade

As delegate from the Communist Party of South Africa to the Fourth Congress I was obliged owing to my wife's illness to leave Moscow on 30 November last, thus missing both the concluding sittings of the Congress and also the advantage of a discussion with the new Executive or Presidium regarding our Party work and the general working class position in South Africa. I therefore write to you on several matters which might have been disposed of in the course of such discussion. I shall be glad if any reply you may consider necessary may be sent very promptly, as I contemplate, if my wife's health permits, sailing for S Africa about the beginning of February. If the Executive Committee thinks any good purpose can be served by my coming again to Moscow on a flying visit during January, I can do so if I receive notice in time – preferably by telegraph. (Letter since received stating such visit unnecessary).

(1) I have been unable to get any information of the proceedings of the Congress since I left. I see in the 'Communist'[1] that 'Andrejew' (South Africa)' has been elected to the Executive. We have noon[2] of that name in our party nor in contact with it. Our General Secretary in S Africa is Com. W.H. Andrews; and when I left Moscow I asked Com. J. Campbell (who as alternate delegate remained to represent S Africa at the Congress after I left) to propose Com. Andrews – for what it was worth – for the E.C. Whether it is he that has been elected and the name has got mutilated in transmission I do not know; Com. Campbell has not written to me, although I expected to have heard from him with a parcel of papers which he was to have sent after me to London. If it is Com. Andrews that has been elected, has Com. Andrews himself been notified of his election, and has he stated that he can come to Moscow accordingly? When last I heard from him he was still unable to get a passport to leave S Africa as he was still on bail on a charge connected with the Rand strike of last March; but he was considering coming to Russia as soon as he could get through those proceedings. Com. Kussinen, in consultation with Com. Ivon Jones, had tentatively suggested this course. I should be glad to know the actual position.

(2) When I left on Nov 30 the Congress had just adopted a thesis and recommendations regarding the 'Negro Question'. It was only earlier on the morning of that same day that this thesis had been submitted to and passed by the Commission appointed to deal with the question, and although I was a member of the Commission I was unable to get a copy of the thesis in question. Com. Sasha,[3] who acted as Secretary of the Commission, and also Com. Trojanovsky, another member of the Commission, one or both promised to send me here a copy of it, but nothing has arrived. Unless therefore a copy has been sent to S Africa direct (where owing to police attention few addresses are safe nowadays) it would seem that our party, which is vitally concerned in the thesis, is to remain in ignorance of it. Will you be good enough to send me a complete copy of the thesis and annexures, including a copy of the earlier draft thesis originally submitted by Com. Jansen to the Commission?[4]

(3) The thesis proposed a Negro Congress at the earliest possible date. What arrangements, if any, have been made or are contemplated for this Congress?

(4) My recollection of the thesis adopted was that (unlike Com. Jansen's draft, although the latter was too pedantically worded) it laid down as universal a policy which is chiefly applicable to conditions in the northern United States. Unfortunately, without the text before me, I cannot develop this criticism accurately. But I remember that a clause in Com. Jansen's draft: 'Negro workers

1. Most probably, the London journal *Communist Review*.
2. No one.
3. The identity of Com. Sasha could not be established.
4. There are single lines in pencil in the left and right margins opposite these two paragraphs starting from: '(2) When I . . . '.

should everywhere be organised, and where negro and white workers coexist a united front should be formed' – (or words to that effect) was rejected as suggesting 'Jim Crow'[5] unions; and a clause was substituted stating merely that the Comintern would use all its efforts[6] to get negro workers into white unions and if it failed a United Front was to be formed to enforce admission. Apart from the obscurity of the reference to the United Front, this, which as far as I remember was the only recommendation of the Thesis on agitation, education, or organisation of negroes, is obviously inadequate.

(a) It has nothing to say regarding the many hundred thousand negroes who are exploited in countries where there are no white unions at all, or hardly any: e.g. West, East, and Central Africa, the Congo, the West Indies etc.

(b) It assumes that where there are white unions they are unions of the same trades as those the negroes work at, whereas often (e.g. in S Africa), being craft unions, and confined to 'skilled artisans' etc., they represent quite other trades, so much so that white men who might perform the same class of work (~~e.g.~~ 'unskilled') as the negroes do would be just as ineligible for membership as a negro would. It would be otherwise if the 'white unions' were professedly 'industrial' unions. Meanwhile, in S Africa, within the specific 'trades', 'coloured' artisans etc. are to-day admitted to the appropriate Trade unions; and if there is still some reluctance to adhere to this principle, for instance in the Transvaal as contrasted with the Cape, it affects very few individuals. The CP would of course always support the claims of those individuals, but the satisfaction of those claims would still leave the mass of the black workers unaffected.

(c) It is incorrect to assume that 'Jim Crow' unions are always undesirable. Where, as in S Africa, the class of work done by the bulk of the negroes is markedly distinct from that done by the bulk of the whites, industrial combination of the negroes comes much more natural apart from the whites. One of the leading native industrial organisers in S Africa, H. Selby Msimang (whom I should like to see attend the Negro Congress) (he is president of the 'Industrial and Commercial Workers Union') expresses, I believe, the views of the conscious native workers of S Africa generally when he pleads for 'One Big Non-European Workers' Union'. The best means to break the white workers' prejudice is not so much to agitate for 'raw Kaffirs'[7] to join the Amalgamated Engineering Union, for instance, but rather to confront the whites with the spectacle of strong organisations of native workers, demanding equal pay for equal work, the co-operation of the white workers, and, for that matter, the

5. 'Jim Crow' – a derogatory nickname for African-Americans in the nineteenth and early twentieth century USA. A system of discriminatory racist laws and practices that emerged in the late nineteenth century was called 'jimcrowism'. By 'Jim Crow unions' Bunting meant separate black unions based on race discrimination.
6. There is a crossed-out word before 'efforts'.
7. 'Raw Kaffir' – a derogatory racist nickname for illiterate rural Africans.

formation of industrial unions to include both black and white workers, where both coexist; and also in any case, the spectacle of native workers so organised where, as under (a) above, there are no white workers. The more important, as well as the more easily attainable, policy for S Africa at any rate is, I feel sure, broad co-operation between the white and black workers instead of the present mutual repulsion. Hence the very narrow and limited clause of the thesis, above quoted, not only fails to 'touch the spot' but is liable, quite purposelessly and avoidably, to excite hostility or aversion among both white and black workers, although I should like to ascertain further the views of the latter on the point. We are all very familiar with the extreme sensitiveness of some of our negro comrades who are always seeing a slight to their colour, and often quite rightly; but after all, where, as in the case of the bulk of the S African native workers (unlike those of the northern U.S.A. no doubt) the question is not yet a burning one in that form referred to by the clause of the thesis, the main centre of gravity, the main object of effort of the C.I., is rather, I submit, to further the organisation of the unorganised and backward workers on whatever lines come most ready to hand – I would not reject even Sick Benefit Society lines if membership is best secured that way – even to the extent of ignoring the white unions if the latter will not hold out a fraternal hand. I have submitted several papers on this subject of co-operation between white and black workers to the Anglo American Group,[8] which are no doubt accessible: e.g. 'Statistics of S African Labour'[9] (published I believe in Russian in the periodical edited by Com. Losovsky[10]), 'Colonial Questions' (published I believe in Russian in 'Le Nouvel Orient'),[11] 'The Labour movement in S Africa' (published in the Congress number of Imprekorr),[12] 'The Communist Party of S Africa' (report submitted to the E.C.), 'The Colonial Labour Front', a suggested additional[13]

8. Anglo-American Secretariat.
9. Most probably, Bunting refers to the article, 'Rabocheie dvizheniie v Yuzhnoi Afrike' (Labour Movement in South Africa), which he published in *Krasny Internasional Profsoiuzov (The Red International of Trade Unions)*, the Profintern journal edited by A. Lozovsky (No. 10 (21), 1922).
10. Lozovsky.
11. The article to which Bunting refers was published in *Novy Vostok* (*The New East*), No. 2, 1922 under the title, 'Belyie i Chernyie Rabochiie v Iuzhnoi Afrike' (White and Black Workers in South Africa), not the 'Colonial Questions'. Bunting believed that Lenin had read this article during his (Bunting's) stay in Moscow and before Lenin's final speech to the Comintern, 'Five Years of the Russian Revolution' which was delivered on 13 November 1922, when Bunting was in the audience. Two years later, after Lenin's death, Bunting wrote: 'Already before that [Lenin's speech on 13 November] I was extremely happy to find out that Lenin had read my article about 'the colonial question' in the journal *Novy Vostok* and that he would probably offer me to meet him to discuss the problem.' The meeting did not take place but Bunting wrote about his impressions of Lenin after Lenin's death in an article, 'Lenin: Personal Impressions', in *The International*, 25 January 1924 (from which the quotation above is taken). This article was the only recollection about Lenin published in South Africa (and on the African continent generally).
12. 'Inprecor'.
13. There is a crossed-out word after 'additional'.

clause about negroes handed to Com. Safaroff in connection with his thesis on Oriental Questions (a copy of which thesis as finally passed I should be very glad to receive) etc. I still think, as suggested in these papers, that the toleration and co-operation of the white workers, both in the home or imperial countries and locally (where white and black workers coexist) would be of such great assistance to the negro movement that great efforts should be made, and the greatest care and tact exercised with an eye to the local psychology, to secure such toleration and co-operation rather than alienate it. I also think that though a Negro conference will be most useful, it should be coupled with a conference between black and white workers on the lines suggested by me in most of the above papers. As things stand, the terms of the thesis make it difficult for the S African C.P. to proceed on the lines which seem to promise the best revolutionary results. I am not referring to any elements in our party which may still favour 'leaving the Kaffir alone', but to those which, like myself, believe that the native workers of Africa will eventually become far more powerful instruments of revolution than the white workers there can ever be. It must be remembered that the lesson of the Rand strike of 1922 to the white workers has not yet been driven home even by Tom Mann, perhaps because he fears alienating them against it by making some false step; but provided it is done wisely, now is the time to drive it home – as for instance it was driven home in Com. Radek's resolution, passed by the Congress on the occasion of the executions of Rand strikers about Nov 17. At the time I was doubtful about the wisdom of inserting a reference to the black workers in just that resolution at just that time, concluding afterwards that as a 'tour de force' Com. Radek's draft was right; though the point is just an example of the difficulty. But I still feel sure that it would be quite irrelevant to get up an agitation for 'Jim Sixpence' (i.e. the typical 'raw' native mine labourer) to join the S African Mine Workers' Union, consisting as it does at present exclusively of white certificated miners, mostly Dutch. I write this letter without special instructions from our party, and perhaps the EC should rather be addressed by our party direct, or would prefer to confer with Com. Andrews if he is to come to Moscow sometime; but I do not think the view of the party would differ from mine by being more on the lines of the Thesis.[14] As regards negro propaganda I enclose some cuttings from SA newspapers: 'Hands off the Natives' etc., for your information.[15]

(5) I take this opportunity to offer in all modesty a few observations suggested by a three months' sojourn as the guest of the Comintern (for which I tender it my very heartfelt thanks) at Moscow.

(a) So long as the Comintern thinks well so to accommodate delegates and others otherwise than during a Congress when they are supposed to be

14. Bunting reiterated his dissatisfaction with the work of the commission and his disagreement with elements of the resolution on the 'Negro question' in his report to the Second Congress of the CPSA on 28–9 April. See document no. 30.
15. Several illegible words follow. In pen: 441 5 Deu. In pencil: ~~5 Cxx. In Deutsch~~. ~~Confidential~~

fully occupied, they should not be left to their own devices but should be systematically educated and schooled in e.g. the work, ideas, problems, methods, tactics (legal and illegal, peaceful and military) etc. of the Comintern and of Soviet Russia, by means of lectures, discussions etc. Otherwise they tend to become mere spongers and loafers at the Comintern's expense. I speak for myself no less than others.

(b) In particular, during such 'off seasons' the Presidium of the ECCI should endeavour to discuss with the delegates of each national C.P. their special party questions and problems. I was in Moscow for more than two months before the Congress, and my party will naturally ask me on my return what the E.C.C.I. had to say, and what advice it gave, as to our party work. The answer will be: 'Nothing. I was called upon for many reports, articles etc. which I supplied (and took great trouble over) and which were no doubt duly filed away in their proper pigeon holes; but that was all. I never had any opportunity of seeing any of the leaders, they were always occupied with more important work.' Of course they are few in number; and they are kept very busy settling various party disputes. But to-day the CI has to do more than that, it has to conduct the revolutionary campaign of the whole world, including the most distant outposts. They have insufficient time for these latter. No doubt competent men to increase the personnel of the permanent General staff are very scarce. Anyway, it needs strengthening to enable it to cope with its enormous task.

(c) From my small experience of work on a Commission, I should say that too much informality is allowed in Commission business. A Thesis or other result of Commission work gets accepted without debate by the Congress, which does not even see a copy of it, for it is usually not circulated, and the delegates have no idea what they are voting for, only a favoured few have seen it. Thereupon it becomes authoritative, and it is a breach[16] of discipline to ignore it. And yet how has such a thesis perhaps been compiled? Scratch meetings of the Commission are held at 'any old' time and place without announcement; those members of the Commission whom the Secretary happens to meet may turn up, the rest know nothing about the meeting. At the meeting, such as it eventually is, no order is kept; the members talk in groups among themselves, and no minutes are kept. In these circumstances a long and controversial thesis may be read out, without previous notice or circulation of copies, to a meeting which wants only to go to bed, the hour is so late; and in this irresponsible manner any ill-digested stuff may be jockeyed through the Commission, adopted by the Congress, and promulgated as Comintern law throughout the world. I would suggest that every Commission should be presided over by a member of the ECCI, charged to see that the meetings are properly convened, conducted and minuted; and that no thesis should be

16. There is a crossed-out word after 'breach'.

voted on by the congress until it has been both discussed by the Presidium and circulated among the delegates. It may be said that to do all this would be impossible in the limited time. Well, one remedy is to reduce the number and length of these 'theses' to more reasonable limits. If every congress is to add a huge crop of theses each year the programme and accumulated theses of the C.I. will soon become as voluminous as the statutes of a capitalist state like England, and you will require a special class of lawyers, learned in C.I. lore, to expound them.

(6) I enclose some press cuttings which in the ordinary way might have been sent just to Com. Ivon Jones; were it not that he is I believe still away, and besides I do not know his present status.

(a) Reprint from the 'Weekly Herald', an 'Amsterdam'[17] organ recently established in Johannesburg by A Crawford, our leading Yellow leader, together with a leaflet 'Communism and its results'. These have recently been very widely circulated in S Africa.

(b) Cuttings re agitation for reprieve of condemned strikers etc. The funeral procession of the three men executed on Nov 17 was the biggest demonstration ever held (and included the largest number ever assembled under the C.P. banner) in S Africa. Tom Mann has greatly revived the spirit of the white workers at any rate. The CP is coming in for more attention than ever. In Capetown it has successfully defied a police prohibition of its meetings, and the prohibition has been withdrawn. Apparently the execution of strikers has ended, and most of the treason cases are to be disposed of summarily. That is mainly due to C.P. efforts, I think.

(c) Cuttings re the report of the 'Martial Law Commission' copy of which I handed to Com. Kussinen.

(d) Cuttings re the movement to expunge the 'Socialist objective' from the programme of the S African Labour Party, in connection with its rapprochement to the Dutch Nationalist Party. See also in this matter the current issues of our organ the 'International'.

With cordial Communist greetings
Sidney P. Bunting

PS. I have just received the Secretariat's letters Nos. 1929 & 1965.

RGASPI, 495/64/12/1–4.
Original in English.
Typed.
Inscriptions: 1) Bunting
2) 3.34

17. The reference is to the non-communist International Federation of Trade Unions based in Amsterdam.

27
Letter from D.I. Jones to ECCI, [8 January 1923][1]

REMARKS ON PROPOSAL TO CALL A NEGRO CONGRESS AT MOSCOW

I wish to support the proposal to hold a Negro Congress at Moscow. I directed the attention of the Presidium to the two Bourgeois Congresses of Negroes held last summer under Garvey and Du Bois respectively,[2] and the confusionist effect of their propaganda.

1. There are certain difficulties to overcome. It will not be sufficient to send out a call to a Congress, but COMINTERN representatives would have to work on the spot to assure a representative gathering of proletarian and radical Negroes.

2. In South Africa, for example, where the native African Negroes are the most advanced industrially, the passport supervision of the negroes is very strict and underground work of shipping delegates would therefore be very difficult. I am inclined to think that a special All-Black route through Persia via Zanzibar would have to be organised for all or most African Negro delegates from the Congo Southwards. A Negro in Europe making for any Baltic port would be immediately marked.

3. Failing such a plan however, the delegates could work their way on ship as seamen. In any case it is necessary to bear in mind that if the Congress is to bear a proletarian complexion the problem of bringing the delegates here is a serious one, requires many months of preparation.

4. Regarding the objection that we should be exaggerating the race consciousness of the Negroes by calling such a world Congress, instead of their class-consciousness, it is only necessary to point out that the Negroes more than any other race are a labouring race, with only a slight crust of

1. This document is undated but it is mentioned with the date (8 January) in D.I. Jones' letter to the ECCI of 23 March 1923 ('Further notes...', RGASPI, 495/155/3/4–5). It is likely that this and the following documents were prepared by Jones for a commission appointed by the Orgbureau of the Comintern as background materials for the work of the World Negro Congress proposed at that time. The commission met in the first half of 1923 under the chairmanship of M. Borodin. Among its members were I. Amter (CPUSA), S. Katayama (Communist Party of Japan), W. Gallacher (CPGB), W. Hannington (CPGB), B. Stewart (CPGB), and Levy (Communist Party of France?). For records of two meetings of the commission held in early 1923 see RGASPI, 495/155/8/1–4.
2. No 'Congresses of Negroes' under either Garvey or Du Bois were held in 1922. Jones could mean a) The International Convention of the Negro People of the World which was convened by Garvey in New York on 1 August 1920 and which called upon the delegates 'to work towards... a free, redeemed and mighty nation' – a 'pan-Negro nation'; b) The Second Pan-African Congress which was convened by du Bois in London, Brussels and Paris on 28 August–6 September 1921 and which called either for full equality or for full segregation of 'races'.

Bourgeoisie in America. The Negro problem exists, and has to be tackled. It only remains to influence the content to be given to the common action of the Negroes as race. The capitalist class are quite glad to encourage militant, anti-white racialism among the Negroes a la Garveyism in order to divert them from the class issue, which is ever present owing to vast preponderance of worker in any Negro gathering. It remains for the COMINTERN to give this common feeling of the Negro race a proletarian content. The Moscow Congress of Negroes would have a resounding echo throughout the world. Not the liberal bourgeoisie but the Communist International, not Manchester but Moscow, would then become the known protector of the oppressed Negro masses.

5. The South African delegates and negro masses generally would derive enormous benefit from intercourse at Moscow with the best proletarian Negroes of America, such as the leaders of the African Blood Brotherhood.

6. Should the proposal be adopted I suggest that a committee be immediately appointed to consider the draft Manifesto sent from America. It requires some of its too literary turns of expression to be simplified for the average Negro reader, and also the avoidance of references to the 'Negro farmer' and 'peasant'. We should appeal the industrial and agricultural working masses. The word 'peasant' is also not used for any American section. It is a slavish copying of Russian conditions to bring in the word for all countries.

7. The term 'Negro' is not used in South Africa. The word 'Bantu' is the inclusive term for negro races South of the Equator. This word 'Negro' has also the stigma of slavery and association with the word 'Nigger' attached to it, although it is the widest understood. But if the COMINTERN should popularise the far more inclusive and more dignified term 'ETHIOPIAN' as a sign of the race's emergence to proletarian consciousness, it would be an achievement. But perhaps this had better be left to the Congress.

8. A special Manifesto would be necessary for Africa, if the present one is adopted for America. And a short all-embracing Manifesto to the whole Negro race suitable for Radio transmission, issued as well.

9. Here arises the question of publicity, the advisability or otherwise of making world wide public appeals to the Negroes, and thus increasing the difficulties of organising the appointment and despatch of delegates. But probably such difficulties would be greatly overweighed by the political 'reclame'[3] among the Negro races of such a world-wide call to Moscow.

10. For America and South Africa the work can be undertaken by the respective Communist Parties on the spot. If the suggestion as to the admission of the Moors[4] and Egyptians be adopted, the Egyptian Communist Party will also be able to help. Comrade Avigdor of the Egyptian section has already discussed the sending of Egyptian native delegates to Moscow.

3. 'Reclame' – a wrongly transliterated Russian word 'reklama' (advertising, advert).
4. Here: North Africans other than the Egyptians.

11. There remain the other parts of Africa, such as Kenya, Uganda, and Portuguese Africa. In the last named region there exists a pro-negro Social Revolutionary Party which would undoubtedly help to organise the Congress, and line itself up with Moscow in the process. In the British East Africa colonies aforementioned we have no connections. The C.P. of South Africa has correspondents in the Belgian Congo with its fifteen million natives. But we have no connections with British Nigeria and the Gold Coast, nor with the French Congo, unless this can be worked through the French Communist Party.

12. Our experience in South Africa is that as soon as a Negro attains any measure of education he becomes spoilt as a proletarian and loses touch with the negro working masses, because he is immediately snatched up to be a lawyer's or agent's tout, or to be a parson. Hence great care will have to be exercised to select working-class delegates in touch with the labouring masses. The point here is that all this requires many months of preparation for the congress, which should be decided upon quickly if it is intended to hold it at the same time as the Comintern Congress. In that the short RADIO Call should be deferred till later, and the special manifestoes sent out now more privately for translation and circulation among Negro Masses.

D. Ivon Jones
(South Africa)

RGASPI, 495/155/3/1–3.
Original in English
Typed. Copy.

28
Letter from D.I. Jones to ECCI, 23 March 1923

FURTHER NOTE ON THE PROPOSED NEGRO CONGRESS
MARCH 23RD 1923

I wish to supplement my note of the 8th January on the above with further consideration which suggest themselves against to idea. The former note contains information regarding problems of organising said Congress which may be yet useful.

I believe that some kind of a Congress of radical negroes for America and the neighbouring islands might be of value. But we have to regard the negro

race as a permanent section of the American population, and the encouraging of ideas of repatriation, 'back to Africa', has a confusing effect upon the classes, just as the 'back to Palestine' cry has had that effect upon the Jewish proletariat in the past. Garveyism depends on this diverting of the attention of the negro masses from the immediate class struggle to the distant hope of free Africa.

This danger is still more apparent in the case of South African natives. These natives have no highly developed intellegenzia like the American negroes, and practically no bourgeois class. It is a race of labourers newly emerging from tribal communism, individually uncultured but possessing a high sense of communist solidarity. Their emergence into industrial life breaks down their tribal animosities. But this break down of tribal animosity takes place in the actual necessities of the class struggle. For example, a few years ago, faction fights between tribes, in which fatal casualties occurred, were frequent among the natives working on the Rand mines. In 1920 all these natives in one mass upheaval forgot all their tribal distinctions and struck work to the number of 80,000 as fellow workers.[1] The Communists were blamed for this as for all other manifestations of awakening among the natives. There are two native newspapers subsidised by the Government which carry on a bitter warfare against the Communist propaganda of solidarity of labour irrespective of race, colour or creed. And the one antidote which they purvey to this class propaganda, and encouraged by the Government, is precisely this one of Garvey, solidarity with negro races against the white men. Garveyism is invading Africa. And the Africans are made to look to America, just as the Americans are made to look to Africa.

Before this lesson is properly learnt, that not the white man, but the capitalist, is the enemy of the negro, and before some measures of alliance has been achieved between the white and black on the international field, it would be a source of confusion to have a racial congress.

Therefore I think that we should limit ourselves to urging the Communist Parties to send negroes in the delegations whenever possible. In Africa, owing to the lack of Communist funds, the newly formed native Unions are in danger of being pocketed by bourgeois agents. If the Communist Party could retain control of these Unions and also have the means of a Native newspaper to fight the Government subsidised ones, it would have far more effect in the fight against Imperialism than any Congress. It seems absurd to speak about Congresses when we are not prepared or notable to this preparatory spade work. If Mahomed cannot go to the mountain, the mountain will surely not go to Mahomed. In Africa we witness a struggle where it is touch and go whether Imperialist Capital is going to win field for expansion. A little attention to these native masses in the past on the part of the International might have proved a

1. The strike of African miners on the Rand in February 1920 was the biggest African industrial action until 1946. The number of strikers involved quoted by Jones is approximately correct.

different result. It is still time to stiffen up the negro masses in Africa by work on the spot.

D. Ivon Jones

RGASPI, 495/155/3/4–5.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.

29
Report of EC to Second Congress, CPSA, 28 April 1923

THE COMMUNIST PARTY. (SOUTH AFRICAN SECTION OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL)
REPORT OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE.
FOR PERIOD AUGUST 1ST., 1921 TO MARCH 31ST., 1923.

Comrades,

At the inaugural Congress of the South African Section of the Communist International it was decided to hold the next Congress in Durban during Easter, 1922.

This decision the Central Executive was unable to carry out owing to the strike and subsequent proclamation of Martial Law, involving death to one of our members and arrest and imprisonment of others, including the general secretary-editor.

The Central Executive, after taking the feeling of the Branches and members in the various centres, decided to use the power given it under Rule 6 (b), to call a Congress at the end of April this year. We therefore have a period of twenty months to review.

This will be done as briefly as is consistent with the importance of the period under examination. We are handicapped somewhat in making this report by being deprived of the use of our Minute Book, which is in the hands of the C.I.D., Johannesburg; consequently, we are unable to give so detailed an account of the activities of the Party as would otherwise be the case.

The Central Executive.

It will be noticed that of the original members elected to the Central Executive only four remain, viz: – Comrades H. Lee, R. Gelblum, R. Rabb and the general secretary-editor. Comrade J. Den Bakker, A. Goldman and T. Chapman resigned, G. Arnold left the Party during the martial law period. Comrades S.P.

and Mrs. Bunting vacated their seats when they left on delegation to the Fourth Congress of the Communist International in Moscow. Comrade Sydney Ward assumed the treasurership in place of Comrade Bunting, but the office of Chairman of the Party has remained vacant since the resignation of Comrade C.B. Tyler when he was appointed national organiser of the B.W.I.U.[1] E.M. Pincus never took his seat on the Committee as his society, the Paoli Zion, refused to become part of the Communist Party. Comrade Mrs. Bourke, who was elected to the Executive under Rule 5 (c), left for Australia.

The members of the Committee which presents this report are Comrades J. First, C.F. Glass, H. Lee, R. Rabb, R. Gelblum, S. Schurin, J. Righthouse, B. Blumkamp, S. Ward, J. Oates, S. Barlin and W.H. Andrews.

The attendances of the Committee cannot be given for the reason above stated.

It may be noted that from March 10th. until May 12th. 1922, the period of Martial Law, no meetings were held of which minutes were kept, although several informal meetings were held between those dates.

The work of the period has been, as heretofore, largely of a propaganda character, and we in South Africa have felt the effect of the general offensive of the capitalist class and of the subsequent retirement of the revolutionary wave which started in 1917.

The stagnation in trade has not been without its effect, not only on our finances, but also on the personnel of the Party.

The shrinkage of the number of subscribers to the Party organ and of our membership, resulting in the disappearance of the Durban, Krugersdorp and Springs branches during the early part of the period under review, culminating in the cessation of our activities on the Rand during the Martial Law period, marked the most critical period of the Party's history.

Since then there has been a gradual recovery. The list of subscribers to the 'International', always an index of the state of the Party, again shows an upward tendency, and the increasing membership is a reflection of the greater activity of the Party and the growth of revolutionary opinion of workers.

Russian famine relief.

The Russian Famine in 1921–22, and the consequent appalling suffering and loss of life, led to the formation of the Russian Famine Relief Committees, with headquarters in Johannesburg.

The very greatest difficulty was experienced in getting an organisation going, but mainly owing to the efforts of the Communists and a few friends a considerable amount of mealie meal, beans and some clothing was despatched to the starving Russian people. £1,300 in cash, besides 867 bags of Maize, 820

1. Building Workers' Industrial Union.

bags of Meal and 3 bales of clothing was sent during the period the committees were in existence. Also CT Sent £390 aimed to Friends.

Comrade J. First ably carried out the duties of hon. secretary to the headquarters' committee.

Just at this time, August 29th. 1921, the Party lost by death Comrade J. Colin Wade, who was one of the ablest and most loved of the comrades. He was, at his own request, cremated at Brixton, where all sections of the community attended to do honour to a fearless fighter and a loveable man.

Congresses of the Communist International.

The Party has had representatives at the last two Congresses of the Communist International. In 1921 Comrade D. Ivon Jones and Comrade Sam Barlin, and in 1922 Comrades Mr. and Mrs. S.P. Bunting. At the last Congress Comrade J. Campbell acted as alternative delegate during Mrs. Bunting's absence through illness. Comrade W.H. Andrews, General Secretary of the Party, was elected as a member of the E.C.C.I. for 1923.

Propaganda.

The Communists of South Africa have not escaped the persecutions of the ruling class which has been directed against them in all countries. In August 1921 Comrades W.H. Harrison, W. Green, D.L. Dryburgh and W. Dryburgh, members of the Cape Town Branch, were arrested for publishing a leaflet and making speeches denouncing the brutality of the Government at Bulhoek, Cape Province, when a large number of unarmed natives were slaughtered by the police under Colonel Truter. Comrade Harrison was fined £75 or six months' imprisonment, Comrade W. Dryburgh £10 or two weeks' imprisonment and Comrade W. Green and D.L. Dryburgh £40 each or four months' imprisonment. The fines of the two latter were paid by the Cape Town Branch and on appeal the decisions in the cases of the two former were set aside.

At Benoni Comrade T. Chapman was summoned for a breach of the Municipal bye-laws, it being alleged that he caused an obstruction to traffic by holding a public meeting at Perry's corner, Benoni. He was found guilty and sentence suspended for six months. An appeal was lodged but owing to the neglect of the solicitors and counsel who had the case in hand, the appeal was dismissed without an hearing. The meetings, however, have been continued regularly since at the same spot and no further action has been taken by the police.

In October 1922, Comrade D.L. Dryburgh and H.M. Fridjohn (the latter a new recruit of the Cape Town Branch) were hauled before the court and charged with 'delivering a public address in a street, without permission'. Both were found guilty and reprimanded. The meetings still continue and no further action has been taken by the authorities.

The most noteworthy effort of a propaganda character was the visit of Comrade Tom Mann. A Johannesburg joint committee of Trade Unions and the Communist Party took the initiative and, backed by the Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria and other committees, wired Comrade Tom Mann an invitation for a three month's tour.

The tour started in October 1922 and finished in January 1923, and was an unqualified success. Crowded meetings were addressed in every considerable town in South Africa and in the larger towns repeat meetings were held with good results to the Labour Unions and the Communist movement.

Comrade Mann was prevented from accepting the invitation of the workers of Australia to visit them owing to the refusal of the Australian government to grant a passport until he had sailed for England.

United Front movement.

Arising from the changed political atmosphere resulting from the strike and its brutal suppression by the authorities, an attempt was made to promote some degree of co-operation between the various sections of the labour movement. Several meetings were held and in Johannesburg and Benoni United Front Committees were formed.

The chief activity of the Johannesburg Committee was a campaign for the reprieve of the condemned strikers and a general amnesty for all martial law prisoners. A petition, containing over 30,000 signatures was sent to the Government, and large demonstrations and meetings were held with this object in view. All efforts failed to save Stassen, Long, Lewis and Hull,[2] but by persisting in the agitation the sentences of death passed on Garnsworthy and his ten companions were commuted to various terms of imprisonment. It is probable that the gigantic demonstration at the funeral of Long, Hull and Lewis had much to do with this decision of the Department of Justice.

The Benoni United Front Committees ran several Municipal elections, both Labour and Communist Party members co-operating to defeat the capitalist nominees.

This movement, although inducing a more friendly feeling and the removal of much misunderstanding, has not resulted in any permanent organic union of the parties concerned, and is frowned upon by Creswell and most of the political labour leaders. Nevertheless the Central Executive is of opinion that an attempt should be made for close co-operation between all sections of labour and has therefore placed the question of affiliation to the S.A. Labour Party on the order paper. Unofficially, the policy of the United Front continues,

2. Four strikers, Carel C. Stassen, S.A. (Taffy) Long, H.K. Hull and David Lewis, were hanged in November 1922. The last three went to the gallows singing 'The Red Flag'. The Comintern sent an official protest against the execution, published in *The Independent*, 5 January 1923.

and, when opportunity occurs the Communist Party identifies itself with all working class movements. For example: On February 28th, the anniversary of the killing of three members of the Boksburg Commando by orders of Captain Fulford, the Party took the initiative in a joint workers' demonstration at Boksburg. Again, Communist speakers were prominent at the demonstration in memory of the shooting in cold blood by the Transvaal Scottish of the three brothers Hanekom and Dowse and Smith on March 16th. 1922.

The Benoni Branch of the Party arranged an anniversary social on March 10th. this year, to commemorate the proclamation of Martial Law; but, after all arrangements had been made, and a hall at the Hotel Cecil booked, the proprietor refused to carry out his contract, and the social had to be abandoned as no other hall could be obtained. An action for damages against the hotel proprietor has been started.

Trade union activity.

The part played by members of the Party during the strike opened up opportunities for activity in the industrial organisations, and there is a gradual movement of the rank and file of the unions in the direction of industrial unionism.

The arch confusionist and yellow leader, Archie Crawford, has lost his hold on the workers, and the S.A.I.F.[3] which was his tool and that of the Chamber of Mines during the war period, has collapsed.

Attempts have been made and are still being made to construct some co-ordinating body which will be able to speak for the Unions as a whole, but the personnel of those who are attempting this is not such as to inspire confidence in the workers, and so far their efforts have failed.

It seems clear that new representatives of the workers are needed, men who are untainted by opportunism and careerism, to build up a sound and militant organisation.

In several unions, members of the Party have been elected to official positions, notably in the B.W.I.U. and Witwatersrand Tailors' Association. Generally, our members are permeating the membership and branches with more modern ideas.

Every opportunity should be taken by our members to increase the influence of the Party by working heartily and unselfishly in the Unions, and assisting even in the small, everyday demands of the workers.

3. South African Industrial Federation of which Crawford was General Secretary and which was particularly active during World War I. The Federation advocated negotiated settlements and abstained from strikes. It opposed the declaration of the 1922 Rand strike.

The Rand strike of 1922.

There is not much to add to the statement contained in the 'Red Revolt' on the subject, written by Comrade S.P. Bunting and published by the Party last year. At the time of writing we have two of our members serving two years' imprisonment, viz: Comrades Dan Colraine and Donald Snowden.

Others who have suffered for the Cause are Comrade D. Nortje killed by natives in the fighting (probably provocateurs, as they have never been brought to book);

S. Goldman:	6 months, reduced to 4 months
H. Glazer:	6 "
T. Chapman:	6 "
E.J. Brown:	7 "
R. Rabb:	£25 fine
Jack Allen:	£25 "

Besides these, S.P. Bunting, W.H. Andrews, Geo Mason, E. Shaw, Mrs. Rabb, E. Nield, F. Shaw and A. Goldman were in gaol for periods varying from one to three months, and were either not charged or their cases, after being committed for trial by the magistrates' courts, were not proceeded with.

In regard to the activities of the Party during the strike and March action, the report of the Martial Law Commission states (Par.127) that upon the Augmented Executive losing effective control of the strike movement and its subsequent development, two bodies usurped its functions:

(1) A group known as the 'Council of Action'.

(2) The Communist Party in Johannesburg,

and in paragraph 136: 'It is clear to the Commission that ..... the Council of Action was closely connected with the Communist Party of South Africa. Indeed it is highly probable that the name assumed was merely a blind, in order to attract recruits who might not wish to belong to a body of avowed Communists.'

It is not necessary to discuss the degree of justification that there is for this opinion.

On March 10th. Martial Law was proclaimed and at 10 a.m. a detachment of mounted police surrounded the Trades Hall, Johannesburg. The C.I.D. arrested everyone found in the building. About thirty officials of Unions and the Communist Party were bundled into a military lorry and taken under armed escort to the Fort. The Party office and literature was afterwards ransacked and all the books and office records, besides the whole of the literature stock, was removed to police headquarters.

The I.S.L. Press was entered by the police, the motor smashed, the plant put out of action by the removal of vital parts and the premises closed down. For ~~ten~~ two ... weeks the whole of the general office and the printing plant of the Party was closed.

The 'International' resumed publication on May 26th., but owing to financial stringency the Central Executive had to curtail the issue to once a fortnight from the beginning of August 1922 to the end of December 1922 when, as a result of retrenchment in other directions, it was found possible to resume the weekly issue of the paper.

Young communist movement. (I S.S.S.)[4] I represent)

The Young Communist League has come into existence since the Party was formed and has carried on a certain amount of open-air propaganda, one of its members being arrested in connection with the demonstration held to protest against the execution of Long, Hull and Lewis. Its chief work, however, has been the carrying on of a weekly study class and the printing and distribution among the youth of the town of leaflets, etc. The amount of attention and hostile criticism that the press has given to its activities is an indication that they have been doing useful and effective work, which we hope will continue and increase in the coming year.

Organisation.

At the beginning of March this year, Comrade C.F. Glass, who has put in a great deal of voluntary work for the Party, was appointed Business Agent and Organiser on a commission basis. Since his period of office the Springs and Jeppes Branches have been opened.

Steps are being taken to reopen the Durban and Pretoria Branches and it is hoped that during the year branches will be running in every considerable centre in the Union.

Wishing the delegates and the Party every success in the ensuing year.

Fraternally yours,
For the Central Executive Committee,
W.H. Andrews[5]
General Secretary.

RGASPI, 495/64/16/4–8.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.

4. The meaning of this abbreviation could not be ascertained.
5. Carbon copy of a handwritten signature.

30
Report by S.P. Bunting on 4th Congress of Comintern, [29 April 1923][1] (Extracts)

REPORT OF THE DELEGATE TO THE FOURTH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

To the Communist Party of S Africa

Dear Comrades

At the time of leaving S Africa for Europe my wife and I had already been appointed, in February 1922, as delegates to the Fourth Congress, but it was not known when the Congress would be held. Later on, when the date was announced, it also appeared that only one delegate from the SA Party was invited, and it seemed likely that Com. Ivon Jones would be the one in the question. I wrote to him asking whether in the circumstances we were likely to be welcome in Russia. He said that Lenin had taken great interest in the Rand Revolution, and that it had been proposed that he Com. Jones should proceed to S Africa to report on it, but that as his health was not too good, and as we were already in Europe, that plan had been given up, and in fact Zinoviev had expressed a wish that I should proceed to Russia. After considerable delay in Berlin, therefore, we got our visas, having already got our passport endorsed by the British Foreign Office, and spent the months of September, October and November 1922 in Moscow. Owing to my wife's ill health we were obliged to leave for London on Nov. 30, thus missing the last week of the Congress, but I attended nearly everything which was of special interest as S African delegates. In the meantime the Party had appointed Com. Jack Campbell as alternative delegate, and in the absence sick of both Com. Jones and my wife I wrote to Com. Campbell to come to the Congress, which he did, arriving about half way through, and remaining after we left, I believe until the end of the Congress; and I think he also attended the Congress of the RILU. I do not know whether he has sent report. I may explain that the Credentials Committee allowed S Africa one alternate delegate after all, which enabled Com. Campbell to take his seat at the Congress. Our greatest regret throughout was that we missed Com. Jones who left for the Crimea two days before we reached Moscow, and owing to his comparative inaccessibility, far even from regular posts, our communications with him were all too scanty.

[...]

1. The document is Bunting's report on the 4th Congress of the Comintern to the 2nd Congress of the CPSA, 28–9 April 1923. The report is not signed. Bunting's authorship and the tentative date were established on the basis of the contents of the document.

The Congress appointed a special Commission on the Negro Question, of which I was a member, together with delegates from North America, Egypt, Tunis, Java, England, Holland, Belgium, Russia and Japan. The personnel was however somewhat weak, and in the end the chief members attending were reduced to two Americans (of whom Billing was one), myself (with Com. Campbell at the last sitting) and occasionally the Hollander and the Russian and a Yugoslav who sometimes 'blew in', and we had no common language and thus what was done in one language was often not translated into the languages understood by the others on the Commission. The Commission produced a 'Thesis' on the question which I think, as the result of some inexplicably keen manoeuvring in a purely American direction by one of the delegates, does not in its 'operative clauses' sufficiently cover the ground.[2] I was begged not to waste the time of the Congress by speaking on the matter, but I wrote about it to the E.C.C.I. a letter to which it has never replied, and having sent a copy to the General Secretary I need not cover the ground again. The clauses are:

(1.) The Fourth Congress recognises the necessity of supporting every form of Negro movement which tends to undermine or weaken capitalism or imperialism or to impede its further penetration.

(2.) The Communist International will fight for race equality of the Negro with the white people, for equal wages and political and social rights.

(3.) The Communist International will use every instrument within its control to compel the trade unions to admit negro workers to membership or, where the nominal right to join exists, to agitate for a special campaign to draw them into the unions; failing in this, it will organise the negroes into unions of their own and specially apply the United Front tactic to compel admission.

(4.) The Communist International will take immediate steps to hold a general Negro Conference or Congress at Moscow.

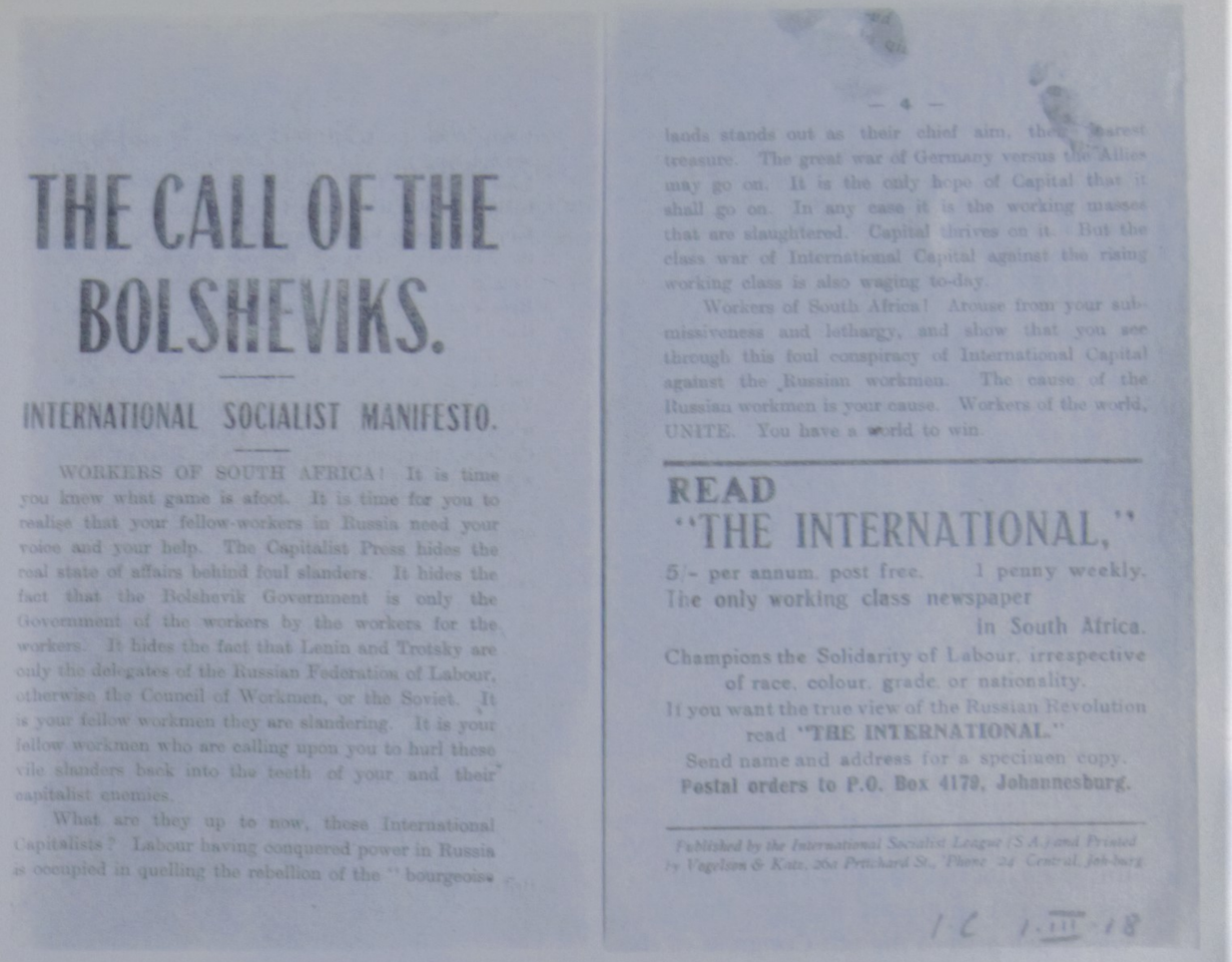
[...]

I understand the ECCI are expecting Com. W.H. Andrews this year, and there was some talk of asking him to transfer himself permanently from S. Africa to some wider sphere of activity.

Yours fraternally

RGASPI, 495/64/16/19, 26–7, 34.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.

2. Most probably, the 'inexplicably keen manoeuvring' was done by Billing – Otto Huiswoud who was to come to South Africa as an emissary of the Profintern in 1932.



THE CALL OF THE BOLSHEVIKS.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST MANIFESTO.

WORKERS OF SOUTH AFRICA! It is time you knew what game is afoot. It is time for you to realise that your fellow-workers in Russia need your voice and your help. The Capitalist Press hides the real state of affairs behind foul slanders. It hides the fact that the Bolshevik Government is only the Government of the workers by the workers for the workers. It hides the fact that Lenin and Trotsky are only the delegates of the Russian Federation of Labour, otherwise the Council of Workmen, or the Soviet. It is your fellow workmen they are slandering. It is your fellow workmen who are calling upon you to hurl these vile slanders back into the teeth of your and their capitalist enemies.

What are they up to now, these International Capitalists? Labour having conquered power in Russia is occupied in quelling the rebellion of the "bourgeois

— 4 —

lands stands out as their chief aim, their dearest treasure. The great war of Germany versus the Allies may go on. It is the only hope of Capital that it shall go on. In any case it is the working masses that are slaughtered. Capital thrives on it. But the class war of International Capital against the rising working class is also waging to-day.

Workers of South Africa! Arouse from your submissiveness and lethargy, and show that you see through this foul conspiracy of International Capital against the Russian workmen. The cause of the Russian workmen is your cause. Workers of the world, UNITE. You have a world to win.

READ
"THE INTERNATIONAL,"

5/- per annum, post free. 1 penny weekly.
The only working class newspaper
in South Africa.
Champions the Solidarity of Labour, irrespective of race, colour, grade or nationality.
If you want the true view of the Russian Revolution read "THE INTERNATIONAL."
Send name and address for a specimen copy.
Postal orders to P.O. Box 4178, Johannesburg.

Published by the International Socialist League (S.A.) and Printed by Vagelson & Katz, 26a Pritchard St., Phone 24 Central, Johannesburg.

1. A leaflet of the International Socialist League, 1919.

2. Sidney Percival Bunting, a founder member and leader of both the International Socialist League and the Communist Party of South Africa. Bunting was a delegate to the 4th and 6th congresses of the Comintern.





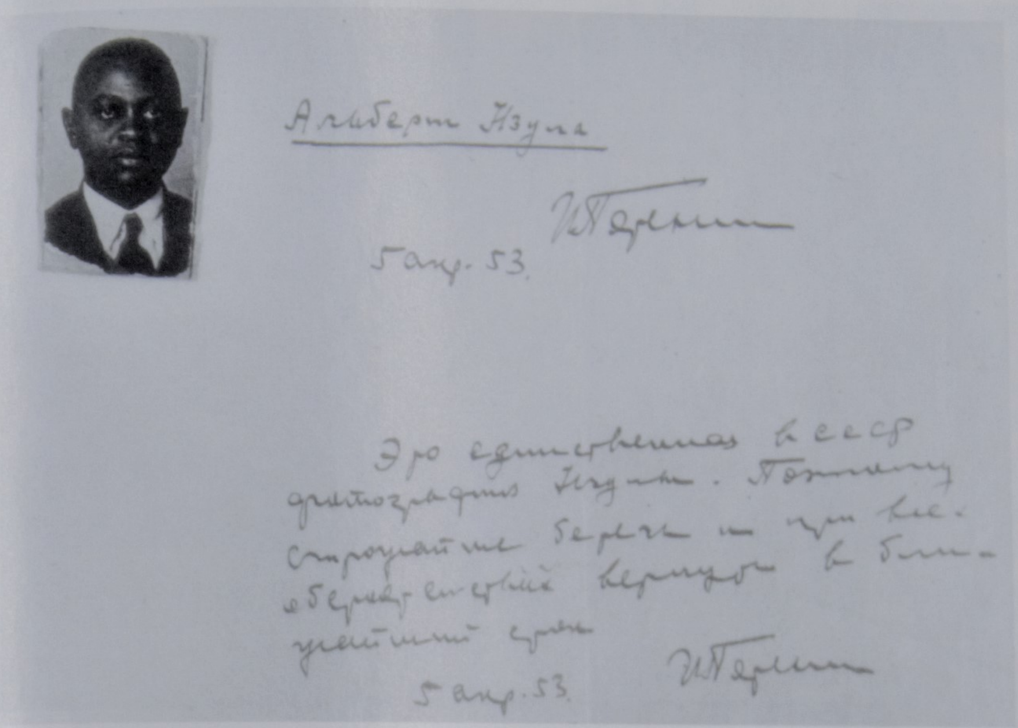
3. Bill Andrews, a founder member and leader of both the International Socialist League and the Communist Party of South Africa. Andrews was also a member of the Comintern Executive.



4. Rebecca Bunting, a founder member of the International Socialist League and a prominent communist. Rebecca Bunting was a delegate to the 6th Congress of the Comintern.

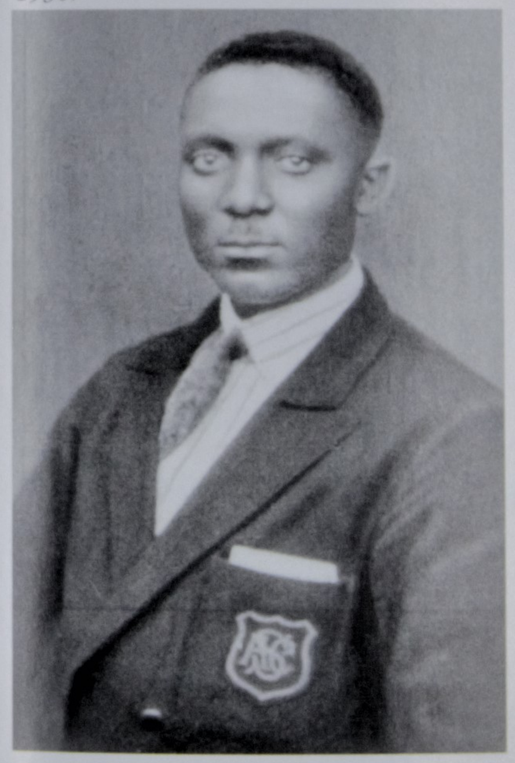


5. David Ivon Jones, a founder member, leader and theoretician of the International Socialist League and of the CPSA. Jones was also a member of the Comintern Executive and South Africa's representative on the ECCI. He died in Moscow where he is buried.

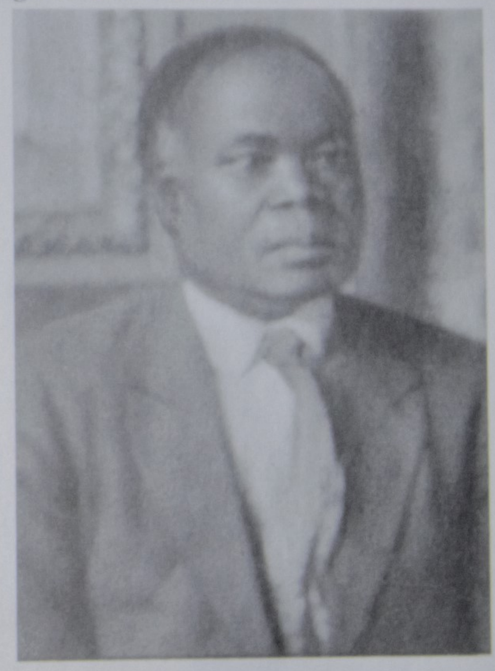


6. Albert Nzula, the first black secretary of the CPSA, who studied at the Lenin School. He died in Moscow where he is buried. Nzula's photograph is pasted to a piece of paper with the following note by Potekhin: 'Albert Nzula. I. Potekhin, 5 April 53. This is the only photograph of Nzula in the USSR. For this reason to be looked after with greatest care and in any circumstances to be returned shortly. 5 April 53. I. Potekhin.'

7. Johannes Nkosi, the hero of the CPSA, killed during its pass-burning campaign of 1930.



8. Josiah Gumede, a founder member of the Natal Natives Congress and of the South African Native National Congress (the ANC), and later the president-general of the ANC.





9. Bill Andrews (centre) among the workers of the Moscow factory 'Dinamo' (1923).

10. S.P. Bunting's Election Address.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Mr. S. P. BUNTING'S Election Address.

ELECTORS OF TEMBULAND,

I am standing for Parliament under the banner of the Communist Party of South Africa, which has its head office at 41(a), Fox Street, Johannesburg.

It is admitted on all hands that this election is being fought on the "native question." But as between the other parties (including the so-called S.A. Labour Party) even the Chamber of Mines organ, Umteteli wa Bantu, confesses (29/1/29) that

"The contest for Parliamentary seats will not revolve around the straight issue of native freedom or native oppression, but each party will bid for public favour by showing in what manner it would continue the repression of native progress so as to ensure the continuance of white superiority and supremacy in State and industry."

Apart from a vulgar scramble for office, the chief bone of contention between the two bigger parties is merely as to which shall control the exploitation of the native labour force of South Africa, the farmers or the mining and commercial capitalists, Afrikander or British imperialism, in either case, of course, for the benefit of the native but for the profit to be made out of his toil. "White capital and black labour," is the common economic background of the world-wide imperialist system of government of subject people, who as the result of it, in glaring contrast with the colossal technical achievements, prosperity, and privilege enjoyed by the conquering ruling class, are still, after centuries of colonisation and civilisation, relegated to an outer darkness of their own, yelling poverty and ignorance, backwardness and deterioration, enslavement and terror, miscalled contentment for the masses, and condemning even the more favoured non-European to a galling inferiority and ostracism. As Professor D. D. T. Jabavu—now strangely enough a supporter of Mr. Hemming, one of your two S.A.P. candidates and an apostle of "no change"—wrote at a time when the S.A.P. had had at least 10 years of power in which to remedy matters: "They are landless, voteless, helots; social outcasts in their fatherland with no future in any path of life. Of all the blessings of this world they see that the white man" (say rather the ruling class) "has everything, they nothing."

And in its policy towards the submerged millions one "boss party" is no better than another. Even as regards the franchise "S.A.P." and "Nats" are in fact divided only on tactics. General Smuts would rather welcome the disfranchisement "by agreement"—*i.e.*, doubtless, with the connivance of a handful of "National Scouts" or intimidated "Bungas"—while General Hertzog makes a frontal attack, coupled only with a specious sop to coloured voters on the principle "divide and rule." That is all. "Let the natives keep their paltry vote at any rate until after the election," says General Smuts, in effect. It is quite insignificant in proportion to their numbers while practically every white man is a voter, it gives them not a tittle of power, and in any case we will never extend it to a wider circle of voters or to other provinces; on the contrary should it ever threaten our white domination we will raise the qualification." And Bulhoek, Port Elizabeth, S.W. Africa, Bloemfontein, and the Rand remind us that his has been by far the bloodiest administration towards both native and white workers.

The Communist Party differs from the other parties as day from night. It has no reason to distort or conceal the real nature of the "native question." In the words of "Umteteli" it does indeed stand for "native freedom" as against "native repression," for it is the recognised policy of the Communist Party at all times and in every country to champion the cause of the exploited



11. Lazar Bach, a prominent South African communist who studied at KUTV, was accused of Trotskyism and died in the GULAG.



12. Josie Mpama (Palmer), a prominent South African communist who studied at KUTV. (The editors are grateful to Professor R. Edgar who gave them a copy of this picture.)

13. Participants of the 5th Congress of the CPSA (Bill Andrews: front row, first from the left, S.P. Bunting front row, second from the right).





14. George Clark, a Comintern emissary in South Africa (1930).



15. Boris Idelson, the first Comintern emissary in South Africa (1929).



16. Bonio Petrovsky, head of the Soviet oil trading company (AROP) in South Africa (1931–36).



Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper.

The International

THE WORLD'S CO-OPERATIVE COMMONWEALTH

THE ORGAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE (S.A.)

84 FOX STREET, JOHANNESBURG.

P.O. Box 4179. Telephone 6035.

No. 254. FRIDAY, MAY 7, 1920. Price THREEPENCE Weekly.

More Bolshevik Atrocities

By GEORGE LANSBURY

MOSCOW.—"All Soviet Russia will become a united All-Russian Co-operative Society of Workers—that is our aim," said Lenin the other day, addressing the Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

I have gone through several state factories here, where motors, bicycles, and aeroplanes are being built. There we could see how much has been accomplished during the period of trouble. Before the revolution Russia was dependent on the outside world for nearly all her machinery, and parts were brought here from abroad to be assembled. Now, from her own raw material, she is building aeroplanes, motors, and bicycles.

I have seen toolmakers, foundry workers, machine minders, engineers, woodworkers, all at work, with machines at full speed, and have mentally compared them with those I have seen by the thousand in England and France. The only difference, and it is a vital one, is that the men here are their own employers. They are working not for a boss or to produce rent, profit, or interest, but for the Soviet State, which is themselves.

They take part in the organisation and direction of their industry. The day before my visit they had cast their votes for their representatives on the Moscow Soviet, and by large majorities had chosen Communists. In England we talk of national workshops, Guild Socialism, and workshop control; here national workshops and workers' control are in actual operation.

People in England often talk of waste in government and municipal enterprise. In these national workshops the exact contrary is the case. Every scrap of raw material and stores coming in is carefully registered and accounted for. The stores inspected are a model of completeness, and were a complete surprise. The products of the factories are all carefully inspected before use, and scamped or inferior work is rejected.

So much for state factories. At the Moscow waterworks the workers have partial control, and they show extraordinary initiative and enthusiasm. They have helped the fuel shortage by new methods of burning peat, which is being in great quantities near Moscow, and by the construction on their own initiative of a narrow gauge railway which enables them to get fuel with less labour and in large quantities. It is impossible that the red armies could have been fed, munitioned, and the nation kept alive, except by this sort of enthusiasm which not only believes but works.

LENIN.
The man of the moment in Europe.

Our London municipal workers could learn a great lesson from these Moscow men and women, who know that they work for the state and feel they are working on behalf of their whole class, and must therefore do their very best, even though creature comforts are so short. There are some who grumble, they say that all the world is against Russia; not a single person I have met, though dreams that things would be other than much worse under any other government than the present.

The position of women in industry here would give complete satisfaction to every leader of the women's movement at home. Women work in industry side by side with men, and are recognised on terms of absolute equality as citizens of the state.

Every post is open to them. Women working on day rates are allowed the same wages as men, even though their production falls 15 per cent. below that of the men. On piece work there is always a minimum wage, which, of course, is the same for men and women. Sickness and unemployment are paid for at full rates, and to the sick extra food and nourishment are also supplied.

Many workers belong to the orthodox church, and desire to enjoy the many holidays prescribed by that organisation. In consequence of this workers are given the opportunity of ten church holidays each year. In addition, there are eight public holidays during the year, and Sundays and Saturday afternoons are holidays. Two weeks' vacation are given yearly, and where needed these are extended. British workers will note that all these are real holidays, as they are paid for.

Overtime is paid for at time and a half rates for the first two hours, and at double rates afterwards. Much overtime is being worked at present, and a good deal of voluntary work is also being done. This latter means that people work at occupations other than their normal ones in order to assist the nation.

A big wave of enthusiasm is rising among the people, who talk now of "the bloodless front," meaning thereby the industrial field. But on everyone's tongue there is one question when they are told I am from England. "When are you British workers going to make your government let us live?"

* * *

THE MOSCOW INTERNATIONAL.

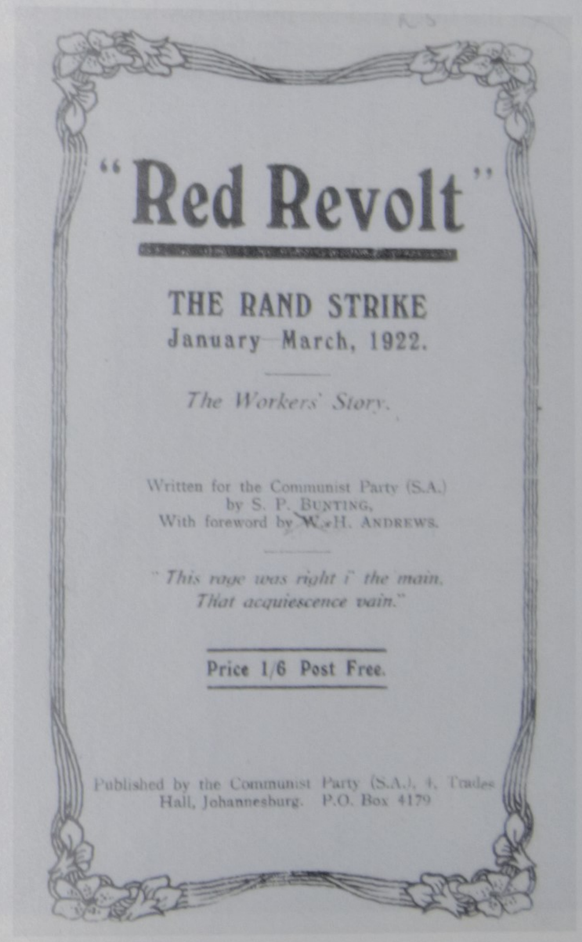
We have received two communications from Comrade S. J. Rutgers, the secretary of the Amsterdam sub-bureau of the Third International, which puts South Africa in touch with the left wing movement in Europe and elsewhere.

* * *

ANOTHER OUTRAGE.

Jim Larkin's indeterminate sentence of five to ten years' hard labour for "criminal anarchy" is one of the most brutal atrocities yet committed by the ruling class of America. Jim Larkin was the leader of the great Dublin strike in 1913. The cables endeavour to stir up prejudice against him by describing him as the "leader of the Dublin strike riots." This latest outrage should rouse organised labour throughout the world to demand his immediate release.

17. The CPSA's weekly newspaper, *The International*.



"Red Revolt"

THE RAND STRIKE
January—March, 1922.

The Workers' Story.

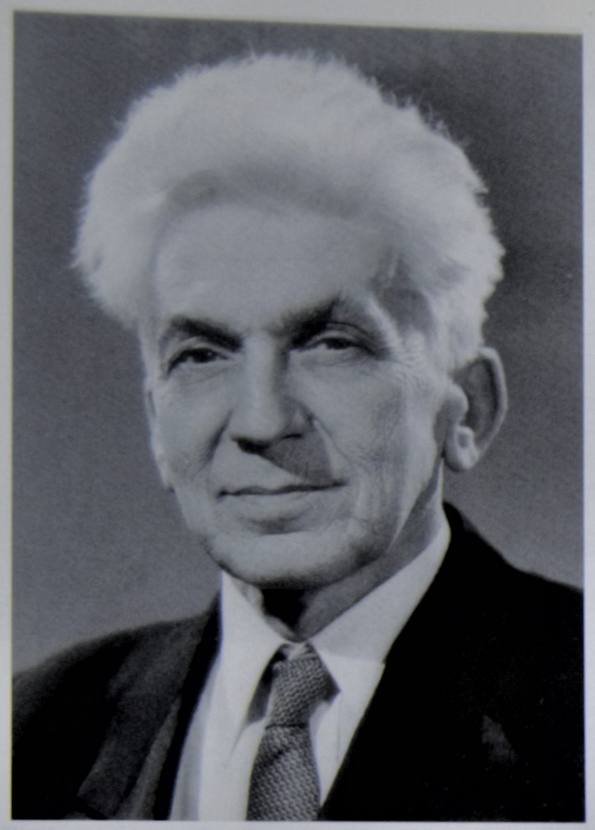
Written for the Communist Party (S.A.)
by S. P. BUNTING,
With foreword by W. H. ANDREWS.

"This rage was right i' the main,
That acquiescence vain."

Price 1/6 Post Free.

Published by the Communist Party (S.A.), 4, Trades Hall, Johannesburg. P.O. Box 4179

18. S.P. Bunting's pamphlet.



19. Endré Sik, KUTV lecturer.



20. The KUTV building today.

21. The Soviet Union's first Africanist experts in 1934. Alexander Zusmanovich is second from the left, back row; Ivan Potekhin is first from the left, middle row; Endré Sik is at centre, between the front and the middle rows; Dmitry Olderogge is first from the right, front row, Igor Snegirev is in the middle, front row.



31
Letter from Provisional Secretary for Calling the Negro Conference to Executive Committee, CPSA, 23 July 1923[1]

Moscow, July 23 1923.

To the Executive Committee of the CP of South Africa.

Dear Comrades:–

The Fourth Congress of the Comintern decided to hold a Negro Congress. The Enlarged Executive decided to call a Negro Conference at the time of the Fifth Congress.

After consulting with your representatives here,[2] we have concluded that it will be impossible to arrange the conference as originally planned. We have decided as follows therefore:

1. There shall be a conference as planned in Moscow, of Negro Communists, this conference to take place at the time of the Fifth Congress. It will be the duty of your Party, therefore, to add a Negro delegate to your delegation to the Fifth Congress.

2. The International Negro Conference (open conference) will take place either in London, Paris or New York. We consulted your representatives here, who seemed to prefer London to New York. Since that time, Paris has been proposed, owing to its being favourably disposed toward the Negro. We ask your final word in the matter.

This conference will be attended by all the delegates who have been to Moscow and about 30 or 40 others who are required for the work. We expect a number of delegates from Africa, but realize the difficulty they will have in leaving the country. This has been the chief reason for our changing our plans. There will also be a number of liberal and petty-bourgeois Negro representatives from the US, West Indies and Central America. We believe that the centre of propaganda for the Conference will be New York.

However, it will be chiefly the task of the South African Party to reach the Negroes of southern Africa. We include Mozambique, German East and British West Africa, and Rhodesia. Your delegates informed us that you would be able to penetrate these parts and possibly obtain representatives of the natives to attend the conference.

3. As it is our intention to hold a Negro trade union conference simultaneously with the general conference, we request you to have this in view when selecting your delegates.

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1. This document is an unsigned copy of the original letter.
2. 'Your representatives here' would seem to refer to D.I. Jones and W.H. Andrews.

We ask you to begin the work as soon as possible. We shall inform you as to the place and exact date of the general conference, as soon as we have conferred with the various parties involved. The conference will occur in the early part of May, in all probability.

With Communist greetings,
Fraternally,
Provisional Secretary for Calling
the Negro Conference[3]

RGASPI, 495/64/19/3.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Inscription: 740.

32
Letter from Secretary for Calling Negro Conference to CPSA, 15 November 1923

15/11/23.

To the EC of the CP of South Africa.

Dear Comrades: –

The Presidium of the Comintern has decided that the open Negro Conference[1] shall be held in New York. The date will probably be May 15.

As stated in our original letter on this question, we shall expect you to send a Negro delegate to the V Congress of the CI, at which the whole Negro question will be taken up and decisions made for the guidance of the Communist delegates to the open conference in New York. If possible, we also ask you to include a Negro among your delegates to the RILU Congress.

It is essential, however, that the open conference in New York be as well attended as possible, especially by representatives of the native population of Africa. We ask you, therefore, to make the greatest efforts to ensure the success of the New York conference.

Doc. 31
3. The name of the Provisional Secretary could not be identified.

Doc. 32
1. See document 31.

Do not fail to let us know at your earliest opportunity whether the Native Congress[2] will participate in the calling of the conference.

We have received considerable information on the situation of the African natives from Comrades Jones and Andrews, also from Com. Bunting's report to the Comintern. We should like to have a comprehensive report from you on the situation not only in South Africa, but other parts of Africa with which you are familiar and on which you have any material.

We do not doubt that you are beginning the work among the natives with energy. Please send us whatever propaganda matter you are getting out, in the form of articles, leaflets etc. Also please furnish us with clippings or newspapers containing matter on this question. If there are any native papers, we ask you to send them to us regularly, as there is adearth of material in Moscow.

We would recommend that a member of your Executive Committee be especially charged with this work.

With Communist greetings,
Secretary for Calling Negro Conference[3]

RGASPI, 495/64/20/2.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.

33
Minutes of Third Congress of CPSA, 27–30 October 1924 (Extracts)

THE COMMUNIST PARTY.
(SOUTH AFRICAN SECTION OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL)

Third Congress held in the Council Chamber, Trades Hall, Johannesburg on December 27th–28th and No. 4 Trades Hall on December 29th and 30th 1924.

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2. Obviously, the ANC.
3. The name of the Secretary could not be established.

MINUTES

The report of the credentials committee, consisting of Comrades C.F. Glass, E. Roux and W.H. Andrews, general secretary-editor, stated that the following delegates were present, and their credentials were in order:–

Comrades E.R. Roux, W. Kalk, Mrs. Bunting, D. Cohen, Mrs. Green, C.F. Glass, representing Johannesburg branch.
– " – S. Buirski, W.H. Harrison, Cape Town – " –.
– " – S.A. Rochlin representing Cape Town Y.C.L.
– " – E.S. Sachs – " – Johannesburg – " –.
– " – R. Rabb, V. Danchin, Sam Barlin unattached members.

Later on in the day Comrade S.M. Pettersen (Durban) arrived and was appointed as an unattached delegate, and Comrades J. Chapman and E. Thomas representing Benoni Branch.

Admission of Press. Com. C.F. Glass moved, S. Buirski sec.[1]

That the press be not admitted but that a report of the proceedings be supplied if requested. Carried.

Admission of non-members. Comrade S. Buirski moved, Mrs. Green seconded.

That members of Trade Unions and bona fide labour organisations be admitted if approved by the credentials committee.

This was an amendment to a motion moved by Mrs. Bunting, sec. S. Barlin – That only members of the Party be admitted.

The amendment on being put was carried.

Greetings. Telegrams were received from Cape Town Branch and Bloemfontein Socialist Circle, wishing the delegates success in their deliberations.

The chairman of the Party, Comrade S.P. Bunting, at 10.35 a.m. declared the Congress open and asked the delegates to appoint its chairman.

Comrade S.P. Bunting was elected by acclamation.

He then read the following address:–

Chairman address.

At last, after an interval of 20 months, we have managed to hold our 1924 Party Conference. Apart from our Constitutional rule that the Conference be held annually, we had waited for a psychological moment to call it, but are now, I think, all agreed that the time was ripe. At any rate, a periodical review of our programme of work and slogans is always valuable, especially to us as pioneers; our executive needs new blood, although unfortunately it has to be drawn from the Rand only; contact between the Cape and other distant centres

1. Seconded.

has to be renewed; we all need to be jolted from time to time out of our ruts; and the differences of viewpoint which are bound to arise in different centres, call for reconciliation through joint debate, a result that Communist above all, seeing that their foundation principles are identical, may be confident of attaining. Moreover, we meet soon after a C.I. Congress, although the 5th Congress last July had perhaps less of value to us than its predecessors.

With the approval of the branches, the C.E. has drawn up an agenda intended to ensure that the principal matters of interest to us shall not be forgotten or made dependent on haphazard criticism arising on say the C.E. report or isolated resolutions from Branches, but shall be located and debated systematically in their proper setting, as part of a comprehensive policy – just as we as a Party have learned to estimate ourselves, partly at last, according to our setting in the comprehensive Communist International. Most ordinary Congresses are arranged like this, and we are following, a long way behind no doubt, the example of the C.I. Congresses in particular. It may be said that we are in for an orgy of talky-talky. Well, discussion is essential at any time, and for the present, when we must confess ourselves unable to carry out any very big action, we may all the more usefully spend a day or two per annum clarifying our ideas and surveying our position, in preparation for more stirring times.

Having drawn up the list of special subjects, the C.E. still in consultation with the branches, has appointed introducers for each in the hope that better justice will thereby be done to them. There, however, it has stopped. Unlike the E.C.C.I. 'Cabinet', striving for continuity, it has not seen fit to inspire or concern itself in any way with what the introducers are to tell us; it almost washes its hands of them; they come before us as free lances, each with a little thing of his own, a surprise Christmas box up his sleeve – except in the case of the item 'programme', on which the C.E. appointed last week a sub-committee to draft a Party programme, but too late for the sub-committee to report back to the C.E. In other words, the C.E., in its wisdom, has shrunk on this occasion from commending any line of policy, or giving any lead. Nor has it actually asked the branches to formulate their views or even instruct their delegates under the given headings. Benoni and Cape Town branches have themselves done something in this direction, whereas Johannesburg has not. Indeed, as Branch Secretary I must confess that it has not even discussed the majority of the items. Personally I venture to think that all this is carrying 'democracy' and 'laissez faire' too far, although, of course, we are all against cast-iron voting mandates. All the greater responsibility, however, on this conference itself to give a united lead in its turn to the incoming C.E. and the Party and membership generally. The C.I. practice is to appoint sub-committees of the congress to evolve resolutions under the various headings as the congress goes along. This may be beyond our power in the two days available, and may be uncalled for in the case of several of the subjects; but where desirable we must endeavour, as we proceed, to find ways and means of registering our decisions, if any.

One more C.I. practice will, I hope be borne in mind here, as far as possible. At the 4th Congress I do not remember a vote ever being taken. Controversial matter was thrashed out in sub-committees until agreement had been reached. They do not believe in minority and majority reports or agreements to differ, but in unanimity; they aim not at outvoting or outmanoeuvring each other, but at convincing each other and smoothing out all differences. I see no reason why we should not attempt the same, if we concentrate on mutual goodwill and reserve our antagonism and intolerance for the enemy without.

As for the subject matter of our Conference, may I presume a little on this opportunity to add a few remarks of my own? We are all asking ourselves, not only what progress have we made since last conference, but in general, what are we doing? Do we justify our existence? And looking only at our small achievements, and at the present rather than the future, some may say that we are not, and that we ought to shut up shop. Let us face the fact that our membership is a good deal smaller than in 1920: there is more disappointment now than then, and we have no great masses behind us yet: they still follow false gods. Well, we are partly the creatures of outside factors; we cannot make the masses revolutionary at will; to a certain extent we ebb and flow with the world situation and in the world there has been a comparative, though by no means complete, lull after the revolutionary crisis of 1917–20. We cannot expect big accessions just now. But although we too may have lost a Newbold or a Philips Price here and there, (and we can usually discern a bread-and-butter rather than a political reason for it), the rest of us have not, I think, lost one jot of our belief in the prospect of revolution and in the great and increasing power of the C.I. as the leader of the effective Labour movement, especially in view of the increasing stability and progress of Soviet Russia. It is as a section of the world C.I. that our self respect rises highest: and equally it is when we survey the baneful part played by the Second International, that we recoil most from the suggestion of being swallowed up again in the Labour Party, and aspire rather to swallow it up.

The bourgeois press, and Bernard Shaw, tell us that the C.I. is going in: we see no sign of it – rather the contrary. Its hand is seen incessantly active in every country: 'Bolshevism draws on itself more and more of the exclusive fire of the bourgeoisie – e.g. in France, Germany and India. Even here they hate and fear us more than ever, in contrast with their tolerance of the S.A.L.P. A Communist of 1924 is worth ten or a hundred Communists of 1918–20. Our Party strength therefore means after all a good deal more today than it did in 1920. The apathetic have nearly all dropped out by now; those that remain are stalwarts. Nor are the excuses given by the backsliders at all convincing: while one says we are not revolutionary enough, another says we are too advanced. The fact is that in this between-time, we are bound more than ever to maintain and develop our forces and revolutionary perspective, and conversely to desert now, individually or collectively, is more than ever unforgivable. If we

are weak, all the more reason for not making ourselves weaker, but stronger. To liquidate would be to leave the capitalist class to all intents unopposed. Nor must we wait too long on external events for an opening, or we shall be making that the excuse for doing nothing. We must for ever be on the warpath against stalemate, stagnation, routine or paralysis.

Here in S.A., the C.I., through us, has enormous virgin fields to conquer. We alone can say 'the whole of the masses, voters and non-voters, are our constituents'. The C.I. distinguishes itself from the Labour Parties by its policy of sweeping in to the combined attack on capitalism and imperialism, not only the masses of the imperialist mother countries, but also the inferior races subjected and battered on by Imperialism in Asia and Africa; and, although locally it may seem remote, there is no doubt that from the point of view of the world movement, that is the direction in which our peculiar responsibility lies. We have two unique tasks in the world movement, first, in South Africa, to bring the European and the helot workers together in a united army – a more characteristically Labour task – and secondly, throughout the continent of Africa, to assist the native people on their own account to throw off the Imperial yoke – rather more of a nationalist task, the two combining as an anti-capitalist or anti-imperialist Pact. In the former task we act absolutely alone, without much useful advice even from Moscow. In the latter there is only the possibility of co-operation from our Egyptian brother party, with which at present we are quite out of touch. For the time being the peculiarly South African task, rather than Pan-African one claims our interest, and an epoch making task it is, for, as Comrade Ivon Jones used to say, we have here in South Africa a miniature of the world. In the world, as a whole, coloured labour stands to European in much the same proportion as it does here, and the estrangement and absence of co-operation between them is even more complete. If we can bring it about here, we shall have solved the whole problem of world labour unity. In this field no other party even attempts to compete with us: we have it all to ourselves.

I believe we are all absolutely agreed on this, in spite of talk about division on the subject; at any rate, in so far as race prejudice stands in the way, it is ashamed to announce itself, while differences on tactics are pre-eminently suitable for argument and solution on sane businesslike lines. Some comrades at the Cape, indeed, wonder at the stress laid on the matter of 'colour' by Rand comrades, but if they will look at South Africa in general they must admit that the 'native question', the gulf between black and white, is a real thing, a most palpable stumbling block to revolutionary progress. However, thier serene failure to see any difficulty about it should at least be of assistance in enabling other in the Party to surmount their difficulties. For once more, we are here today not to stabilise any differences amongst us, but to eliminate them, so that whatever action we sanction shall not be considered as only the concern of a few enthusiasts among us, the rest washing their hands of it, looking askance at it, or saying 'serve them right' if trouble arises, but as action in the name of the

whole Party, and therefore of every member, where the actors feel they have the whole party whole heartedly behind them and ready to champion them against all comers. No party in the world has a more difficult task than this one of ours. No wonder we have made little progress with it as yet. If we differ it is because the subject is difficult: we are bound to express diverse opinions on one or another aspect of it; and none of us can afford to be cocksure about it. But if our Conference accomplishes no more than to remove mutual aloofness on the subject of native affairs, it will have justified itself; on the other hand, if it leaves us inharmonious, anarchistic, cynical, or mutually contemptuous, it will have failed. Disagreements in that spirit on any subject, whether avowed or smothered, quickly paralyse and petrify a party, a branch or a committee, rob it of political fighting power, and 'freeze the genial current of the soul'. Indeed, the whole Labour movement of South Africa, as it always seems to me, is paralysed and stultified by its failure to tackle its 'native question' (which, by the way, is a very different thing from the capitalists' 'native question'); but this is a case in which we must certainly not be the plaything of objective circumstances of that kind, but should strenuously resist any tendency to a similar paralysis. By all means let us be wise as serpents, but also courageous as lions, prepared for a rough and tumble if need be.

[...]

The best cure for disagreements, in fact the supreme slogan for our coming year, apart from anything of the sort, is to intensify our activity in all directions. We have not only to keep our tails up, but to redouble all our efforts, seek out new fields and stunts, maintain our reputation as the party with a punch, in short, do more. We have to lay our plans for a long struggle, and must not be surprised if some of us grow old and shrivelled or even narrow and soured before big results are attained. Other movements have fared that way and yet come out victorious. In every such cause some will I do not say desert, but fall by the wayside, worn out or, fed up. Just as farmers here and there may give up with a succession of bad seasons or locusts, but agriculture has got to go on, equally our soul will go marching on, in spite of all, and we are fortunate in having a younger generation coming along ready to carry on the flag and fight even better than their seniors.

The address was greeted with applause.

[...]

RGASPI, 495/64/33/4–8.
Original in English.
Typed.

34
Documents of Fourth Congress of CPSA, 26–8 December 1925 (Extracts)

FOURTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA HELD AT 145 LONG STREET, CAPE TOWN, ON DECEMBER 26TH, 27TH AND 28TH 1925.

Johannesburg Branch –	S.P. Bunting,
	F.W. Kalk,
	E.R. Roux,
	B. Sachs,
	J. Shields,
	T.W. Thibedi,
Cape Town Branch –	J. Gomas,
	E.J. Khaile,
	P. de Norman,
	J. Pick.
Durban Branch –	no representative,
Benoni Branch –	Jessie Chapman,
Unattached Members –	B. Kreel (Montagu C.P.)

Party members present during the Conference –

Johannesburg Branch –	R. Bunting, J. Myerson, C. Grootewal, J. Righthouse, J. Ogterop, R.G. Lake, (Y.C.L.).
Cape Town Branch –	M. Wolton, L. Koush, M. Walt, J. Locks, S. Zegal, L. Dirmeik, B.S. Madase-Shumba, S. Jacobson, S. Shlom, D.G. Wolton, J. Walt, L. Dromerty, E. Sacks, F. Pearce, Mrs. Pearce, G. Nuthal, G.H. Barnes, D.H. Julius, E. Gaba, B. Sieff, A. Gamsu, D. Dryburgh, R. Blake, J. Murray, J.A. La Guma, I. Vermont, P. Sieff, E. Richman.
Non-Members –	S.M. Silwana, W.A. Harrison, A.G. Harrison

Agenda

1. Chairman opens Conference.
2. Minutes of Last Conference.
3. Report of C.E. for 1925.
4. Reports of Branches
5. The political situation, national and international, Imperialism and War (J. Shields).
6. Function and Policy of the Party; the Pact; Native Affairs; Asiatic Question; Trade Union Movement; Elections. (S.P. Bunting, E.J. Khaile, R. de Norman, W. Kalk, J. Pick).

7. Party Organisation, Party Education, Group System, Nuclei, Work in Trade Unions, etc. (J. Shields).
8. Propaganda with reference to the different sections of the working class (E.R. Roux).
9. Youth Movement and Anti-Militarism (B. Sachs).
10. Land and Peasant Question.
11. Discipline (Appeals).
12. Financial Report.
13. Literature Report.
14. Party Press.
15. The International.
16. Election of C.E. and Officials.
17. Next Conference.
18. General.

First Session.

Saturday, 26th December, 10:45 a.m.–1 p.m. Com. S.P. Bunting was in the chair.

Admission of New Members. It was moved by J. Pick, seconded B. Sachs, that a sub-committee be appointed to determine what non-members shall be admitted. – Carried. The following were then appointed: S. Shlom, M. Wolton, J. Walt, R. Bunting.

Chairman's opening speech:

The Chairman of the Party, Com. S.P. Bunting, then opened the Conference. He said that both Cape Town and Johannesburg looked to the Conference to give them inspiration. Perhaps the Conference would succeed in doing that. It was a little body of ten in charge of affairs of a whole party: but possibly the ten delegates present were the ten best qualified to decide on policy. Unfortunately still both branches consisted largely of members who were not exactly workers, but people who did the hard work of the party found themselves soon cut off from bourgeois ideas.

Both branches during the past year had suffered internal dissension. The habit of resigning or being expelled was perhaps more developed at the Cape. Large numbers of once active members had fallen away from the Party. Of the delegates present only himself and Com. Pick had been delegates at the First Conference. What was the cause of this falling out? He thought it was chiefly on account of the native question which bourgeois members, who came into the movement during the anti-war period, were unable to stomach. Also there was the fact that the party could not offer political careers to its white members. Many members seemed to have left on personal grounds. Most of these cases, however, had an economic or political background. In every individual case so

far he maintained the individual had been in the wrong and the party had been in the right. We had to put a stop to this frivolous view of importance of membership of the party. We could expect a complete change in the membership of the Party as we became more proletarian in character.

Our greatest lose[1] from active membership had been that of Com. W.H. Andrews.

There had been some talk of a standing opposition in the party. But such talk was quite inadmissible, especially in a small party like ours. We had to be comrades, whatever we thought of each other personally.

The seamen's strike had been a failure to the extent it was not led by the Communists. Similar situations might arise at any time, and we should have an efficient machine in readiness. We were told there was no hope for expansion, that our party consisted merely of idealists. But this coming year would probably show a change: it depended where we looked for members. He thought we could not hope in the near future for large adhesions from white workers in the North. Among the rest of the working class there were great personalities in town and country. We had made a fuss of the I.C.U., and thought rightly. Our way to becoming a mass party was becoming clear. In face of the native question even old Russian revolutionaries of 1905, had become shopkeepers in this country, adopted reactionary views. But, if we went ahead, there was no doubt we should become the largest working class party in the country.

[...]

Central Executive Report for the Year 1925.

Meetings Held: Since its election at the end of December, 1924, the C.E. has held 35 meetings. Meetings have been held on Thursdays at fortnightly or weekly intervals in accordance with the amount of business to be done. A number of special meetings were held specially during the last half of the year.

Changes in the C.E. Elected at Conference, S.P. Bunting (chair), W.H. Andrews (Sec.-Editor), C.F. Glass (treasurer), C.J. Andrews, T. Chapman, V. Danchin, D. Cohen, E.F. Green, W. Kalk, E.R. Roux, S. Rubin, B. Sachs.

At the first meeting of the C.E. on 8th January, Com. W.H. Andrews stated that he desired to be relieved of the post of Secretary-Editor as soon as possible. It was agreed that Com. Andrews' resignation be accepted as from Feb. 15th Com. Glass also intimated that he wished to relinquish his position of office assistant from the same date. On 5th February a letter was received from C.F. Glass offering to retain the position of bookkeeper-treasurer for a monthly salary of £5. This offer was not accepted. Comrade Irene Sabel was installed as office assistant at £10 per month. Com. Bunting was appointed Editor of the

1. loss.

'International' at £10 per month and Com. Roux, General Secretary, at £6 per month, Com. W.H. Andrews having persuaded the C.E. that all officials should be paid. The motions allowing salaries to these comrades were subsequently rescinded at their request, and their work which is only part time, has been conducted in a purely honorary capacity.

On 12th Feb. Com. Glass resigned from the position of treasurer and C.E. member.

On 19th Feb. Com. W.H. Andrews was elected to fill the vacancy on the C.E. caused by his resignation as Gen. Secretary. Com. Danchin was elected treasurer and Com. Kalk Vice-chairman.

On 26th March Com. J. First was elected to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation from the C.E. of C.F. Glass.

On 14th May a letter was received from C.F. Glass resigning from the C.P. At the same time the letter was published in the capitalist press.

In May Com. B. Weinbren was appointed by the Cape Town branch as Cape representative on the C.E.

A letter was received from Com. W.H. Andrews on 11th June resigning his position on the C.E. stating he no longer had time to attend meetings owing to his appointment as secretary of the S.A.A.E.O.[2] and fearing that resolutions would be passed in his absence with which he did not agree. At the same time Com. E.F. Green was compelled to resign owing to her departure for Rhodesia. This was followed by the resignation of C.J. Andrews owing to his disagreement with party policy.

The vacancies were filled by Comrades M. Goldsmith, J. Myerson, and J. Shields, the latter a member of the C.P.G.B. newly come to S. Africa.

This completes the list of changes in the C.E.

[...]

RGASPI, 495/64/43/1–4. The full text of the document: 495/64/43/1–39.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: 3895 – 24. DEC. 1926 (in German)

2. South African Association of Employees' Organisations.

35
Proposals of E. Sachs to Comintern, January 1926

FROM THE REPORT OF CD. ZACHS,[1] JANUARY 1926
PROPOSALS

1). One of the most essential conditions for the establishment of a good connection between the Communist Party of South Africa and the Comintern is that the Comintern direct Party activity.

2). The relationship between the Communist Party of S. Africa and the British Communist Party has been so far very weak and unorganised. The situation should be changed as soon as possible.

3). As the Communist Party of S. Africa suffers from the lack of experienced executive cadres, it would be highly desirable to have an exchange of representatives between both Central Committees, i.e. for one member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of S. Africa to join the Central Committee of the British Communist Party and vice versa.

4). It is necessary to start educating persons appropriate for colonial work. It would be highly expedient to send some natives from S. Africa to KUTV to Moscow.

5). The Profintern and the Krestintern should give proper attention to S. Africa. Profintern should get in touch with the ICU,[2] the Krestintern could have a broad field for activity there because there is a serious agrarian problem in S. Africa.

6). The most suitable way of carrying out the present slogans of an international united front as well as the resolutions about colonial workers adopted at the recent conference in Scarborough could be attandance by a representative of trade unions (Swales and Purcell[3]) at the next congress of white trade unions in S. Africa. This visit of a representative of the ICU could have a great political meaning for he could raise the issue of an international united front and of the need to organise colonial peoples.[4] The Communist Party of S. Africa would have taken care of the necessary invitation, perhaps also on the part of the ICU, while the Communist Party of Britain would attend to sending somebody in truth. The organisation of strong native trade unions is the nearest and the most essential task of the Communist Party of S. Africa. The means for this is the recognition of these new native trade unions on the part of

1. Sachs.
2. 'ICU' is written in English in the original.
3. British trade unionists. Albert Arthur Purcell – an official of the British Trades Union Congress and a member of Parliament.
4. This phrase was, obviously, distorted in the Russian translation. Sachs could have meant that a trade unionist mentioned in the previous sentence should visit the ICU as well as white trade unions.

British trade unions. It would be a big step to overcoming the scornful attitude towards the natives on the part of white trade unions, especially if some of the strongest native unions will be under the control of British unions.

7). The recent Negro congress in America[5] seemingly has not had any response on the African continent as far as South Africa is concerned. A good start for the organisation of a world Negro congress which would be really representative of Negroes would be for various local native congresses in different parts of the African continent to take up this matter together with already existing American organisations. The Party has a certain influence on the Native congress of S. Africa.

8). All the resources of the Party have been spent so far on the International, the Party organ which has not justified itself despite all expenses. It has been edited by the editor who has done it in his spare time and this is why it has never come close to being a mass organ. It is important for the International to achieve a good financial base so that the Party could make certain means for its activity in view of the fact that colonial work cannot be carried out without means.

RGASPI, 495/64/49/3–4.
Original in Russian (Comintern translation of an English original text that has not been found in the Archive).
Typed. Copy.
Inscription: To the South African file (in Russian)

36
Letter from Head of All-Union Society for Cultural Contacts to Krestintern, 29 June 1926

Copy
All-Union Society for Cultural Ties.

Strictly confidential
Moscow 29 June 1926

Cd. Orlov
Org. Secretary of the Krestintern. Here

Dear Comrade,

Cd. Petrov (ECCI) has reproached me for assisting Com. Sachs's trip to South Africa and for supporting him financially, while, according to Cd. Petrov, Sachs did not deserve such trust and the trip has told badly on his work.

5. American Negro Labour Congress held in Chicago in October 1925.

I deem it necessary to inform you that Cd. Sachs had been recommended to me by Cd. N.L. Meshcheriakov and by the Secretary of Your Presidium, Cd. Garni. As far as the financial support goes, I gave him a small sum for the materials that he promised to me.

In view of this I ask you to explain this matter to Cd. Petrov (ECCI) accordingly, for I personally would not like to take any responsibility for a person unknown to me.

I ask you to inform me about the developments.

With comradely greetings O.D. Kameneva
Chairman of the Society.

RGASPI, 495/64/49/2.
Original in Russian.
Typed. Copy.

37
Letter from Krestintern to Eastern Secretariat, ECCI 30 June 1926

Strictly confidential
Personal
30 June 1926.

TO CD. PETROV (EASTERN SECRETARIAT, ECCI)

Copies: Cd. O.D. Kameneva
Cd. Pepper (Secr. on Anglo-Sax. countries,[1] ECCI)

Dear Comrade,

Following the letter from Cd. O.D. Kameneva (a copy of the letter is enclosed) I am forwarding the following information to you in regard to Cd. Sachs from South Africa.

Cd. Sachs was sent to us last October by Cd. Rafes, board member of the Eastern Department of the ECCI, and by Cd. Fokin from KIM to work part time in the Krestintern on Africa and on the Negro question in America. We were informed that Cd. Sachs had been called specifically from Berlin to work on this issue. Since is became clear from our communications with Cd. Sachs that

1. Anglo-American Secretatriat.

he had left Africa a long time ago, we dropped the idea of using him full time and offered him just to write a pamphlet on the Negro question.

Later Cd. Sachs worked at KIM, getting a full salary there and credentials to participate in the Plenary Session of the Comintern (with a consultative vote).

After the end of the Plenary Session Cd. Sachs offered his service to the Krestintern in organising work among the Negroes in S. Africa. From Cd. Sachs's reference by Cd. Fokin and other comrades from KIM we understood that, despite being quite a trustworthy comrade, he is not sufficiently active in the Party. Therefore, we again rejected his proposal, having offered him to prove his qualification by work back home and by fulfilling the literary task given to him.

Because Cd. Sachs had already had a ready passport for the departure (if we are not mistaken, procured for him by KIM) we have directed him for a possible use to Cd. O.D. Kameneva, as a chairman of the Society for Cultural Ties, thinking that he may be useful in cultural work.

With comradely greetings
N. Meshcheriakov.

RGASPI, 495/64/49/1.
Original in Russian.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: 1) list 1
2) Outg. No. 548/c
30.VI.26

(in Russian)

38
Letter from S.P. Bunting to Secretary, ECCI, 3 November 1926

Central Executive Office
4, Trades Hall,
Johannesburg.
3rd November 1926.

The Secretary
E.C.C.I.
Moscow.

Dear Comrade,

We desire to remind you of our recent appeal for financial assistance, more particularly in connection with our printing press. This, which was founded in 1919, has been maintained all these years with great difficulty, and a year ago it

was decided that it must be enlarged as the only alternative to closing down. This was done and new plant was purchased, but we were not able to raise enough to pay for it, and are still about £750. in debt over it, apart from instalments on a new linotype which we have so far paid out of profits, – for the business now pays current expenses with something over to go towards the printing of our organ, the 'S.A. Worker', which we need hardly say does not pay for itself. If we could pay off our load of debt and have a little money on hand it would remove a millstone from around our neck, and we should have built up a permanent source of strength to our movement, and one capable of eventually paying off all its debt.

There is a special reason, however, why we apply to you now for funds. Our press has for a number of years past been obliged to conceal from the public its communist identity. Our manager, who has been in charge ever since our press started, has appeared before the world as the proprietor of the business, although actually only a wage earner. He has brought in a good deal of work, indeed the bulk of the work, from customers who would indignantly refuse to give it if they knew it to be a communist press. He has also lent some £300 towards the cost of plant, and reckoning other claims, e.g. for holiday pay, bonus for overtime, etc. he is a creditor of the business for about £400. Although not a communist (no communist has been available for the position) he has played his role of camouflage (which a communist could not have done), and generally served the interests of the Party on the whole very faithfully, bearing the brunt (and the discredit to himself) of dealing with creditors who during the past few ~~weeks~~ months especially have made themselves very importunate, as though he were personally the debtor, besides putting in a considerable amount of overtime in order to keep the business going, so much so that he is to a certain extent suffering from nervous strain, often resulting in extreme irritability.

This, coupled with the usual white worker's antipathy to blacks, has resulted in extreme friction between him and the representatives of the I.C.U. (Native General Workers' Union), who brought their paper to be printed at our press. He has very seriously insulted them on a number of occasions, and finally he has refused to print their paper any longer: and it is now being printed elsewhere. (There has also been constant friction between him and us on other matters).

This is a state of affairs which we as a Communist Party, of course, cannot allow to continue, especially as we are the only friends of the native workers in S. Africa, and several ~~weeks~~ months ago we decided to dispense with his services as soon as a suitable substitute could be found. Two obstacles, so far insurmountable, however, have prevented this decision from being carried out. In the first place to remove the manager will at once disclose to the public that the business is after all not his, and this will mean at present the loss of most of our custom (for the custom from Labour bodies is insignificant except the printing of a Labour Party paper which is given to our

press on the express assurance that the C.P. is not interested in the press!), resulting in the collapse of our press and consequently of our weekly paper, the central activity of our party, for we cannot afford to print our paper elsewhere. But even if our manager could be replaced by another without disillusioning the public as to the proprietorship, the second obstacle is that he would of course take his dismissal unkindly, and he has in fact declared that if dismissed he will at once sue for his £400. (which indeed he wants paid even if not dismissed), and we cannot risk our plant being sold in execution of a judgement for this sum, nor can we raise the money or anything near it.

Matters are thus dragging on at a deadlock, and meanwhile the I.C.U. has naturally taken up a hostile attitude owing to the refusal to print its paper, although other causes (counter-revolutionary influences, etc.), are certainly contributing to that hostility, and this particular grievance is to a certain extent being merely exploited to excuse that hostility. Nevertheless it is clearly our urgent duty to remove any such excuse.[1]

Apart from pressure by all other creditors, therefore, we very urgently need £400. in order to be able to pay off and replace[2] the manager as soon as we can discover a suitable successor and a suitable occasion for installing him without disclosing the true position to the public (even then we still run a risk of the ex-manager himself disclosing it out of revenge, but we do not think he will do this).

We, therefore, ask you for a loan of £1000 (one thousand pounds) which we would hope to repay by instalments spread over five years beginning from January 1928, out of the profits of the press.[3]

Will you put this before the Committee and advise us as soon as possible whether and to what extent you can help?

In reply please communicate with our 'representative' here:-

Mr. A E KAHN
Box 5778
Johannesburg

Yours fraternally,
THE COMMUNIST PARTY (SOUTH AFRICA)[4]
S.P. Bunting
Secretary.

RGASPI, 495/64/48/1–4.
Original in English.
Typed on the letterhead of the CPSA.
Stamped: 3629 – 30 DEC. 1926

(in German)

1. There is a single line in pencil in the left margin opposite this paragraph.
2. There is a single line in pencil in the right margin opposite the part of this sentence beginning from 'very urgently ...').
3. There is a single line in pencil in the right margin opposite the first two lines of this paragraph.
4. Stamp.

39
Report by J. La Guma to Anglo-American Secretariat, ECCI, 10 March 1927[1] (Extract)

INFORMATION MATERIAL ON SOUTH AFRICA.
PREPARED BY COMRADE LA GUMA MARCH 10TH 1927

THE POLITICAL PARTIES OF SOUTH AFRICA.

1) The South African Party – The opposition in the House of Assembly. Led by General Smuts. The Imperialist and high finance Party, supported mainly by big business, English speaking bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.

2) The Nationalist Party governing in coalition with South African Labour Party. Led by General Hertzog. Predominantly Dutch or Afrikander, as they are usually termed. Composed of Dutch Farmers and landowners. Derives its support mainly from rural areas.

3) The South African Labor Party. Led by Colonel Cresswell, and built upon individual white (only) membership of both English and Dutch speaking white workers in industrial centres. A recent proposal to organise coloured (as

1. James La Guma, the first coloured member of the CPSA to visit Moscow, prepared this report for the Anglo-American Secretariat of the Comintern. La Guma travelled to Europe as the CPSA delegate to the Congress of Oppressed Nations organised by the Comintern in February 1927 in Brussels to mobilise support among national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Then he visited Moscow on the invitation of the Anglo-American Secretariat to inform the Secretariat about the South African situation. While in Moscow, he apparently prepared this report and participated in discussions on South Africa at several meetings: two meetings of the Secretariat held on 10 and 16 March; a meeting of Politsecretariat of the ECCI held on 11 March; a meeting of the Presidium of the ECCI held on 16 March. The meeting on 10 March resolved to establish regular contacts between the CPSA and the CPGB and worked out a short resolution that was to be presented to the meeting of the Politsecretariat the next day. The meeting on 11 March decided not to consider the resolution and instead asked La Guma (who was in a hurry to get back to South Africa) to prolong his stay to participate at the meeting of the Presidium on 16 March. A further meeting of the Anglo-American Secretariat on 16 March discussed the resolution but was unable to reach an agreement about it. It also discussed 'practical instructions to be given to Com. La Guma (verbally)' (see document 43, vol. I). Finally, the meeting of the Presidium decided against any resolution on South Africa except the one connected with the expulsion of communists from the ICU (see document 42, vol. I). Apparently, La Guma left for South Africa immediately after this.

   These details are important for it was during La Guma's stay in Moscow that the slogan of independent native republic as the Comintern's line for South Africa emerged.

   For minutes of the meeting on 10 March see: RGASPI, 495/72/24/7; for the minutes of the meeting on 16 March see: RGASPI, 495/72/24/9. Important details about these meetings are found in Petrovsky's Memorandum to the Presidium of the ECCI (document 43, vol. I) and in his report: RGASPI, 495/64/64/1–2.

distinct from native) workers into its ranks is finding favour. Efforts are at present being made in that direction.

4) The Constitutional Democratic Party. One member in House of Assembly (M. Alexander) who has solid support of Jewish community in his constituency.

POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS OF NON EUROPEANS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

1) Indian National Congress membership derived from petty traders. Communist Party has no influence in this organisation.

2) Chinese Kuomintang Party[2] on very good terms with Communist Party. Sent strong fraternal greetings to recent Party Congress.

3) African National Congress (South African Aboriginals). Is representative of all South African Native Tribes. A large but loosely organised organisation. Several native comrades belong to this organisation, but no nuclei have been organised within it to my knowledge. Communist Party steadily gaining influence with this organisation. The CP also greatly assisted them with dispatch of delegates to Brusselles Conference.[3]

Brusselles Conference. From statement made by the Vice President of African National Congress at Brusselles Conference to this effect 'We have been a long while looking for our true friends in South Africa and I think we have found them in the Communist Party' and from other conversations it appears that the C. will have his support within this organisation.

INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS OF NON EUROPEAN WORKERS.

The Industrial Commercial Workers Union (ICU) founded in Cape Town in 1919. At present has 32 branches spread over the Union of South Africa, with a membership of approximately 45,000. Its principal achievement was the procuring of a 50% increase of wages for the Dockworkers of Cape Town. This was obtained after a strike of fairly large magnitude. Its original militant policy has been very much diluted by the reactionary majority on its Executive, and strong Communist influence within this organisation has been responsible for the recent destabilisation – the expulsion of Communist officials and a further recommendation to the Annual Congress 'that no member of the ICU shall be a member of the Communist Party'. This act is totally at variance with the policy of the rank and file who are essentially militant and have on several occasions

2. No information on this party could be found. It could be a branch of Kuomiutang, the party in China headed by Chiang Kai Shek and allied at this time with the Communist Party of China.
3. Congress of Oppressed Nations (see footnote 1) was attended by J. Gumede, at that time – Vice President of the ANC.

in different parts of the country demonstrated the fact by lightning strikes, demonstrations etc., without consulting the official leadership. Congresses of this organisation are held Annually in April.

Nucleus of the CP function within this organisation. In fact there has been a concentration of the Party's efforts upon this organisation to the exclusion of all others.

COMMUNIST PARTY ORGANISATION. The 400 members of the Party spread about the 4 provinces of the Union. The bulk of its membership being concentrated in the two cities of Cape Town and Johannesburg. The Johannesburg branch, where the Central Executive is situated being the larger.

The Johannesburg aggregate comprises three groups: 1) Central 2) Ferrieratown 3) Jeppes. A further No. 4 group Doornfontein was in process of formation. These are area groups. Members of these groups meet in their respective areas once per week when reports are taken from individual members, discussed and decided upon. The Organ of the Party (South African Worker) is also distributed at these meetings to be sold in warehouses and factories as the case may be.

[...]

RGASPI, 495/64/66/67–8.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: 1) ORG. DEPARTMENT (in German)
2) Return to Secretary after completion

40
Statement of J. La Guma to Presidium, ECCI, 16 March 1927

PRESIDIUM, MARCH 16 1927[1]

Comrade LAGUME:

Chairman, comrades: No doubt you have already been informed that the Communist Party of South Africa is a very small one compared to many others

1. According to Minutes no. 88 of the Meeting of the Presidium of the ECCI on 16 March 1927 (RGASPI, 495/2/71a/120–1) members of the Presidium present during La Guma's statement were: Bukharin, Piatnitsky, Petrovsky, Lozovsky, Idelson, Manuilsky, Reesema, Duncan, Pepper, Katayama, Angaretis, Stepanov, Stasova, Humbert-Droz, Schatzkin, Bela Kun, Murphy, Treint, Kachan, Vasiliev, Shubin, Abramov.

but concerned with many conflicting problems. One of the problems of great importance to us is that at present before the House of Commons – the native question, embodied in Hertzog,[2] and I hope you will allow me in going over this situation to make a sort of general survey of those bills.

One of these bills is called the 'Enfranchising Bill' which if carried out will disenfranchise many people who have voted for the past 70 years.

Another is the 'Native Council Bill'. We look upon this not as a concession that is being made to the native population but we construe it to be an attempt on the part of the industrialists of South Africa to safeguard the capitalist expansion owing to the rapid industrialisation of South Africa and take into consideration the fact that all these measures are of an aggressive character which are being imposed upon the native worker. There is a state of considerable unrest and to save the expansion of capitalism we hear these measures are intended to remove at least 99% of the working class vote of the native. It is significant also to note that in this matter the so-called protectors of native peoples throughout the world are in accord. General Smuts, who represents the subject peoples of Great Britain, seems to be in accord with General Hertzog, realising as he does that these four bills are interdependent.

We know of another bill, the Land Bill, which simply means an expropriation of the native people from the land and there will undoubtedly be a large influx of this expropriated land workers into the towns intensifying the competition and bringing down the standard of living. We know this because Hertzog's intention in the first place is to get hold of the land and, on the other, General Smuts will get a hold of the land for these imperialists.

So there is an alliance between the Imperialist Party[3] and the leading bourgeoisie of the Nationalist Party coming to a head in the very near future. Then there is another phase to this bill, and that is, that the big land owners want to get possession of this expropriated native owned land. These things are being brought about by restricting the areas in which the native people may live. If you read the bills you will find that the government is going to release certain areas for native occupation, but there is no mention of the fact that these lands are already occupied by the natives. There is nothing in these bills about this. At present there is a great agitation against this land bill and we find ourselves somewhat at our wits end to formulate the policy of the Party on these four bills.

The fourth bill is called the 'Coloured Peoples Rights Bill' wherein Hertzog intends to give certain concessions to the coloured people; i.e. instead of making the franchise that exists in the[4] provinces universal, to allow them to

2. Most probably, La Guma said 'Hertzog's bills'.
3. La Guma must have meant the South African Party.
4. There is a gap after 'the' in the original; obviously, the stenographer did not understand the names of the provinces.

elect one representative in the northern provinces for the coloured people. If we take this in conjunction with the recent attitude of a certain leader, to wit, Mr. Ka ...[5] we find that this is going to have a certain affect on the movement as follows: We know that Mr. K ...[6] has come under the influence of the master class and his object is to split the coloured and native workers. This Coloured Peoples Rights Bill is going to assist him greatly in bringing about this decision.

Then we have another problem such as the division between white and black labour in South Africa. We have made several efforts to bring about a better understanding between the black and white workers but we have failed so far because of our small numbers in these two respective sections. Also, apart from the fact that the white worker feels that he is able to live on a higher standard there is also a malicious trend prevailing there somewhat on this fashion. He asks himself whether or not, if he allows the black labour to rise by organisation, he will not terminate the position to the detriment of the black worker himself. This is one of the most dangerous positions.

According to the decision of the Comintern recently, about two years ago, it was agreed that we should concentrate upon the native masses. We have been taxing our minds to formulate a platform that will rally the workers around the Communist Party. We have failed so far because we have all these conflicting elements to reconcile. The trouble is that if we formulate a platform to rally black workers there is a danger of alienating the white. My object in putting this forward is only to give you some slight idea of the position we are in South Africa and whether there will be any advice coming from the assembly this evening.

[...]

In answer to questions:[7]

As I said the South African Party[8] is a small party and the majority of its members are concentrated in Johannesburg and in the town of Cape Town. The most activity is carried on in Johannesburg, i.e. we have sent at least two members to the Trade Union Congress, we have at least about 10 or 12 members in the Johannesburg branch, and in the small branches of the trade unions we have about 125 members in the black organisation and Industrial

5. Kadalie.
6. Kadalie.
7. La Guma was responding to questions by Bukharin and Lozovsky. Bukharin asked: 'How strong is our party? Nothing is said about this in the resolution [of the British Secretariat]. How many members do the native organisations have and how many members do the white organisations have? Is there an opposition in the white organisation, and if there is a left opposition, how strong is it? Then I request further information about the activity of the party'. Lozovsky asked: 'How many members does the party have and what is the relationship which exists between black and white communists? How many members does the Labour Party have?' See: RGASPI, 495/2/71a/121.
8. The Communist Party of South Africa.

and Commercial Workers' Union. We have committees formed of members of these two unions and they meet occasionally to discuss the problems that are confronting us in these organisations. We have formulated a policy for these members that they must push inside these organisations which they do the best of their ability. In Cape Town we have Sunday evening meetings as well as week day meetings. Large number of literature is sold and we recruit members at these meetings. We are hampered very much by lack of propagandists. Our speakers are comrades who work during the day and they find it hard to do so as much party work as is required from a member of a Communist Party. We also have a school for illiterate Negroes which meets twice a week. The teachers are white people. Our party has about 400 members of which 100 are Negroes and 300 are whites.

[...]

RGASPI, 495/2/71a/123–5, 131.
Original in English.
Typed.

Remarks of N. Bukharin to Presidium, ECCI, 16 March 1927[1] (Extracts)

[...]

I am against the resolution[2] because it is wrong ... even worse is the overall construction of the resolution, especially concerning the directives of the CI. The greatest fault is that there is no line on the most important questions. When Com. Lozovsky says that the resolution is too general, then I can say that, on the one hand, it is too general, and on the other, it does not give a general line. I now will consider individual questions. The national question, or in other words, the race question, the relationship between black and white workers, has not been worked out in the resolution. This is the most important question and for this question no line is given. There is a sentence about the Brussels congress, but where is the party line? There is no mention of it in the

1. This document is a full record of N. Bukharin's three comments on the South African question at 16 March meeting of the Presidium. La Guma presented his statement to the same meeting earlier and stayed on to participate in the rest of the proceedings. Bukharin's comments on South Africa were part of his general remarks on different matters discussed at the meeting.
2. The resolution under discussion was drafted by the British Secretariat and presented to this meeting (see document 39, footnote 1). For the text of this resolution see: RGASPI, 495/2/71/175–80.

resolution. This, however, is the most burning problem. To write a resolution without indicating the line for these questions is not appropriate. Then it is better not to write a resolution at all. Concerning the question of the nature of the state. The party must make demands, such as a demand for a Negro republic independent of the British empire,[3] or in addition for autonomy for the national white minorities, etc. Again, there is no word about this question in the resolution. Overall the Communist International must say very clearly that in the struggle between the Negroes and the whites that it is on the side of the Negroes. That is the main problem and if one speaks of race prejudice of the Negroes one is turning the problem upside down. Then we would be in the mainstream of imperialist politics. Not to mention the nature of the state is non-permissible. Where do we take the struggle, along what line? That is not clear from the resolution. On the other hand, we are supposed to work along the line of partnership between the whites and the Negroes, but one has to understand that this problem must be considered in detail. This is a complicated problem and must be at the centre of questions considered in the resolution. In the resolution there are no specifics of the general line, indeed, there is no general line. Then I would like to note that the resolution which is meant for the party does not say a word about the communist party itself. To give a resolution for the communist party without saying a word about the communist party does not make sense. Then it is better not to write a resolution at all than a resolution where the party is not mentioned [...] I believe that the worst enemy could [not] work out a better plan to destroy our party. Therefore, the resolution is politically incorrect. It is opportunistic and we cannot accept such a resolution [...]

Com. Bukharin: I suggest that at this stage of development we only ask one question, namely the question of our policy with regard to the black trade union.[4] What are we supposed to do with this issue, if we do not succeed in the struggle against the expulsions?[5] This is a resolution about a concrete issue. Perhaps we should accept an additional resolution about the Brussels congress, but this is a directive which has already been defined in the general resolution about the Brussels congress. One could accept it as a separate resolution. [...]

3. This is the first mention of the slogan of independent native republic that has been located in the Comintern archives to date. It is unlikely that this question was raised at any earlier meeting during La Guma's stay: there is no mention of this in the documents. Unless there was yet another meeting which preceeded the 16 March meeting of the Presidium and which has not been traced in the Archive yet, or was not documented at all, Bukharin was the first person to mention independent native republic. This mention could have come without any preliminary discussions, casually, particularly since a similar slogan for the African-American population of the southern states of the USA had been discussed earlier.
4. Obviously, the ICU.
5. Here and further on Bukharin discusses the expulsion of communists from the ICU in December 1926.

Com. Bukharin: We must at least find a general solution to this question. I believe that it is not permissible for local bodies to disavow their delegates who are expelled by the congress. In doing so we would our[6] power in the struggle for our policy in the trade unions. On the other hand, I am against the immediate organisation of a new trade union. This would be a mistake in the other direction. The situation is rather difficult here. We have rather limited influence and there is a danger that we would be isolated. If we start organising a new trade union immediately we lose the trump card in the struggle for trade union unity. Since in this case the issue is the black trade union we would lose politically.

Therefore it would be better that our followers vote against the exclusion of those who have been expelled. If they are expelled by the congress for those reasons, they should advocate co-operation among those expelled, especially in the struggle for reinstatement in the trade union. I believe that is sufficient in the current situation.

My practical suggestion: we do not accept this general resolution but form a small committee, perhaps of three comrades, whose task it should be to define this important problem properly based on the principles which we feel are correct or, in the event that another proposition is accepted, based on the principles of that proposition. Then we will accept a separate resolution that the VTsSPS,[7] several foreign trade unions, etc. send telegrams of greeting, and nothing else. [. . .]

Accepted.[8]

RGASPI, 495/2/71a/128, 137–9, 142, 148.
Original in German.
Typed. Steno.
Inscriptions: 1) South African question (typed)
2) Pres. 16.3.27.

6. A verb after 'would' is missing in the original. Perhaps, 'weaken'.
7. Abbreviation for Vsesoiuznyi Tsentralnyi Sovet Professionalnykh Soiuziv (All-Union Central Council of Professional Unions), the central body of Soviet trade unions.
8. Bukharin's proposal that a committee of three draft a resolution on South Africa was accepted. The resolution submitted by the British Secretariat was rejected.

42
Resolution of Presidium of ECCI, 16 March 1927

RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICA

16.III.1927

The expulsion of five Communists from the Executive of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of South Africa confronts all the revolutionary workers of that country with the question of the forms and methods suitable for the struggle against the expulsion and splits.

The Communists should pursue the following line in connection with the Congress of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union, to be held on the 25th April.

1) To bring protest resolutions at all Locals[1] against the expulsion with the demand, appealing to Congress, to have the Executive's decision annulled.

2) In the case of Congress confirming the expulsion of 5 Communists, all opponents of expulsion at the Congress should bring written protests against it, but should in no circumstances either leave Congress or give grounds for disruption.

3) All opponents of expulsion should strive for the non-expulsion by local organisations from their ranks of any workers who may be expelled by the Executive or by Congress.

4) If the leaders of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union exclude from the Congress all who support the expelled Communists, all excluded from Congress should form an Excluded Members' Committee which should take the following actions:

a) Send an appeal to all local organisations of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union demanding their coming forward against the disruptive activities of the majority at Congress;

b) Send in demands to all local organisations for the convention of an Extraordinary Congress and the withdrawal of the resolution;

c) Embark on a campaign in all local organisations for the support of the expelled workers;

d) Express themselves in favour of the preservation of the unity of the Union, making the keystone of the whole campaign the necessity of taking back all those expelled and of the establishment of the unity of the Union for the purposes of the successful struggle against the bourgeoisie.

1. Local branches.

5. The whole struggle, before, during and after Congress whatever the manoeuvres of the reactionary leaders, must be carried on under the flag of revival of the unity of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union and the demand for the right of workers of all tendencies to express their views within the general trade union organisation.

RGASPI, 495/2/71a/163
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Inscription: Attachment to the Minutes of Presidium of 16.III.27 (in German)

43
Memorandum of D. Petrovsky to Presidium of ECCI, 17 March 1927

Confidential
17.III.1927

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PRESIDIUM
COPIES TO MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH SECRETARIAT

I could not stay until the end of the meeting of the Presidium. Statements by members of the British Secretariat as well as comments by members of the Presidium compel me to make the following statement.

1. Com. La Guma was summoned at the suggestion of the British Secretariat to inform it on issues of the South African movement.

2. After the arrival of Com. La Guma it turned out that his presence in South Africa was extremely urgent and therefore it was desirable to let him go as soon as possible.

3. On the 10th of this month a meeting of a part of the British Secretariat with Com. La Guma was held to consider the most urgent tasks. A short resolution was worked out together with Com. La Guma and was presented to the Polit. Secretariat on the 11th of this month.

4. The Polit. Secretariat decided not to consider the resolution and proposed that Com. La Guma remain at the meeting of the Presidium to hear a detailed report there.

5. A specialist in South African affairs presented a short introduction to the resolution for the British Secretariat and the Presidium which was a topic of the discussion at the meeting of the British Secretariat on the 16th of this month.

6. Both at the first and the second meetings we proceeded from the understanding that we would consequently thoroughly discuss all questions concerning the South African labour movement, but until then we would confine ourselves to answering the questions, that, in our opinion could not be delayed.

7. It is a pity, indeed, that an unfortunate expression about the antagonism between the Dutch and English population crept into the introduction. The economic precondition of the antagonism is clearly sufficiently stated. But I repeat that the introduction was not intended to be sent anywhere.

8. At the meeting of the British Secretariat on the 16th the point about a campaign on behalf of the Labour Party[1] did not evoke any disagreement. We proceeded from the assumption that reorganisation of the Labour Party and its conversion into a party based upon collective membership is possible only if communists conduct a campaign simultaneously in the trade unions and in the Labour Party itself. This discussion at this meeting was focused first of all on different wordings in the introductory part of the resolution. Com. Duncan offered to formulate tasks pertaining to the national movement separately for the resolution section, and also to find out more about the question of forms of contact between the British Communist Party and the Communist Party of South Africa.

9. It was not assumed that the resolution section would be sent. There was only the discussion about practical instructions to be given to Com. La Guma (verbally).

10. Participants at the meeting on 10th March were: Rathbone, Reesema, Young, Hunt, Demar and La Guma; at the meeting on the 16th participated: Murphy, Duncan, Rathbone, Katayama, Feinberg, Hunt, Demar, Hardy, Young, Smolyansky, Reesema, and La Guma.

D. Petrovsky

RGASPI, 495/72/25/47–8.
Original in Russian.
Typed. Copy.

1. Here and elsewhere in the document, the South African Labour Party.

44
Report of Meeting of Central Executive, CPSA, 7 July 1927[1] (Extract)

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE

7th July 1927

Present: Coms. J. Shields (chair), Mattushek, Myerson, B. Sachs, Weinbrenn, Thibedi, Michalson, R. Bunting and S.P. Bunting (sec.), also Coms. W.H. Andrews and J.T. Gumede. And later Coms. E.S. Sachs & Richter.[2]

Brussels: J.T. Gumede reported that he had been elected President of the African National Congress and E.J. Khaile Secretary; and that at the A.N.C. Conference he had reported verbally on the Brussels Conference, pointing out how oppression was due to capitalist conditions, and producing photos showing that it was worse in some ways in India and China than in South Africa, and that there was great discontent among the working class in England, France, Germany and Belgium also, so that all workers were one with those of Africa. He was confronted with statements in the native papers that he was a Communist, and replied: 'Before I left for Europe I was against what I had heard of them, but in Europe I found they stood up for the oppressed all over the world – hence the hatred of Governments for them, indeed they were the only party that concerned itself with us natives.' This was well received, as also at the Kimberley non-European Conference: and he was elected unopposed, despite Government attempts to prevent it.

The A.N.C. had set up a Labour Secretariat, on the motion of Prof. Thaele, who was in touch with the C.P. at Capetown. The A.N.C. executive should keep in close touch with the C.P. The A.N.C. would not trouble the I.C.U. whose rank and file were not against joining the A.N.C. The A.N.C. expected to register thousands of individual members, including those who leave the I.C.U., until eventually the I.C.U. would co-operate.

[...]

Chairman.

RGASPI, 495/64/63/29. For the full text of the document see: RGASPI, 495/64/63/29–30.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy. Corrections by hand.

1. The author of this document and the addressee could not be identified. The contents of the document indicate that it is a report or an extract from a report of a Central Executive meeting of 7 July 1927 at which J.T. Gumede informed the Party leadership of the developments within the ANC and of its attitude towards him in the wake of his attendance at the meeting of the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in Brussels organised by the Comintern to form the League Against Imperialism. The invitation and arrangements for Gumede's trip to Brussels came through the CPSA.
2. M. Richter.

45
Resolution of Politsecretariat of ECCI, 22 July 1927 (Extract)[1]

RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICA.[2]

22.VII.27

[...]

6. The CP and its tasks:

Our CP has a membership of about 400, fifty of whom are native or coloured workers and peasants. Though still weak, the present intensified campaign of the government against the natives offers it an immense field to develop its influence amongst these peasants and workers, and it is amongst this section of the South African population that its chief field of activity must lie in the near future.

a.) The first task of the Party is to reorganise itself according to the decisions of the CI and to put forward a political programme of action as a necessary condition to fight for a mass CP of S. Africa.

b.) While not lessening its work amongst the white population, IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY to pay particular attention to the native section of the population and in particular to reverse the proportion of whites and natives in the Party membership figure: in addition, the Party should do everything possible to help the native comrades into the leadership of the Party.

c.) The Party while fighting against all the customs, laws and regulations which seek to discriminate against the native and coloured population and in favour of the white population, should put forward as its immediate political slogan an independent black South African Republic as a stage towards a Workers' and Peasants' Republic with full autonomy for all minorities.

[...]

RGASPI, 495/64/56/125. For the full text of the document see: RGASPI, 495/64/56/117–28
Original in English.
Typed.
Inscriptions: 1) PS no. 35§4
2) M – Copying
4741/5/19.4.28
3) Archive DP.[3]

(in Russian)

1. The rest of the document is a general description of the South African political scene and situation. The archives contain the same document in Russian: RGASPI, 495/64/56/15–26.
2. This resolution was passed 'in principle' by the Politsecretariat of the ECCI on 22 July 1927 (Minutes no. 35). A commission consisting of Rathbone, Reesema, Petrovsky, Schüller and Petrov was charged with the task of editing it on the basis of comments made during the meeting (RGASPI, 495/3/28/1).
3. To D. Petrovsky's archive.

46
Minutes of Bureau Meeting, A-UCP(B) 25 August 1927 (Extract)[1]

MINUTES NO. 8. OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE A-UCP(B) TO ECCI OF 25.8.27.

Strictly confidential.

Typed three copies.
1 copy sent to c. Stalin
1 – " – destroyed
Present: c.c. Stalin, Molotov, Piatnitsky, Kuusinen and Shatskin
Agenda: 1) About c. Varga's apparatus.
2) About the circulation of the Steno of the last plenum of the CC and of the CCC of the A-UCP(B).
3) About the publication of speeches and papers of the first day of the plenum.
4. Questions of individual comrades.

Heard	Resolved
[...]	
4. Questions of individual comrades.	4.
a) The suggestion of c. Shatskin to allow c.c. Zusmanovich and Bobryshev to go abroad illegally if they do not get visas.[2]	a) No objections.
[...]	
	Secretary of the Delegation of A-UCP(B) to the ECCI: Piatnitsky (Piatnitsky)

RGASPI, 508/1/55/1.
Original in Russian.
Typed.

1. This document has no direct connection with South Africa (A.Z. Zusmanovich who later on became head of the African Section at KUTV was not connected with Africa at the time of this meeting) but shows how and at what level decisions of sending Comintern emissaries abroad were taken. No similar documents on Comintern emissaries to South Africa were found in the archives.
2. Most probably, the words 'if they do not get visas' are inserted into the text by Piatnitsky.

47
Letter from S.P. Bunting to L. Gibarti, League Against Imperialism, [October 1927][1]

Abs:[2] Central Executive Office
4 Trades Hall
Johannesburg

The Secretary L. Gibarti
League against Imperialism and
for National Independence.

Dear Comrade,

In a communication from yourself to J.T. Gumede some weeks ago touching on the work of the League against Imperialism, you draw attention to the fact that John Beckett, M.P., Executive Member of the League Section in Britain, was paying a visit to South Africa. You stated that Beckett would be only too willing to do all in his power to assist in the development of the work of the League during his sojourn here. Unfortunately expectations in this respect have not been realised. Right from the moment of his landing in South Africa, Beckett made it clear that his visit was solely concerned with certain private personal business matters.

When he arrived in Capetown he was met by a number of comrades who are interested in seeing the League progress and develop, but he could render them no assistance whatsoever. In due course he came to Johannesburg, and the Secretary and Chairman of our Party made it their business to at once get into contact with him for the purpose of asking him to assist in taking steps to bring about the formation of a committee that would devote itself to carrying out the programme of the Brussels Congress. It was pointed out to him that if he took the initiative in calling a meeting of sympathetic trade unionists and other elements, then in all probability the setting up of a committee pledged to carry on the work would result. Mr. Beckett could not see his way clear to do so.

He informed us that the tactics of the League has undergone considerable change in some respects and that it was no longer thought advisable to press for the affiliation of the native workers organisations, until such times as the white trade unions had linked up to the League. He was of opinion that it was no use attempting to set up a committee composed of European and non-European elements in this country as such effort was meantime out of the

1. The date established on the basis of the contents of the document.
2. Abs. – Absender – 'sender' in German.

question owing the local circumstances. In accordance with this view he, therefore, took no action in the matter.

Again, too, although Beckett responded to an invitation of the EC of the SA Trade Union Congress which invited him to address them, he failed to urge the TUC[3] to devote more interest to the question of the League's programme and policy. At a meeting of Trade Union executives in Johannesburg a few days later which he attended, the Brussels decisions were kept out of the pictures altogether.

In general one might say that although Mr. Beckett's visit created a very favourable opportunity for arousing interest in the League's work, such opportunity was wholly and entirely lost owing to his woeful apathy in the matter. We draw your attention to this matter because we think it important that you would be made aware of the great laxity which Mr. Beckett showed. He never, so far as we were aware, even visited the native workers organisations in order to get their opinions and now he has left for Europe again without once having interested himself in raising the League's policy to the fore.

Yours fraternally
S.P. Bunting

RGASPI, 542/1/18/59–60.
Original in English.
Typed, copy.
Stamped: 2202 – 28 October 1927. (in German)
Inscription: Copy (typed).

3. British Trades Union Congress.

48
Minutes of Meeting, Anglo-American Secretariat, ECCI, 1 December 1927 (Extract)

PROTOCOL NO. 24
MEETING OF ANGLO-AMERICAN SECRETARIAT 1.12.27[1]

Present: – Comrades Katayama, Fineberg, Rathbone, Reinstein, Petrovsky, Gallacher, Samoen, Wurm, Schmidt, Thomas, Demar, Kant, Omra, Emery, Young, Fawkes, Mingulin, Hilt, Reesema and Laguma.

Question	Decision
1. S. Africa Com. Laguma gave a brief report[2] on the situation in the S. African Party, and the following comrades participated in the discussion: – Demar, Petrovsky, Rathbone, Fineberg, Reesema and Young.	1. It was agreed:- a) To instruct Com. Laguma to do whatever possible to carry through the resolution on S. Africa in the Central Committee and the Party. b) The S. African Party should pay special attention to the fight inside the I.C.U. 1) for the re-admission of those members who were expelled and 2) for the organisation of a left wing within the union to fight for the leadership of the union. c) The Party should concentrate on work among the natives with a view to its becoming a party of the native workers of S. Africa.

D. Petrovsky

RGASPI, 495/72/27/197.
Original in English.
Typed.

1. The decision to listen to and discuss the report of J. La Guma was taken at the meeting of the Bureau of the Anglo-American Secretariat on 29 November 1927. RGASPI, 495/72/27/147.
2. For text of the report see: RGASPI, 495/72/25/136–40.

49
Report of Discussion, Meeting of Anglo-American Secretariat, ECCI, 1 December 1927 (Extract)

MEETING OF ANGLO-AMERICAN SECRETARIAT. 1.12.27

[...]

DISCUSSION ON SOUTH AFRICA

Com LAGUMA stated that the Communist Party of South Africa had not yet considered the Resolution of the Comintern on South Africa,[1] but would do so at its Congress on January 1st. He had, however, received a letter from the Secretary of the Party which indicated that the resolution did not meet with the approval of the Central Committee of the Party. The Central Committee seemed to be afraid that the slogan of an independent native republic as a step towards a peasants and workers republic with full safeguards and rights of all minorities, would antagonise the European section of the working class. They maintain that the European section has the most say in affairs, and that those who drew up the resolution have an insufficient knowledge of the situation in S. Africa, especially 'the widespread apathy of the native masses'.

Com. Laguma declared that this was contrary to the facts, that there had been many strikes and revolts by the natives against their intolerable conditions, unjust taxation, etc. Further there was proof that the natives were beginning to understand that the I.C.U. was following a reactionary policy. For example, two or three months ago the workers at a large railway depot in Johannesburg came out on strike, and when the officials of the I.C.U., at the request of the management, asked the workers to return to work, they were told to go to a 'warm place', and the strikers carried on without their assistance. There had been many other similar instances. He thought that the Central Committee were not in as close touch with the masses as they should be. The Committee, with one exception, consisted of Europeans, and judging from the letter he had received, he did not think they were gauging the situation correctly.

Com. DEMAR urged that a special decision should be taken to fight against the Kadalie leadership of the I.C.U.; that our comrades should organise an opposition inside that union with a view to capturing the leadership, and to rescue it from the clutches of the League of Nations and the Amsterdam International.

1. Resolution of the Politsecretariat of the ECCI of 22 July 1927. See document 45.

Com. PETROVSKY expressed the opinion that Com. Laguma had acted wrongly in not having met the Central Committee on his return to South Africa, and defended the resolution and tried to carry it through. As Com. Laguma was in favour of the resolution, he must get into contact with the Party comrades and do everything possible to get the resolution accepted.

Com. Petrovsky continued that we were witnessing a great change in the policy of the Amsterdam and Second International. In the old days they were satisfied to cover up the action of the imperialists; now they were performing the work of the imperialists, and were turning to the colonies and the oppressed nationalities with object of helping the capitalists to conduct their peaceful work, and the militarists to do their military work. The question of the I.C.U. and Amsterdam was not a small question – it was a question on an international scale, and a big campaign was required to combat it. In view of this, the special attention of the Party should be called to the fight against Amsterdam, which meant also doing everything possible to help our small group inside the I.C.U. to fight against the Kadalie leadership.

Com. Petrovsky stated that it appeared from what Com. Laguma had said that the relation of forces of the white and coloured members inside the Party had remained the same. Something had to be done to change this proportion. On Com. Laguma's return to S. Africa, he must take up the fight for a stronger campaign among the coloured people, so that the Communist Party should become a real party of the natives.

Com. RATHBONE stated that in addition to the proposals made by Com. Petrovsky, he would like to add that we should fight the Amsterdam influence in the I.C.U. not only from within but from without. In the first place we must organise our group inside the I.C.U., and although this might be difficult in view of the fact that the party members were expelled from the Union, he agreed with Com. Petrovsky that this decision should be disregarded because it was not a formal decision. This could form the basis of a challenge to the Kadalie group. But in addition to this, we should organise the workers in those areas which were not touched by the Kadalie Union. For example, the I.C.U. had not organised the coal mining and gold mining areas, and if we organise the workers in those areas, we could force the Kadalie group to negotiate with us. Even if we failed to keep in the end the actual branch which we had organised, the very fact that we were endeavouring to organise native workers would mean a great extension of our influence.

Com. FINEBERG declared that the Communist Party of S. Africa would never be capable of carrying out the C.I. resolution as it is at present organised. The resolution instructs a white group in a colonial country which is the dominant power to hand over that power to the native population. Our instruction should therefore be to the communists in S. Africa to throw their whole weight on the native side, as only a native party could logically carry out a slogan of an independent native republic. The whole policy of the S. African

Party[2] at the present time was directed towards the white workers, and it was not possible to expect them to carry out such a task.

Com. REESEMA stated that it was not accidental that Amsterdam had interested itself in S. Africa. The natives felt that the British imperialists were protecting them against the Dutch Boers, and Kadalie was working as an agent of British imperialism.

Com. YOUNG opposed the suggestion made by Com. Rathbone that we should organise those workers not touched by the I.C.U. This meant, he declared, to organise a new native union in opposition to the I.C.U. This was contrary to the policy of the resolution of the C.I. which stated that we must work inside the I.C.U.

Com. LAGUMA, in reply to the discussion, stated that with regard to the activities of the party members within the I.C.U., it was very difficult to do what was expected of them in view of the fact that they had been expelled from the union, could not take part in any of its meetings, etc. The I.C.U. had recently printed a new constitution in which no reference was made to the expulsion of the communists. The Central Committee of the Party had taken advantage of this and instructed the members to apply for membership. Com. Laguma stated that he had applied, but was refused, other applications having met with similar results. But he was not in a position to say as to what had happened to less prominent comrades in the party.

With regard to the resolution of the C.I., Com. Laguma explained that he was in Cape Town and he had sent the resolution to the C.C., defending it at the same time. On receipt of the letter from the C.C., he had made it the subject of debate in the party in Cape Town, and at a meeting of the National Congress, and it was enthusiastically received and agreed that it was the correct line. Even the Europeans, with one exception, approved of the resolution in Cape Town, while the non-Europeans were unanimous.

With regard to Kadalie and Amsterdam, it appeared that Kadalie was already disillusioned about Amsterdam. In an article in the 'Labour Monthly', Kadalie stated that he applied to the Amsterdam International for affiliation with the object of bringing the South African Labour question into the international arena, but that he was aware that the R.I.L.U. had always been in favour of organising the colonial workers. Laguma thought there was a possibility of getting Laguma[3] to change his policy.

In conclusion, Com. Laguma stated that they all agreed that the Party in S. Africa should be predominantly non-European. He pointed out, with regard to the question of organising the native workers in those areas where the I.C.U. had not yet spread, that the African National Congress had just recently at their

2. Here: Communist Party of South Africa.
3. Undoubtedly Kadalie.

convention decided to form an African Labour Congress, and it would be possible to do this work through them.

RGASPI, 495/72/27/198–202.
Original in English.
Typed.

50
Draft telegram from ECCI to Sixth Congress, CPSA, 22 December 1927[1]

Confidential[2]

DRAFT TELEGRAM TO BE SENT TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS TO BE HELD ON JAN. 1ST, 1928.

The C.I. sends fraternal greetings to the 6th Congress of the South African Communist Party with best wishes for its successful work. The South African Party has big tasks before it. It is the only force able to organise the native workers, to overcome the prejudices of the white workers cultivated by imperialism against their native brothers and to create a united front of the white and native workers against imperialism.

To accomplish these tasks three conditions are absolutely necessary. First: that the Party shall concentrate its work among the native masses whilst continuing its work among the white workers. Only in this direction can the party create a sure foundation for its fight. Secondly: the Party must mobilise all its forces to detach the ICU from the Amsterdam International. The Amsterdam International is the tool of imperialism and it is necessary to prevent the native trade union from being used as a part of this instrument. Thirdly: the Party must work inside the ICU and mobilise the native masses against the dangerous policy of Kadalie as the only way to bring this native union onto the path of class struggle. The Party must explain to the masses the nature of the Amsterdam International which is using its connection in South Africa on behalf of world imperialism.

All these points are included in the CI resolution already submitted to the South African Party.[3] We urge the Party Congress to have very serious

1. This telegram was written and sent as a result of the discussion of La Guma's report in the Anglo-American Secretariat.
2. 'Confidential' in Russian in the original.
3. The CPSA.

discussions on these questions and to accept the resolution submitted by the CI as the line for their every-day practical work. If the party will create a firm ideological and organisational foundation it will be a big step forward in the struggle for the emancipation of the South African toiling masses from capitalist exploitation and will advance the general fight of the working class and the oppressed people against world imperialism.

COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL
(Gallacher)

RGASPI, 495/64/59/10–11.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: 1) 1066 – 22.XII.1927.
2) Archives of the Comintern (in Russian)
3) Material for the Secretariat (in German)
Inscription: Manuilsk.

51
Letter from W. Demar to Secretariat, ECCI, 24 December 1927

TO THE SECRETARIAT OF THE ECCI

Confidential
24 December 1927.

The telegram to the Party congress of South Africa is underwritten by Com. Gallacher, who is now the Executive Secretary. However, I fully share the responsibility and ask to accept the following explanation.

1. On the essence of the matter.

On 9th August the Anglo-American Secretariat forwarded to the South African Party[1] a resolution[2] with the enclosed special letter, which had been worked out by the Anglo-American Secretariat and discussed by the Politsecretariat of the ECCI.

1. Here and elsewhere in the document: the Communist Party of South Africa.
2. See document 45.

On the 1st of this December Com. La Guma reported to us at a meeting of the Anglo-American Secretariat that this resolution had not been approved by the present Central Committee and that measures should be taken to discuss it at the congress which begins on 1 January. The Central Committee does not agree to one of the main points, i.e. to the question of focusing the work on the native masses. Simultaneously we understood from La Guma's report that the Party has done next to nothing in regard to winning the sympathy of the masses inside the only native trade union[3] in South Africa. The expelled communists remain outside the Union and a tendency towards the organisation of native workers outside this Union appeared.

Since the discussion of the South African resolution by the Comintern a number of events took place. Kadalie, Secretary of the aforementioned native trade union, took part in the Congress of the Amsterdam International and at the Labour Conference at the League of Nations.[4] People from Amsterdam advertise their connection with colonial workers, trying to refute, with the help of Kadalie, our agitation about Amsterdam not being interested in colonial peoples.

On the basis of all this information the Anglo-American Secretariat resolved at its plenary meeting on 1 December:

a) To instruct Cd. La Guma to do everything possible for the Central Committee of the Party to adopt the resolution of the ECCI;

b) that the South African Party must pay special attention to the struggle inside among the native trade union attempting to reinstate the expelled and organise the left wing for the struggle against Kadalie;

c) that the Party must concentrate its attention on the work among the Natives and head for becoming a mass party of Native workers.

Such instructions were given to Cd. La Guma, and it was resolved that the South African question would be considered by the Politsecretariat. Because of the Party Congress this could not be done and La Guma left.

2. About sending the telegram.

The congress will take place on 1 January, and La Guma left Moscow on 5 December to attend the meeting of the League Against Imperialism in Brussels. It was necessary to make the instructions drawn up by the Anglo-American Secretariat known to the congress at any cost. Therefore, 3 points adopted by the Secretariat have been worded as a telegram. In order to avoid sending the telegram from Moscow it was decided to hand it in to Cd. Inkpin for the dispatch from London. Cd. Inkpin stayed in Moscow for 8 days after the

3. Here and elsewhere in the document: Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union.
4. 1927 Labour Conference in Geneva sponsored by the International Labour Organisation of the League of Nations.

telegram had been worked out, and the text of the telegram was submitted to the Secretariat in time. But there have been no meetings. Inkpin has left and probably he either has sent the telegram already or will send it one of these days.

I realise that every document should be issued by the highest organs of the ECCI and that in this a mistake was made but at the same time I have listed a whole number of circumstances which, no doubt, mitigate the mistake of the Anglo-American Secretariat.

We have sent by telegraph political suggestions which are very important for the congress of the South African Party and which had been discussed and adopted by the ECCI. Although the resolution which was adopted in summer generally contained them as a whole, in present circumstances they need to be specifically stressed and strongly recommended to the Party congress.

Demar.[5]

RGASPI, 495/64/61/54–6.
Original in Russian.
Typed.
Stamped: No. 1352 – 9 JAN 1928
Inscription: O.F./3 cop.
24-XII-27 (typed)

52
Report of Activities, Anglo-American Secretariat, ECCI, [late 1927 or early 1928] (Extract)[1]

[. . .]

SOUTH AFRICA

Concerning South Africa we have handed in a very short report. The most important achievement of the Comintern in regard to the small South African Party[2] is that it has put forward a slogan of independent native republic and directed the attention of the Com. Party more towards the natives. There has

Doc. 51
5. Signature in English.

Doc. 52
1. The date is established on the basis of the contents of the document.
2. The Communist Party of South Africa.

been an appreciable opposition towards this line in the Communist Party of South Africa. This opposition has hardly been overcome completely. At the same time the new tactical line has been implemented, and it brings very good results that have been stressed at the last two pages (5 and 6) of our short report.

It is necessary to add that in the last several years we have been maintaining close and direct contact with the South African Communist Party.

[. . .]

RGASPI, 495/72/25/242.
Original in Russian.
Typed.

53
Letter from J. La Guma to V. Demar, 10 January 1928

62, Hanover St.,
Cape Town,
10.1.28.

Dear Comrade Victor,

This is to inform you that I arrived back in Cape Town safely after an uneventful voyage. We attended the General Council of the League against Imperialism at Brussells and there I parted with Gumede.

With regard to the Party affairs here I am very much afraid that the recent thesis submitted by the ECCI to the South African Party is going to mean a split on colour lines again or prove very strong purgative.

Since my arrival in Cape Town we have had very hot arguments on the thesis supported by the entire black membership. It seems that at the Congress of the Party there has been more of a colour division than anything else on the question of adoption of the thesis or rejection. The European comrades who spoke against it advanced the same bankrupt arguments as embodied in the letter I read to the Anglo-American Secretariat; but nothing of a constructive nature was put forward. I am given to understand from Comrade Gomas who was one of the delegates from the Cape Town Branch to the Congress, that the thesis has been referred back to the newly elected Central Executive (the personnel of which is practically the same) for discussion with Gumede and myself on our return from Europe. I am therefore waiting in Cape Town for Gumede and will accompany him to Johannesburg to fight for the adoption by the Party of the thesis as submitted, since in the opinion of the non-European comrades it is what is required by us. Good progress has been made amongst the natives this last year according to the report of the CE considering

everything, better progress than amongst the whites. I am forwarding interesting cuttings from the local paper dealing with the white workers attitude towards the question of cooperation with the blacks. It is exactly as I predicted in my report to the Anglo-American Secretariat. There is absolutely nothing to be expected from that quarter. In spite of this the European members of our Party do not consider it 'practical politics' as they call it, to launch even a National Revolutionary movement amongst the blacks until such time as our lords and masters, the white worker, bestows his blessing upon us.

This attitude of the Europeans is creating distrust in the minds of our non-European comrades. It will perhaps interest you to know that during one of the 'peppy' arguments I mentioned, the question arose as to what would happen if the Party rejected the thesis and it was subsequently adopted by the National Congress[1] and Communist such as myself for instance worked for it within the National movement. The reply by a prominent European comrade was that I would be expelled from the Party. So you will no doubt follow that if a compromise is not arrived at it will mean a colour split in the Party. I for one am not afraid of it being very optimistic of the Party gaining a strong foothold amongst the non-European masses providing it is able to win the confidence of the non-Europeans.

I would be very pleased indeed if you would give me advice as early as possible what course to pursue should the thesis be rejected by the C.E. The non-Europeans including myself, a few Europeans as far as I know, all feel that it is the correct one. We have no desire to split the Party. But you will understand that we have a keen desire and the strong determination to emancipate ourselves from these chains of bondage that we have so long endured. And in our opinion the way to that emancipation lies through the earnest propagation of the slogan of a free and independent native republic, steps towards a workers and peasants Republic, with full safeguards for national minorities. We feel that it is our due and will work for it.

Hoping to hear from you quickly, with best wishes and revolutionary greetings to all the comrades. I have the honour to be,

Yours for the World Revolution,
LaGuma.

RGASPI, 495/64/77/4–5.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Inscription: To Petrovsky (in Russian)

1. The ANC.

54
Letter from D. Petrovsky to J. La Guma, 15 February 1928

February 15, 1928.

Mr. Laguma,
62, Hanover Street,
CAPE TOWN.
South Africa.

Dear Laguma,

Victor[1] has shown me your letter dated January 10. It is a pity that we have no concrete information about the stand of your colleagues on the question you raise. I will write to them today, but I want to impress upon you as strongly as I can that it would be the greatest mistake to raise at the moment the question about breaking the company.[2] Everything must be done in order that our point of view be accepted by all our colleagues.

Yours,
A. Bennett.

RGASPI, 495/64/77/3.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: 622 – 16.FEB.1928

55
Letter from D. Petrovsky to CPSA, 15 February 1928.

February 15, 1928.

PO Box 4179,
JOHANNESBURG,
South Africa.

Dear Comrades,

We have received information that there is great disagreement about our thesis concerning the question about the Native Republic. It is a great pity we have

1. Victor Demar.
2. Obviously, the Party.

not heard anything from you until this date. I wanted to call your attention to the fact that several months have elapsed since you received these theses and not a word has been said to us by you, either for or against the theses.

I would ask you urgently to do whatever possible in order to make clear to us your point of view. At any rate I hope that no final decisions against our proposal would be taken without preliminary discussion with us.

Yours,
A. Bennett

RGASPI, 495/64/77/2.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: 621 – 16.FEB. 1928.

56
Letter from V. Demar to J. La Guma, 22 February 1928

February 22nd 1928.

My dear Laguma,

I was very glad to receive a letter from you. I completely sympathise with you in your complaints regarding our white friends who do not understand the importance and absolute necessity of working among the natives. But I think, Laguma, that you exaggerate a little the difficulties you have to face. You speak of a break. This is too much. Of course, there will be some amongst our friends who will maintain their attitude, but I do not believe that the majority will oppose the line given by the Centre.[1]

It is necessary to work to guarantee the complete isolation of such persons as continue to resist. But I hope no break will occur among our African friends.

There is one important matter which should be stressed, and should give a new stimulus to all our friends to increase their activities. In spite of the big statesmanlike experience just experienced by your native Reformist in Geneva and Amsterdam,[2] he has now been compelled – as I see from the Press – to make strong protests against the administration for preventing his union to establish local branches. This situation gives a good opportunity of explaining

1. The Comintern.
2. Obviously, Kadalie. See document 51.

to the natives the real meaning of Reformism, of Geneva, of Amsterdam, and so on. There is much work for you to do.

I hope you will continue to write to me about everything you consider important and that you and the old man[3] will make the most of your big trip and of everything you saw here.

Please let me know about the old man. How is he behaving? I hope everything will be all right and that you will give up a little of your pessimism as your work proceeds.

Yours,
(Victor)

RGASPI, 495/64/77/1.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: 671 – 22.FEB.1928
Inscription: South Africa (in German)

57
Minutes of Meeting, Executive Committee, CPSA, 15 March 1928

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 15TH MARCH IN ASHERS BUILDING AT 8 P.M.

PRESENT.

S.P. Bunting (Chair), T.W. Thibedi, V. Danchin, B. Weinbrenn, A.H. Michalson, M. Wolton, D.G. Wolton, W. Kalk, G. Makabeni, Phooko, R. Bunting, E.S. Sachs.

Comrade La Guma was also present.

LA GUMA'S REPORT.

Comrade LaGuma stated that as a guest of the Soviet Union he had accompanied the British, Irish and American delegations on a tour to the Caucasus.

3. Most likely, J. Gumede who was in the USSR at the same time as La Guma, in November–December 1927.

He had reported on the South African situation to the Comintern and submitted a copy of a cable to the 6th S.A.C.P. Conference which had never been received in S.A. He stated that the Anglo-American Secretariat had asked for a very careful investigation into the Thesis. Fineberg had stated that a task had been submitted which was more than S.A. Party could undertake at present. LaGuma reported that he had discussed the question of students and had been instructed that ten vacancies were available for S.A.[1]

In response to a question he stated that Bucharin had said that the white workers in S.A. soaked as they were with Imperialist ideology, were not of primary revolutionary importance in this country. To a further question LaGuma stated that all section resolutions were submitted to the Presidium before circulation and he had no reason to suppose that a different course had been adopted in regard to the Thesis. He further stated that he had suggested a rallying, cry was needed for the workers of S.A.

THESIS.

La Guma. The origin of the slogan did not consider white workers as of primary importance. The slogan reached out to the majority and challenged the domination by white workers.

The I.C.U. had been built on a basis of nationalism.

Kalk. Said that opposition of local capitalist interests as against Imperialist interests was not being utilised by the adoption of slogan. He asked whether Com. La Guma ~~thought~~ that Dutch Nationalist Party could still be expected to struggle against Imperialism.

Danchin. Which Imperialism is referred to in Thesis? Is it British or South African Imperialism? Why does the native national movement (if it can be called such) support British Imperialism against Boers who oppose British Imperialism.

E. Sachs. Said National movement could not succeed in S.A. because all subjected people were becoming proletarianised and there was no middle class or petty bourgeois elements among natives. Another 1922[2] with joint black and white workers participation would constitute tremendous advance.

Weinbrenn. Said that slogan does not take into consideration white population of 1,700,000. It will immediately turn S. Africa into armed Fascist camp.

1. Vacancies reserved at KUTV for black members of the CPSA (see document 58).
2. 1922 Rand strike which was called 'Red revolt'. See documents 17–19.

Makabeni. Slogan may be alright later on but was not suitable now. It does not take into consideration the wishes of the people.

Thibedi. Slogan is Garveyism and Racialistic.

Bunting. A black republic is inevitable and we all agree on that but the means to achieving it brings out our disagreements. The launching of the slogan now will mean the hostility and antagonism of the entire white working class.

Phooko. Says slogan resembles Garveyism and will be a means a placing power in the hands of the chiefs who will use it for their own ends.

M. Wolton. Slogan has been grossly misinterpreted as a piece of racialism by many comrades and discussion has not been on merits of slogan but arguments against racialism. The interpretation that the white workers will be segregated, that the present position will be reversed, that the whites will be driven into the sea are distortions of the slogan. Even a Native Bourgeois Govt would mean improvements for the native worker and the limited freedom secured would be an advance on present conditions.

D.G. Wolton. Eventually blacks must predominate in this country, and a Black republic be realised. The collaboration of the white workers was of secondary importance. Unity will only be realised after the proletarian revolution in S.A. is achieved. Slogan Workers of the World Unite is abstract in this country and in face of daily oppression at hands of white worker cannot easily be understood. Hence, need for slogan reaching out to native masses especially.

Discussion has shown that Thesis is not understood and acceptance at this stage would endanger the Party. Slogan must be popularised and when properly understood and when shorn of distortions, it would secure the support of the majority of the Party.

As the hour was very late it was agreed that any further statements be heard at the next meeting.

PRESS.

Com. Bunting drew attention to a statement in the current issue of the paper which he contended was contempt of court. It was moved that the item referred to be obliterated and after some discussion was put to the vote.

Carried by 7 votes to 3.

NEXT MEETING.

It was agreed that a special meeting be held on Sunday night, ~~that~~ but as several members could not attend on Sunday, further discussion on the Thesis be left over until next Thursday.[3]

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 11.50 p.m.
Confirmed this[4] day of March. 1928.

Chairman.

RGASPI, 495/64/75/15–16.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.

58
Minutes of Special Meeting, Central Executive Committee, CPSA, 17 March 1928.

MINUTES OF SPECIAL EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD
AT ASHERS BUILDINGS ON SUNDAY MARCH 17TH 1928 AT 8 P.M.

Present. S.P. Bunting (Chair). E.S. Sachs, V. Danchin, R. Bunting, M. Wolton, D.G. Wolton.
Comrade La Guma was also present.

Students. Com. La Guma reported that there were vacancies for 10 students in the Oriental University,[1] – a course of 3 years tuition. This number of students had been allocated to S.A. by the University and sanctioned by the C.I. Considerable discussion followed and it was finally agreed that five students should be sent now and more at a later date when they could be spared from local work.

The following nominations were then accepted

Gomas, Tong, Thibedi, Mphahlele, Silwana, Shumba, Gumede Jr.

It was agreed that the following names be put on a list for further consideration at a later stage.

Mbeki, Ronald, Ndobe, Kelly, J. Molefe, Tjelele, Mofutsanyana, Twayi, Chiluane, G. Makabeni, Majoro, Sepeng.

Doc. 57
3. The words in this phrase were changed by hand in the original.
4. There is an empty space for a date after 'this' in the original.

Doc. 58
1. Communist University of the Toilers of the East (KUTV).

A proportionate vote was then taken of the nominations with the following results.

1.	Gomas	42 votes
2.	Thibedi	32 – " –
3.	Shumba	22 – " –
4.	Tong	16 – " –
5.	Gumede Jr.	16 – " –
6.	Mphalele	8 – " –
7.	Silwana	7 – " –

It was also agreed that Com. La Guma should interview Miss Dorothy Gow in Capetown in regard to the student question.[2] In the event of any of the first five not being able to leave the vacancy to be filled up by the next on the list.

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 11 p.m.
Confirmed this[3] day of March 1928

Chairman

RGASPI, 495/64/75/17.
Original in English.
Typed.

59
Minutes of Meeting, Central Executive Committee, CPSA, 12 April 1928 (Extracts)

MINUTES OF SPECIAL CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT ASHERS BUILDINGS ON THURSDAY APRIL 12 AT 8 P.M.

Present. S.P. Bunting (Chair), M. Wolton, W. Kalk, R. Bunting, V. Danchin, T.W. Thibedi, G. Makabeni, D.G. Wolton, A.H. Michalson. Apologies were received from B. Weinbrenn.

[...]

Thesis. A letter was read from J. Shields in England that he had, as a result of careful deliberation and extensive discussion, become a supporter of the Thesis.

[...]

---

2. The meaning of this resolution is not clear.
3. Space for a date is left empty in the original.

Com. Bunting. Agreed with certain points in statements of each supporter of slogan. – There is no native Bourgeoisie in South Africa and stage of Nationalism need not necessarily be gone through in this country. Consider that I.C.U. was never based primarily on National appeal, leaflet issued by I.S.L. on class Unity was responsible for development of native Labour movement. It is not necessary to resort to Anti-White sentiments to rally Natives. Support of National movements has never led anywhere. We must bear in mind rejection recently of Lenin's declaration re British Labour Party.

Does not slogan imply 'independent of whites' or at least barely tolerant of them.

Slogan is not clear, but a subtlety like Hertzog's cry of Independence.[1] The supporters of the slogan all show an Anti-white attitude.

Slogan is a social democratic, social patriotic cry. We cannot tell on what lines the liberation of African Workers will take place. A slogan of a Workers South Africa – Liberation – Freedom etc., is and would be more popular and to the White Workers also.

After a considerable discussion on the question of voting, it was agreed by 5 votes to 3, that a majority and minority report be obtained from Capetown branch. It was agreed by 5 votes to 4 that similar reports be prepared and submitted to the C.E.

W. Kalk moved that voting be taken now. The motion was defeated by 5 votes to 2.

R. Bunting moved that no voting at all be taken on number of supporters to each report. The motion was defeated by 5 votes to 1.

Thibedi moved that voting be taken on the 2 reports to be submitted to the CE.[2]

A.H. Michalson moved an amendment that the voting take place on the Slogan. The amendment was declared lost and therefore lapsed.

The motion of T. Thibedi was carried with one dissention.

It was agreed that the reports must be despatched overseas by May 1st.

WORLD CONGRESS.[3] A letter was read from Roux stating that he was willing to attend as a co-delegate, provided the time of sitting fitted in with his own arrangements.

E. Sachs moved 'That steps be taken to raise the fare to 6th World Congress'. Agreed.

E. Sachs moved 'That Com. Roux be sent as a co-delegate'. Agreed.

V. Danchin moved 'That we appoint a delegate tonight'. Agreed.

A ballot was taken on the two nominees, Coms. Bunting & Wolton.

The result showed voting 4–4.

1. The reference is to the National Party's anti-British and, originally, anti-imperialist (i.e. anti-expansionist) stand.
2. It would appear that here 'the CE' stands for the ECCI.
3. The 6th Congress of the Comintern.

It was agreed that another ballot be taken at the next meeting. Coms. Kalk & Michalson left sealed ballot papers as they could not be present at the next meeting.

[. . .]

RGASPI, 495/64/75/20.
Original in English.
Typed.

60
Minutes of Meeting of the Central Executive Committee, CPSA, 10 May 1928

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, MAY 10TH IN ASHERS BUILDINGS AT 8 P.M.

PRESENT. S.P. Bunting (Chair), R. Bunting, M. Wolton, W. Kalk, V. Danchin, T.W. Thibedi, D.G. Wolton, G. Makabeni, E.S. Sachs.

Thesis. Statements were submitted by S.P. Bunting and D.G. Wolton which were both read.

Upon a vote being taken the results were as follows.

S.P. Bunting's statement ..... 8 votes.
D.G. Wolton's statement ..... 2 votes.

As there was no statement submitted from the Cape branch it was agreed that the two statements should go forward as a majority and minority reports.[1]

Students.

A letter was read from Comrade La Guma and Gumede. Gumede submitted the name Stanford Conjwa as a student. After discussion and investigation of his credentials it was agreed that Stanford Conjwa be sent as a student. The Secretary was instructed to advise Gumede accordingly. It was agreed that reservations should be made for Conjwa, Gumede Jr., Thibedi and Gomas or Tong. The Secretary was instructed to advise Comrade La Guma accordingly.

Lenin course.[2]

It was moved that two delegates should be sent. An amendment was moved that one delegate be sent. Upon a vote taken the motion was carried by 6 to 3.

1. It has been impossible to locate either the majority or the minority reports in the Archive. The major arguments of both are known from: E. Roux. *S.P. Bunting: A Political Biography* (Cape Town: African Bookman, 1944); 2nd edn: London: Mayibuye Books, 1993.
2. 'The Lenin Course' refers to the International Lenin School.

The three nominees, Danchin, Kalk and Kelly were discussed and it was finally agreed unanimously that Comrades Danchin and Kalk be appointed.

Comrade R. Bunting moved that the Lenin Course students be instructed not to leave before October. Carried.
Y.C.I. Congress. It was unanimously agreed that Comrade E.R. Roux be appointed delegate to the Y.C.I. Congress.
Basutoland.
The Secretary reported that Gumede would probably be invited to the Conference of the Lekhotla la Bafo, and that he had no funds to proceed with. It was agreed that the expenses of Gumede and Comrade Thibedi be paid.
Literature report.
Comrade Sachs was instructed to prepare a report for submission to the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 11.30 p.m.

Confirmed this 17th day of May, 1928
Chairman

RGASPI, 495/64/75/24.
Original in English.
Typed.

61
Minutes of Meeting, Negro Commission, Sixth Congress, Comintern, 11 August 1928 (Extract)

MINUTES OF NEGRO COMMISSION OF AUGUST 11, 1928
IN ROUND HALL OF DOM SOYOUSOV.[1]

Present: Petrovsky, Williams, Nasonoff, Haywood, Roux, Jones, Phillips, Lasorey, Douglass, Whiteman, Adams, Bittelman, Representative from Columbian Party, Wicks, Wilson, Rivers, Bunting, Mrs. Bunting, Jacquemot, Farmer, Pepper, Don.[2]

1. 'Dom Soyousov' – transliteration of the Russian 'House of the Unions', a building in Moscow that housed Nobility Club before 1917 and was taken over by the Council of Trades Unions after the Bolshevik revolution.
2. Only 11 of those present at the meeting were members of the Commission (S.P. Bunting among them). Neither E. Roux nor R. Bunting were members.

Discussed.	Decided.
Order of business	That the order of business be the following: 1) South African report 2) Negroes outside of South Africa and USA 3) Resolution on Negroes in U.S.A.
1.) Report of Comrade Bunting on South Africa which was submitted in writing. In the reading of this report it developed that there are certain differences of opinion in the Communist Party of South Africa in regard of the carrying out of the Comintern resolution sent to Africa last year.	1.) Motion of Bittelman that Comrade Petrovsky give a brief report of the so-called misunderstanding first, that is, the difference of opinion which has arisen between the ECCI and the South African Communist Party.
	Carried unanimously.

Report of Comrade Petrovsky: 1.) When Comrade Laguma was here in 1927 we had meetings with him and discussed the Negro problem in South Africa. Information received from Laguma does not co-incide with that received from Com. Bunting. For instance, Laguma reported that the Party had about 455 members of which 400 were white and the rest black.

2.) The new stand taken by the Industrial and Commercial Union which is composed of black workers. This union, under the leadership of Kadalie, has decided (1) not to allow Communists to occupy responsible positions and (2) to eventually expel them from the union. Comrade Laguma says that they are powerless to resist this which caused us to think something must be wrong as this union was organised and built up practically by our forces. We meant that the approach of the Communists in South Africa must be wrong since this is the union of the most oppressed population in the world and the rules which would apply in the case of the old bureaucracies in the imperialist countries would not apply here. After a careful study of all the material submitted at that time we came to the conclusion that the South African C.P. does not pay enough attention to the Negro problem, does not sufficiently stand as the champion of the Negroes and understand the peculiar relations of forces among the Negroes themselves. It seems that the Party believes it can simply organise the masses of proletarianised Negroes directly into the Party itself.

On the basis of this a resolution was worked out which was accepted by the Political Secretariat and Presidium of the Comintern. (Then Comrade Petrovsky went on to explain some of the points in this resolution for the benefit of those comrades who had not the opportunity of reading it). This resolution stressed

the need for an agrarian programme and the slogan for an independent Native South African Republic.

After Comrade Petrovsky's explanation Comrade Roux of South Africa asked for permission to state his point of view as he said that since the delegation had arrived in Moscow differences of opinion had arisen among the delegation. Permission was granted and Comrade Roux submitted two documents setting forth his point of view.[3] Comrade Roux also stated that he believes that the South African C.P. has not paid sufficient attention to the detailed programme and that there has not been a thorough-going discussion of the role of the Communist Party. The Party has sort of decided to live from day to day on the immediate issues that arise and to adhere to the idea that no programme is needed. This shows the extreme youth and look[4] of understanding of the party.

Decided:

b.)[5] Motion that a commission of three be appointed to draw up a resolution which will state clearly a repudiation of the arguments put forward by the majority of the CEC of the S.A. C.P. Commission to consist of Comrades Haywood, Bittelman and Williams.

Amendment that Comrades Bunting and Roux be added to the commission.
Amendment that Bittelman be responsible for this commission
MOTION AS AMENDED CARRIED.
[...]

Secretary
Williams

RGASPI, 495/155/56/111–12. For the full text of the document see: 495/155/56/111–16.
Original in English.
Typed.

3. Roux's documents have not been found in the Archive. His proposals were not accepted by the Commission. For Roux's participation in the Commission and his changing views on the Comintern resolution on South Africa see: S. Johns, *Raising the Red Flag. The International Socialist League and the Communist Party of South Africa, 1914–32*. Cape Town: Mayibuye Books, 1995, 224–5.
4. lack.
5. There is no point 'a)' in the original.

62
Letter from J. La Guma to D. Petrovsky, 22 August 1928

Conf.
Johannesburg
August 22nd 1928.

Comrade Petrovsky

Dear Comrade,

I notice that our delegates to the Sixth Congress have exposed their political leanings of which I have been for a considerable time suspicious. We have had quite a bad time in the Party since the arrival of the Thesis, but we – the minority in the Central Executive are fighting on. The crowd led by Bunting are unable to divorce their feelings from the parasitical white worker who are using the black worker now as a catspaw. We have had a number of strikes of workers in this federation recently. On two occasions the blacks came out in sympathy and support of the whites and were shamelessly betrayed on both occasions. The white Communist in the Party pass these instances over without a thought. Theirs is only a sort of pro-native feeling not a Communist one at all. And I am going to make every effort at the next Congress of the C.P.S.A. to change the leadership.

There is a project afoot to send two white members of the Central Executive to the Lenin Institute[1] for a three years course. I tell you frankly I have no confidence in them to return from Moscow and do any party work. Both of them Danchin and Kalk by name are useless to the Party at present. Have good bank balances and in my opinion are merely attracted by the novelty of Moscow and would like to have a three years holiday there at the movement's expense. The one Kalk is a Secretary of the White Furniture Workers Union here at a salary of £35 per month and the other – Danchin a book-keeper at a bigger wage still – naturally obtained at the expense of the cheap black worker. What can these people do for a proletarian revolutionary movement and that a black slave movement. Besides they have never yet given any proof of their sincerity to the Party here – it seems that it is merely a hobby to them. I trust you will be[2] on the look out and not be imposed upon. I am inclined to think that even if the Thesis is adopted by the delegates to the Sixth Congress –

1. International Lenin School.
2. There is a crossed-out word after 'be'.

when it is brought back here it will be 'killed by kindness'. I have no confidence in them to sincerely fight for it.

You may depend on
Yours for the Revolution
La Guma.

P.S. To busy to write further until next time.

RGASPI, 495/64/77/20–1.
Original in English.
Handwritten.
Stamped: 1) 002279 – 20.SEP.1928,
2) 2166 – 25.SEP.1928.
Inscriptions: 1) 28/IX/28
2) Received on 14/IX (in German)
3) 'Conf.'.

63
Amendment to 'Native Republic' Slogan Proposed by CPSA Delegation, Sixth Comintern Congress, 25 August 1928[1]

THE COLONIAL THESIS ON SOUTH AFRICA.

25.8.28

The CP of South Africa proposes an amendment of the 'Native Republic' slogan as at present drafted, for the following reasons.

1. There is a real danger that if a national or racial movement for a native republic were launched in a form liable to conflict with the other tasks of the Party, or other wise inappropriate, as we think the present form is, it might have as its outcome an eventual race war between black and white, irrespective of class divisions among the whites. This is admitted by advocates of the slogan.
2. Such a race war negates and clashes with the class solidarity of black and white workers which it is the Party's task to promote, and on the basis of which the Party has succeeded in winning the confidence of large native masses without in the slightest degree compromising with chauvinism.

1. Judging by the handwriting, this document was edited and corrected by S.P. Bunting.

3. The ruling class, while not at the moment courting such a race war, will welcome it when it comes, they are ready for it – so long as they can count on white and black labour disunity, on which their strength largely depends.
4. Such a race war would probably result in a defeat of the unarmed blacks, followed by their redoubled oppression and also that of the exploited whites, and with no compensatory gain. The CP for its part would succumb under the strain.
5. All this can be avoided by modifying the 'pure and simple' racial or national appeal of the slogan ('racial' is more correct than 'national' as no native nation exists today, there are only various rival tribes) in such a way as to reconcile it with the class appeal of labour solidarity.
6. The amendment proposed by the SA delegation achieves this result. It reads: 'AN INDEPENDENT WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC WITH EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL TOILERS IRRESPECTIVE OF COLOUR, AS A BASIS FOR A NATIVE GOVERNMENT'.
7. This embodies all the substantial content of the slogan as at present drafted, everything that it will work out at in practice, the absolute liberation of the natives and their rule as the race constituting the immense majority; while it avoids a wording admittedly liable to cause racial misunderstanding and excesses, and thereby keeps open the door for labour solidarity.
8. The native revolutionary movement gains decisively by such solidarity. In particular, the present government, which depends on working class votes and came into power as a protest against the shooting down of white workers in the 1922 strike, dare not directly and violently attack the labour movement. It does indeed attack the native labour movement with a law against 'creating hostility between white and black', whereby a native national or racial movement is attempted to be made illegal; but the labour movement as such is still protected (the reverse of the position in some other countries) and the native movement whether national or class profits by that protection as a most valuable shields.
9. The amendment involves no 'capitulation to white chauvinism', it is rather a means of check-mating and overcoming it among the exploited white workers. After all, the way to combat the chauvinism of white workers and peasants is not just to shake a fist at them, to threaten them with forcible conquest by the blacks, that method may be reserved for the bourgeoisie; rather it is to engage them with black workers and peasants in the common fight against the bourgeoisie, confronting them with the spectacle of black organisation, whether industrial, agrarian or national, on a large scale as an accomplished fact. This we have proved by long experience in this very campaign against chauvinism, as the only alternative to the possibility of a mere barbaric nation-wide pogrom which may, indeed, end in 'capitulation'.

We have had no answer to these arguments. They been insolently ignored in the Negro Sub-Commission.[2] Our reports on the South African conditions of which we have peculiar knowledge have been altered and our statements distorted, We have been charged with hypocrisy. The whole atmosphere created has been one, not of Communists debating, but of a law court, where our opponents 'look for points' and pose as judges of the kind that listen to no arguments saying they have heard them all before – as if the world were full of South Africas, whose peculiar circumstances were known everywhere and to every one!

The slogan apart from the amendment proposed has been expressed in three different forms.

1. 'An independent black South African Republic as a stage towards a workers' and peasants' republic with autonomy for minorities'.
2. 'An independent native South African Republic as a stage towards a workers' and peasants' republic with full safeguards and equal rights for all minorities.'
3. 'An independent native South African Republic as a stage towards a workers' and peasants' organisation with full safeguards and equal rights for all national minorities.'

The laatter version skips the preliminary stage which the other versions assumed could, and must, precede a worker's and peasant's government. As a matter of fact (there being no native bourgeoisie or bourgeois national movement in South Africa) it will be necessary completely to overthrow the white bourgeoisie and imperialists before either stage could materialise, so that there is no special point in calling for a preliminary stage. (The astounding reason, typical of the way our arguments have been met throughout, which was given for not accepting this latter version as proposed by a Sub-Committee was that to do so might be regarded by the South African Party[3] as a point gained by them!)

However, it is evident that the wording is elastic. All the more reason for accepting the amendment which does no real violence to the meaning.

We are anxious to lose no chance of arriving at a workable understanding in this matter and in the view of the very serious consequences at stake, we ask the Commission to give its most earnest consideration to our amendment, acceptance of which will also involve consequential alterations in the paragraphs[4] about South Africa to figure in the Colonial Thesis.

Failing acceptance of this amendment, we ask that before the slogan comes into force, our Party in South Africa be furnished by the ECCI with a full

2. Negro Commission.
3. Here: Communist Party of South Africa.
4. There is an illegible word before 'paragraphs'.

exposition and criticism on the whole matter (we have never had anything of the kind sofar) which our Party will discuss and report back upon. This is very necessary if further misconcetion is to be avoided.

Alternatively, or in addition, we suggest that a 'real, good English Communist' of the kind Comrade Kuusinen had in mind in his reply to the Colonial debate, proceed to South Africa as investigator and remain there for say a year, perhaps working at his trade there, the application of the slogan to await his report to the ECCI at the end of the year.

In any case, the Party Executive in South Africa should have a certain discretion to express, interpret and apply the slogan in accordance with the need of the actual local situation.

RGASPI, 495/154/351/61–4.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.

64
Letter from J. La Guma to D. Petrovsky, 30 August 1928

Johannesburg, S.A.
P.O.Box 4179
30/8/28.

Comrade Petrovsky

I understand from hearsay that one of the chief arguments used in support of their opposition to the thesis by the South African delegates, is that a step has already been accomplished towards the unity of the white and black workers by the 'amalgamation' of white and black laundry workers Unions.[1] A report to this effect I notice has already appeared in the 'British Worker', the organ of the Minority movement. I beg leave to state that such an amalgamation of the Unions was turned down by the white Union and that an agreement to support each other in the event of a strike was all that was arrived at.

But, I regret to say that at the very first opportunity of proving the sincerity of their aims the white laundry workers left the blacks in the lurch. This also happened in the clothing industry when black clothing workers came out in support of the whites and after the whites were comfortably back working the blacks were left to the mercy of the bosses.

1. La Guma's reference is to the merger of the white Cleaners' and Dyers' Union with the Native Laundry Workers' Union whose membership was exclusively African, a development noted by Roux in his remarks at the meeting of the Negro Commission on 31 July.

It seems that we can expect many more of these 'amalgamation' stunts as soon as the white workers realise that they have another means of exploiting the blacks – as a catspaw.

The remarks of the person Mrs. Rebecca Bunting in opposition to the slogan of a Black Soviet Republic was reported in the capitalist press here who were somewhat jubilant and gave great publicity to it.[2] The other result is that we have already received a letter and comments from non-Europeans outside the Party, that it seems the Communist Party South Africa is 'running with the hares and hunting with the hounds'. It is in my opinion a disgrace the way the Social Democrats are trying to sabotage the freedom of the blacks of this country.

La Guma

RGASPI, 495/64/77/24.
Handwritten.
Stamped: 1) 002341 – 1.OCT.1928
2) 2211 – 3.OCT.1928 (in German)
Inscriptions: 1) Native Laundry Workers Union
(on reverse side, in La Guma's handwriting)
2) received 29.9.28. (in German)

65
Minutes of Meeting, Central Executive Committee, CPSA, 20 September 1928 (Extracts)

MINUTES OF MEETING OF CENTRAL EXECUTIVE
HELD ON THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 20TH 1928 AT 8 P.M.
AT ASHERS BUILDINGS

Present. M. Wolton (Chair), La Guma, Sachs, Weinbren, Molobi, Thibedi, D. Wolton, Danchin, Kalk, Diamond, Phooko.

[. . .]

Thibedi's Allegation

Com. Thibedi reported that in looking through the drawers in the desk used by Comrade D. Wolton he had found a typewritten document which he thought had subsequently been despatched to the E.C.C.I. He had copied extracts from the document as follows.

2. The reference is to articles in the mainstream South African press that claimed that Rebecca Bunting had warned of dangers of 'a black South African republic'. See, for example, the *Cape Times*, 25 August 1928. In fact, she made no such statement on the floor of the Sixth Congress. See: *The International Press Correspondence*, VIII, 48 (11 August 1928), p. 839.

'Financially the Party depends on donations from S.P. Bunting or some of those who aim to visit Russia eventually and claim allegiance to the movement. A definite non-European section of the Party is persistently clamouring for recognition and accordingly the white members of the Party see their privileged monopoly being threatened.

Definitely hostile acts are being resorted to in order to stem the development of non-Europeans within the Party.

In Johannesburg the majority who function (about 10) are ably represented by S.P. Bunting and the majority of blacks who function (about 10) are inarticulate or have through a course of selection of years, merely support because they have no reason to suppose any other policy is available.'

Com. Thibedi further stated that after the receipt of the newspaper report of the speech of Rebecca Bunting Com. Wolton had said to him in conversation 'For the last 10 years some members had been trying to get Buntings out of the Party – this is now their chance.'

Com. Thibedi alleged that Coms. Wolton and La Guma were carrying on intrigue within the Party and that Com. La Guma had in his possession a document that was being circulated amongst members of the Party.

Com. Weinbren read Comrade Bennett's speech from Inprecorr in which was stated that the recent successes of C.P.S.A. were due to the resolution submitted by the E.C.C.I. Com. Weinbren thought that misleading communications were being sent to E.C.C.I. by individuals in the Party and he strongly protested against such communications being sent.

Com. Wolton stated that he was preparing a report on the Party organisation in South Africa and he had made considerable notes. The report had not been submitted to E.C.C.I. He described as a lie the statement of Com. Thibedi that he had used the implication that 'now is the time to get the Buntings out of the Party'. In reply to Com. Weinbren he said that statements were submitted in the Minority report on the Resolution. Com. La Guma stated that he had prepared a document for submission to members of the Party, such document was in support of the E.C.C.I. resolution on South African and that the document was held in readiness. He further stated that frequent communications were passing between he and members of the E.C.C.I.

Motion. Weinbren moved seconded Diamond 'That the C.E. hereby warns all those concerned that this squabbling and antagonism be stopped otherwise the suspension of such members will be enforced'.

Sachs moved an amendment seconded Kalk 'That the C.E. appeals to all comrades to cease personal squabbles which are destroying Party work, and to carry on political discussion in a disciplined and comradely fashion.

Amendment – 2 votes

Motion – 4 votes Motion declared carried.

It was agreed that Com. Wolton's statement that the document had not been submitted to the E.C.C.I. without reference to the Party.

It was therefore accepted that the Com. Thibedi's accusation fell to the ground. [. . .]

RGASPI, 495/64/75/39–40. For the full text of the document see: RGASPI, 495/64/75/1–41.
Typed. Copy. Corrections by hand.

66
Resolution of Political Secretariat, ECCI, 19 October 1928 (Extract)[1]

RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICAN QUESTION. 19.X.1928.

[. . .] While developing and strengthening the fight against all the customs, laws and regulations which discriminate against the native and coloured population in favour of the white population, the Communist Party of South Africa must combine the fight against all anti-native laws with the general political slogan in the fight against British domination, the slogan of AN INDEPENDENT NATIVE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC AS A STAGE TOWARDS A WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' REPUBLIC WITH FULL RIGHTS FOR ALL RACES BLACK, COLOURED AND WHITE. [. . .]

RGASPI, 495/20/653/43. For the full text of the document see: RGASPI, 495/20/653/39–49.
Typed.
Stamped: 1) Valid. (in German)
2) Pol. S-t 9/14–19.X.-28 (in English)
3) Pol. Secr.. 19.X.28. (in Russian)

1. This brief extract from the 'Resolution on South African Question' is included as it contains the final version of the slogan of an independent native South African republic as adopted authoritatively by the ECCI at the conclusion of discussions during and after the 6th Congress of the Comintern.

67
Report of V. Danchin and W. Kalk to Anglo-American Secretariat, ECCI, [5 December 1928] (Extract)[1]

REPORT ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Internally, the Party is faced with the problem of its attitude to the policy decided upon by the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International in regard to the slogan of a 'Black republic'.[x]

[. . .]

This slogan, has produced considerable discussion in the Party since it was put forward a year ago. The consensus of opinion, including that of the majority of the native comrades, was definitely against its adoption. Although accepted by the Capetown branch, it was rejected by the Johannesburg branch. At annual conference of the Party in January it was decided to refer the matter back to the Central Executive (consisting of 8 whites and 5 Natives) which, in turn, was divided on the matter, the majority being against it and the minority consisting of three, being in its favour. The principal grounds for opposing the slogan are as follows. It is generally recognised in South Africa, both by the black and white sections of the population, that the position of the white race there is radically different from that of any other 'colony', in so far as it is made up of a nation of 1¾ million people, comprising all classes, who regard the country as their permanent home. Further, the white working class, who number close on 200,000 and whose numbers are growing, despite its present attitude of 'leaving matters to the Pact Government', had produced an important labour movement, politically and industrially, which is capable of, and practised in, militant action against the capitalist class. A good deal of progress in their ranks has been made by the Communist Party in recent years in its propaganda that the interests of the white and black workers are identical, and some notable practical achievements have resulted. On the other hand, our native propagandists have popularised this idea amongst the black workers, who, as a consequence, have, on several occasions, shown their readiness to fight side by side with the whites. In sharp contradictions to these

x The following passage gives the arguments against the slogan adopted by the VI World Congress of the Comintern. The Resolution of the ECCI on the South African Question completely rejects these arguments: but they are instructive for us as showing the ideas which we have to liquidate. Our last letter to South Africa stressed the line of the Comintern on this question. NEAL.

1. This document is undated but minutes of the meeting of the Anglo-American Secretariat of 5 December 1928 indicate that a report on South Africa was delivered on that date by 'Johns' and 'Brown'. See: RGASPI, 495/72/43/22–3.

achievements stands out the fact that the previous agitation of native nationalists for a 'Black Africa' have met with complete failure. Now, in the words of one of our most advanced Native organisers, 'we are asked to preach black racialism although we have hitherto condemned every kind of racialism – black or white'. Another point is that as far as British imperialism, as such, is concerned, there is the curious position that, owing to the Native policy pursued by Britain while administering the Cape, England is regarded as a 'friend' by large masses of the natives. Furthermore, in the present circumstances, it is extremely probable that if the Party propagates the slogan it will be brought 'within the law' of 'setting black against white', and its legal existence made impossible. The Party is too weak as yet to go 'underground' and fight illegally, and if it is outlawed it would be forced into extinction. All these difficulties can, however, be avoided by pursuing the Party's present day policy of concentrating on the building up of mass organisation of native workers, and overcoming the prejudices of the white workers. When the achievements are reached the South African proletariat will form a force to be reckoned with politically and an invincible power industrially. As against these arguments the protagonists of the slogan (who number three on the Central Executive, two of these being whites) contend that, owing to the white working class forming an 'aristocracy of labour', unity between black and white labour is impossible, and that our policy on these lines should be abandoned in favour of an 'all-black' policy.

The matter came to a head when our delegates left for the Sixth World Congress of Communist International, when the Central Executive Committee decided (by the above-mentioned majority) to oppose the thesis of which the slogan forms a part and to submit a counter-thesis to the Congress for its consideration. A statement of the minority views was however, also to be put before the Congress. When the news reached South Africa that the Congress had adopted the original thesis and slogan, with some slight modifications, the general feeling in the Party was to withhold further criticism and discussion until the delegates returned and reported fully, but the opposition to the slogan was undiminished. The delegates were due in South Africa about the middle of November, since when, of course, we are without news as to further development of the matter.

Another urgent need of the Party at the moment is an adequate number of trained and capable native propagandists and organisers for work among the native masses in town and country. More branches could be opened, and existing branch activities extended, if the suitable man power could be obtained. The Party conducts an evening school at its hall in Johannesburg, where about eighty adult pupils, mainly drawn from the industrial workers in the town, receive training in the English language, arithmetic, Communism, etc. Good result have been achieved, ex-students of the school now being in charge of the Party branches at Potchefstroom and Vereeniging, but much more should be done in this direction. The invitation received some time ago

to send ten native comrades to study at the Moscow Oriental University[2] was therefore welcomed by the Party as an important step towards creating a great expanse in its activities. Owing to passport and other difficulties, however, it has, up to the present, been found impossible to send the students overseas. The attempt has, however, not been abandoned, and it is hoped that in the very near future the first contingent will go forward.

Danchin and Kalk

RGASPI, 495/64/74/2–3. For the full text of the document see: RGASPI, 495/64/74/1–3.[3]
Original in English.
Typed.

68
Letter from Anglo-American Secretariat, ECCI, to Central Executive Committee, CPSA, 14 December 1928

The CEC of the
C.P. South Africa.

December 14, 1928.

Dear Comrades,

The two comrades for the Lenin School[1] duly arrived a few weeks ago. Everything has been fixed up for them and they are quite comfortably installed in the School. We have to acknowledge receipt of your CEC minutes which they brought. On looking through the minutes, a number of questions arise which we would like to raise with you.

First of all, we notice from the minutes that there is a certain amount of unsettledness with regard to the work of Comrade Laguma. We are particularly interested in the overtures made to Comrade Laguma by the ICU, especially in view of the definite anti-Communist policy of Kadalie and the ICU. We should like to have fuller information on the situation and some

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Doc. 67
2. KUTV.
3. KUTV.A slightly different version of the same text is found at RGASPI, 495/43/48–51.

Doc. 68
1. Victor Danchin and Willie Kalk.

indication the line of the Party is pursuing with regard to the ICU. It would appear from the minutes that the CEC is not completely united on the question of bringing about a unified native trade union movement. This was revealed in the differences on the question of unity of the Native Trade Union Federation with the ICU. The resolution of the 6th Congress makes quite clear that one of the objects of the Party is to strive for a united trade union of native workers. The decision of your CEC 'to maintain friendly relations' is not a correct interpretation of the spirit of the Congress resolution. It may be you have since had the resolution before you and are clear and united on the policy that should be pursued. If so, we shall be glad to hear what is your decisions on this question.

We are also concerned with the apparent lack of harmony among the CEC members as revealed in the minutes. We consider that, with the immense tasks before the Communist Party of South Africa, where the Party is so small, it can ill afford to spend sessions of the Executive Committee in personal recriminations. By this we do not wish to minimise the importance of self-criticism; we must frankly and boldly analyse and criticise our weaknesses and shortcomings, and do everything possible to overcome them.

We notice that the Secretary was preparing a report on Party organisation. We should be glad to have this as early as possible, as it is apparent from the CEC proceedings that there is need for a certain reorganisation which will eliminate many small questions coming before the CEC and leave their hands free to concentrate on the political tasks before the Party.

We have taken the opportunity of the arrival of the Lenin[2] students to have a report from them on the general situation in your country and in the Party. On the basis of their report it appeared to us that it was desirable that your conference should be postponed to allow the membership to discuss the South African Resolution adopted by the World Congress. From the attitude taken up by many of your members towards the slogan of a Native Republic, there is a need for considerable ideological clarity on this question. A purely mechanical acceptance of the slogan, or acceptance with reservations would not be beneficial for the Party, but indeed harmful. We fully understand the implications of this slogan and the difficulties which the Party will have to overcome in advocating it, but we think the arguments in our resolution are so convincing, that if the members are given an opportunity to discuss this resolution, they will fall into line and be united with the C.I.

In conclusion, we understand you are having some difficulties in sending the quota of native comrades for the Lenin School. We have gone into the question of rendering assistance, but we consider the main part of the problem is at your end. If you can arrange for the students to reach Europe, we will be in a position to assist them. We have to remind you that the last provision made

2. Obviously, students who came to the International Lenin School, i.e. Danchin and Kalk.

was for the native students only, and must on no account be utilised for any other purpose.

Yours fraternally,
For the Anglo-American Secretariat.

RGASPI, 495/64/77/12–13.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: 3125 – 18.XII.1928

69
Letter from T.W. Thibedi,[1] 7 January 1929

COPY OF LETTER RECEIVED FROM T.W. THIBEDI, GENERAL SECRETARY, S. AFRICAN FEDERATION OF NATIVE TRADE UNIONS; DATED JOHANNESBURG, 7TH JANUARY 1929.

Our C.P.S.A. conference has ended last week. The majority are still not satisfied with the new slogan, the South African delegates to the 6th World Congress of the C.I. are trying to convince the majority for that slogan, but all in vain. The new Slogan has and still is doing the Revolutionary Movement a lot of harm. The C.I. should quickly reconsider their decision on the matter. The R.I.L.U. can do us gd[2] by considering the Black Republic more especially from a revolutionary Trade Union point of view. Tell Comrades Losovsky, Bucharin, Stalin and the C.I. Secretariat for dealing with the Negro problems, also the 'Agitprop'. The Federation of Non-European Trades Unions, representing about 2,808 black workers, consider the Black Republic slogan a mistake, and that a 'Workers and Peasants Republic' would really rally the black and white workers in this country. Since this new slogan many workers seem not interested, white as well as black.

Comrade J.A. La-Guma, who was elected several times to official positions in the Party, and whom we all trusted, has left for Cape Town some months ago, he never informed the Trade Unions nor the Party of his departure, he left the Federation of Non-European Trade Unions without a word of good-bye. He is no longer active in the Trade Unions or the C.P. he has opened a business, a Tea-Room or something like that, in Cape Town. I have been elected General Secretary of the Federation; during La-Guma's time the Trade

1. There is no addressee on the copy of this document found in the archives.
2. [good?] unclear word in the original.

Unions were declining, now, since he has left, much life is shown by all. The following is our membership: Laundry Workers 800, Furniture Workers 600, Clothing Workers 400, Motor Drivers 200, Bakers 300, Transport 200, Food & Drink 100, Meat & Cold Storage 30, Dairy 60, Steel Workers Union, a new Union, 118. I may say that I intend to set up Committees in the Mines, but at present I am worried by the financial question. Kadalie, Ballinger, are always trying to smash or to capture our Trade Unions, but so far have failed. Comrade, I am busy night and day and my sole desire is to get all these Trade Unions 100% revolutionary. I wish to hear much about the R.I.L.U. and the Agitprop. Re-students I have no hope of getting a Pass-port from this Government. ??Try.

The slogan should be considered immediately. Those who pretend to be for same are only afraid that the whole of the C.P.S.A. might be off from the C.I. All the Trade Unions demand 'Workers & Peasants Republic for Africa', not a white or black Republic. Show the letter to Losovsky, Bucharin, Stalin and those of the Agitprop. Tell them and Willie[3] to write to me.

Yours for a speedy revolution,
(signed) T.W. Thibedi (Native)

RGASPI, 495/64/80/59–60.[4]
Original in English.
Typed. Corrections by hand.

70
Letter from A. Nzula to R.P. Arnot, ECCI, 19 March 1929

Johannesburg
19th March 1929.

Mr. R. Page Arnot,
Room 59, E.C.C.I.,
Moscow.

Dear Comrade,

In reply to your letter of the 26 January 1929 re appointment of a Negro Comrade in South Africa to assist the Negro Bureau in the work ~~so far as~~ in

3. 'Willie' could be Willie Kalk who was doing a course at the Lenin School in Moscow at that time.
4. A slightly different version of the same text is found at: RGASPI, 495/64/80/61–2.

South Africa, the Congo etc. I am instructed by my Executive to inform you that Comrade A. Nzula, assistant-general Secty[1] of the Communist Party in S.A. ~~and~~ actg.[2] general secretary.

I shall write soon and send in my first installment of articles.

Yours Fraternally,
A. Nzula
~~~~~~
Actg. General Secty.

RGASPI, 495/64/85/37.
Original in English.
Typed on the letterhead of the CPSA.
Stamped: CONTROL (in Russian)
Inscriptions: 1) Negro Bureau file
No answer (in English)
2) Received when?
By me on 23rd April.
Did it come through ordinary post?
R.P.A. (in English)
3) AngloSax. (in Russian)

Report of B. Idelson to ECCI, August 1929 (Extract)[1]

COMRADE L'S REPORT ON SOUTH AFRICA AUGUST 1929

[....]

Although hatred of the white oppressor is common to all the sections of the Negro population, there is as yet no class carrying on a consistent struggle against the oppressor. This hatred is extended to all the classes of the white population: the white proletariat has not yet shown its sympathy to the black population in any way, and the CP is only beginning to win its

Doc. 70
1. Secretary.
2. Acting.

Doc. 71
1. The archives contain both the original Russian manuscript of this report and a typed copy (RGASPI, 495/19/189/2–17; RGASPI, 495/64/82/1–31). One typed copy of the Russian original was sent directly to Stalin on 31 August 1929 (RGASPI, 495/64/82/1–31). This copy has an inscription in Russian: 'To com. Stalin. Confidential, 31.VIII.29'.
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sympathy. The privileged upper stratum exists in the form of the Negro intelligentsia, very weak numerically and, on the whole, backward in its political development. It was at first the leader of the struggle against whites, but was very soon converted into a tame opposition. There are of course, even now native intellectuals, for instance, teachers, in direct touch with the mood of the masses, and themselves true to the traditions of hatred to the whites. But all of them are, in some form or other, engaged in government service, they have had an English education in English schools and, apart from fear, they are all the time under the influence of the corrupting policy of British imperialism, the government apparatus and the church. Their vacillations are due to the fact that they are not interpreters of the will of an already firmly established class (bourgeois, working class or peasant). Because the Negro proletariat is developing and growing more rapidly than the bourgeois (which practically does not yet exist), it will become the class which will lead the national-liberation struggle and will bring many intellectuals to its side. But hitherto this absence of a leading class in the struggle has affected the character of the national organisation. In this situation, the bourgeoisie thinks it will be able to manage just with a thin layer of a native bureaucracy. Into its subjugation-apparatus, it includes chiefs of tribes, bestowing on them illusory administrative functions, – in the Transkai[2] territory a national council (Buncha)[3] has been established which has no attributes of power whatever, black priests are given every possible encouragement and a staff of paid Negro politicians is being gradually selected. The Chamber of Mines has even a special newspaper in the vernacular, 'Umtatele Va Bantu' (The People's Lawyer)[4] which is run on lines in keeping with the interests of the mining industry and British imperialism. Of the national organisations, the African National Congress (ANC) reflects the above-mentioned influences more clearly than any favourable complexion by fine words about national liberation. Considering that at the conventions of the African National Congress, chiefs (i.e. of tribes), white bishops imperialistically minded Britishers set the tune, one can well imagine what kind of 'progressive' role the ANC can play now. Its 'left' section and leaders (of the Gumede type) are entirely in the leading strings of these people, and are of some use only when oppositional language is required against the government and the Herzog Party. This explains the insignificance if the influencee and popularity of the African National Congress.

There is practically the same story in regard to the national 'labour' organisations. The organisation established by Kadali, the ICW (Union of industrial and commercial workers) was the first attempt to organise the

2. Transkei.
3. Bunga.
4. The correct transliteration and translation: 'Umteteli wa Bantu' ('People's Voice').

black proletariat. But even this organisation did not spring up as a labour organisation but rather as a general-nationalist organisation, carrying on agitation in a general-nationalist spirit. This explains the extraordinary influx of members in the ICW. That Kadali developed very rapidly into an adventurer and that nearly all the leaders of the 'union' followed suit, is of course due to the fact that the Negro section of the working class is not yet a force capable of producing from its midst (or attracting from the midst of other social groups, for instance, the intellectuals), steadfast leaders with a definite ideology.

RGASPI, 495/64/82/73–5. For the full text of the document see: RGASPI, 495/64/82/44–75.
Original in English (Comintern translation of the Russian original text).
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: 4694 – 4.IX.1929

72
Note by B.I. Idelson, 10 August 1929

10 August 1929

Dear Com. . . .[1]

Despite the fact that the report[2] came out long, it could only[3] general.

Please inform me if comrades who deal with these issues have questions.

I have not written in the report what my activities were because I pointed to the shortcomings in work.[4] My task was to improve these shortcomings, as well as to carry out the main instruction, i.e. to check the implementation of the resolution of the C.I. The latter is now being implemented, of course, still at an early stage

.

Louis.

1. The name of the addressee is cut out in the original.
2. This document is an accompanying notice to the original Russian manuscript of Idelson's report (see document 71 for an extract from the English translation of this report).
3. [be?] Illegible word after 'only' in the original.
4. Most probably, Idelson means the work of the CPSA.

I had to write the second part of the report in a hurry and in an inconvenient situation. I am afraid that it will not be possible to read it without typing it beforehand. (There are no secrets there, except for the part about the Party).

RGASPI, 495/19/189/1.
Original in Russian.
Handwritten.
Stamped: No. 2415 10.AUG.1929

73
Circular of League of African Rights, 1 September 1929

LEAGUE OF AFRICAN RIGHTS.

Address:-
4la, Fox Street (Box 4179),
Johannesburg.
1st September, 1929.

President:	**Chairman**:	**Treasurers**:
J.T. Gumede.	S.P. Bunting.	C. Baker.
Vice-President:	**Vice-Chairman**:	S.P. Bunting.
A. Modiagotla.	N.B. Tantsi.	
Secretaries:	**Committee**:	
A. Nzula.	M. Kotane.	B. Molobi.
E.R. Roux.	S.M. Kotu.	T.W. Thibedi.

Dear Sir,

We desire to call your attention to the objects of the above league, as set forth in the enclosed copy of its constitution. As you will see, it has been formed with the definite object of launching a 'Petition of Rights', to which it is hoped to obtain a million signatures, embodying some of the most elementary demands of the Native, Coloured and Indian people of the Union, to be

supported by meetings, processions and demonstrations, all culminating on Dingaan's Day[1] next.

The League's appeal is to the entire non-European population, whether organised or not, but it is desired to enlist the support of all non-European associations, etc., whose organisational machinery can be of great assistance, especially in obtaining signatures for the petition and in calling public meetings.

We may add that the League is in no way designed to supplant or interfere with any existing bodies; it only invites their co-operation in this particular campaign, which, we may add, is a perfectly constitutional one. It is felt that the demands are common to practically all the bodies concerned and are such as to command absolutely unanimous support from all non-European and even from the more liberal European elements. The promoters of the League have no other object in view than to see that its task is successfully carried out on a pan-South African scale, if possible before General Hertzog's Native Bills are put through, for it is contemplated that such a demonstration of solidarity on the part of the subject races cannot but give the Government pause in its reactionary proposals.[2]

In the hope that you will assist in the work, we enclose ..... forms of petition (Nos. ..... to .....), and ask you, and with you any organisation with which you may be connected, to take up actively in the interest of yourself and your countrymen the task of getting signatures and arranging meetings of support. The signature of every adult African (including Coloured and Indian) should be solicited (and also of any European sympathiser), whether educated or illiterate, voter or non-voter, men and women, in town and in country. Signatures can be written on both sides of the sheet. In the case of those who cannot write, the name and address should be written out for them and they should affix their mark ('X') immediately after the name.

As soon as five sheets have been filled up they should be returned to us, and so on, five at a time. The matter is urgent, especially in view of the Nationalist Party demand for immediate anti-native legislation and of General Smuts' proposal to tighten up the Native Administration Act. The petition must therefore be proceeded with AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE. In order to produce the desired effect we look not to the mere presentation of the

1. Dingaan (Dingane) Day – the day of the Battle of the Blood River (16 December 1838) when advancing Boer commandos defeated Zulu warriors under their ruler Dingaan (Dingane, 1795–1840), slaughtering thousands. The day became a symbol of victory for the Boers, commemorated as the 'Covenant Day'. The CPSA and later the ANC turned it into the day of protests and a symbol of struggle, commemorating it as the 'Heroes' Day'. After 1994 it became a public holiday, the 'Day of Reconciliation'.
2. There is a single line in pencil in the left margin opposite this paragraph.

petition, but to the enormous number of signatures which it is hoped to obtain.

We need hardly say that there is NO OBLIGATION WHATEVER ON ANYONE TO JOIN THE LEAGUE or pay any subscription or donation to it or to buy its badge. Signing the petition is one thing and joining the League another. It is, however, desired that the League shall be a real and permanent body, and, as you will see, the constitution provides for membership, local branches, etc., as well as for affiliation of other bodies.

The League will have important work before it for years to come and will need all the strength derived from a rank and file membership, for, as you will see, it is a democratically controlled body, especially with regard to its finances. You will therefore, we hope, invite anyone who has signed the petition to become a member of the League also. The subscription, 1/- per year, is put designedly low in the hope of attracting thousands to join. Every individual member on paying his first shilling becomes entitled to the League's badge, and we send herewith ..... badges accordingly, which you will please issue only against payment of the shilling in cash.

The subscriptions (i.e. proceeds of sale of badges) will constitute the only funds of the League, and will be used solely for furthering its objects and in particular for sending out organisers to canvass for signatures for the petition and to hold meetings. The more members the larger the funds available for this work.

If a branch of the League is formed in your locality, half the amount of the subscription will be retained by the branch for these purposes, only the other half being sent to headquarters. If no branch is formed the whole amount should be remitted to headquarters. We ask you to make a point of seeing that remittances to headquarters are made promptly by Postal Order (payable to S.P. Bunting) as soon as £1 is due to headquarters (after deducting necessary postage, cost of Postal Order and other petty disbursements).

Please write the letter M in the margin of the petition in front of the name of every signatory who becomes a member of the League. If a branch is formed the branch secretary should copy out from the petition the names and addresses of these members. These will make up the branch membership roll.

The holding of mass meetings, demonstrations, etc., must necessarily be left to local effort by yourself and your friends, but you will appreciate the tremendous value of the simultaneous and unanimous demonstrations on Dingaan's Day in particular, to which all other meetings held should lead up as a climax; and we ask you to make all necessary arrangements accordingly in your district. Of course it will be at meetings that signatures will be most quickly obtained.

Please advise us as soon as you require a further supply of petition forms and badges.

In the hope that you will see in this arduous but important work the very best service that can be rendered at the present time to the subject people of Africa.[3]

We remain,
Yours faithfully.
A. NZULA.
E.R. ROUX.
Joint Secretaries.

RGASPI, 495/64/85/12.
Original in English.
Printed.
Stamped: 3900 – 27.NOV.1929

74
Report of D.G. Wolton to ECCI, 20 September 1929

REPORT ON SOUTH AFRICA

September 20th, 1929

Shortly after the conclusion of the 6th World Congress of the C.I. the 7th Annual Conference of the C.P.S.A. was held in Johannesburg.

At this conference the new Party line, as approved by the C.I., was laid before the delegates after a wide, though incomplete, preparatory discussion by all Party organs.

After the opening of the Conference, the Credentials Committee reported the presence of 18 native delegates and 10 white delegates, representing an aggregate party membership of 3,000.

During the discussion on the C.I. resolution, which lasted for a whole day, practically all the delegates participated. The whites for the most part opposed the resolution, partly through unclear understanding and the rest through a social-democratic outlook. The native delegates, whilst not following all the intellectual hair-splitting of some of the white delegates, supported the resolution on race grounds. Ultimately the resolution was put, and only four votes were cast against. Thus it was carried by a big majority.

3. There is a single line in pen in the left and right margins opposite this sentence in the original.

Since the Conference it can be said that some of those against the resolution have come over and now support the Party line.

The 7th Annual Conference of the C.P.S.A. was a big advance on the previous conferences, chiefly because of the developing participation of natives and because it revealed the crystallising of the new Party leadership in the form of a number of capable leading native elements.

The level of discussion was theoretically low, and many delegates fresh from the back veld[1] participated in discussions which, though halting and unclear, were alive with practical everyday experience of the struggle. A number of the native delegates were women and the conference revealed the fact that the women were playing their part in the forefront of the struggle and showed equal heroism and determination and courage in the daily fights. Many of the delegates had come great distances in order to be present at the Conference and their arrival was made the occasion of a big demonstration of over a thousand workers in procession.

The working class of Johannesburg followed the proceedings with considerable interest and attention.

The most important factor that emerged from the Conference was that the natives as such were on the move and commencing to exercise their proportionate functions in the life of the Party.

A native assistant general secretary was appointed, who, shortly after the conference was called upon to largely take control of the Party machine in Johannesburg,[2] and this step has been responsible for the crystallising of a fairly strong section of native workers in the Party operating with a conscious responsibility.

With the close of the Party Conference, the Parliamentary election campaign became imminent, and it was decided to contest two seats in Cape Province constituencies (where native voters exist) and Comrade Bunting for Tembuland and Comrade Wolton for Cape Flats were selected by the Party. These two campaigns were conducted for approximately three months, during which time important gains were made by the Party. (A copy of short report made by Comrade Wolton to the Executive Bureau of the C.P.S.A. is herewith enclosed).

Comrade Bunting stood in a three-cornered contest against an S.A.P. and Independent candidate and secured 283 votes against 1100 of the S.A.P. winning candidate, and thereby secured the return of his deposit, which is lost if less than one-fifth of the winning vote is secured. Comrade Wolton secured 93 votes in a four-cornered contest against the winning SAP Nationalist and Independent. This was less than one-fifth of the 1700 votes of the S.A.P. candidate and accordingly the deposit was forfeited.

1. The author means rural areas.
2. A. Nzula.

The campaign of Comrade Bunting was conducted in the virgin soil of the Transkeian territories, where the Communist Party was entirely unknown and where no other form of organisation of the people exists.

The mass of the native peasants exist as a reservoir of labour for the gold and coal industries, and these peasants ARE THUS in turn drawn into industry for period of twelve months or less.

The early stages of Comrade Bunting's campaign saw tremendous enthusiasm generated in favour of the Communist Party, and the persecution instituted against the candidate only served to intensify this enthusiasm. Masses of peasants came to join the Communist Party who had never been organised before. It was necessary to develop leading elements from amongst them who could be left to hold together the organisation nucleus round which the mass groups rallied.

This created a very serious problem for the Party in that local Party groups had to be left in control of elements completely inexperienced in elementary understanding of Party work. In some cases endeavours were made to supply experienced comrades from other areas in order to hold together the newly created groups, and where this could be done, success was the result, but in the other cases the Party influence was lost after the propagandists had left the areas concerned.

This was a problem found in the more backward areas and the whole constituency of Tembuland was made up in this way. After the election one of the Party propagandists was left in the territory to tour the areas and endeavour to keep the local Party groups together. It was considered that the votes received by Comrade Bunting constituted a fairly solid backing for the Party, and the enthusiastic following of non-voters revealed the fact that the Party had made serious inroads into this reservoir of Chamber of Mines labour.

In the Cape Flats Comrade Wolton secured large meetings of workers and enthusiastic support from native workers in particular. A separate report of this candidate, submitted to the Executive Bureau of the C.P.S.A. is attached herewith and gives further details of this campaign.

The Party during the last twelve months has maintained its influence in the native trade union movement, endeavouring to consolidate the gains made since the formation of the independent unions. Practically no new ground has been covered, largely due to the fact that little success has accrued from the efforts made to develop a group of native functionaries from the Unions. In order to keep the individual unions together Party members have had to act in a supervisory capacity and the strength of Party members experienced in organisational work is very limited. Despite this fact, however, the native trade union movement in South Africa has been kept under Party leadership, the reformist groups of the various sections of the I.C.U. have steadily declined in strength and influence. Some definite progress has been observed since the leading Party position has been occupied by a native and it can be expected that this factor will do much to

develop the initiative and independence of native Party members and trade unionists.

An attempt has recently been made to extend the influence of the unions to the farms, and the nucleus of an agricultural workers' union has been set up – Party members in farming areas forming this nucleus and attempting to rally the workers round simple elementary demands. In addition, contact has been established with a peasant organisation in Basutoland – 'Lekhotla la Bafo' – and Party members have been responsible for launching a proposal and resolution summoning a conference to convene a 'League of Protectorates', (i.e. Basutoland, Bechuanaland, Swaziland). Attempts are now being made to link up the Transkeian territories and plans are being made for the convening of an all S.A. Conference of non-European organisations upon the initiative of the S.A. Federation of non-European trade unions.

Due to the impossibility of European comrades entering mine compounds and the weakness as yet of native functionaries, the Party has completely failed to get a footing in the basic industry of S.A. (gold mining), but this question is in the forefront of Party tasks and will be undertaken immediately native comrades are available.

The decline of the I.C.U. is almost complete and despite the government's backing given to the IInd International[3] man, Ballinger, he is retreating all along the line and rapidly becoming an unimportant figure in S.A. working class life.

For some years past, European members of the Party have been occupying important positions in the white trade unions and some good work has been done in efforts to bridge the gulf between white and black trade unions, but this was work of a very indefinite character until the new Party line was adopted. It is in this section of Party work that the right wing danger reveals itself most clearly, when under spurious slogans of unity of black and white workers, the revolutionary workers tend to lose their independence and become an appendage of the reformist machine.

The Present Position of the Party

With the adoption of the new Party line under the slogan of an 'Independent S.A. Native Republic, with equal rights for all national minorities as a stage towards a Workers & Peasants Republic', important right wing tendencies and deviations have become manifest, but conversely a powerful impulse has been released towards the creation of a proletarian Party leadership. This predominantly native leadership is imperative in order to lead the native masses along the road of revolutionary struggle. The masses had been hovering round the Party, but the traditional distrust of the white man and the

3. Second International.

absence of the direct race appeal to the natives prevented any support of anything more than isolated cases.

Since the adoption of the new Party line, it can be said that the masses are stirring and are attracted in masses to the Party.

The immediate tasks of the Party are to fight this right danger, and to train and equip the new leadership which is coming forward.

This latter is a task of considerable magnitude in view of the almost complete inexperience of natives of elementary organisational work and yet in individual cases astoundingly rapid progress had been made.

There is within the Party now a cadre of capable experienced native comrades who are rapidly extending Party training over a wider area, and conducting successful recruiting. Both amongst the masses and amongst the students of the educational institutions.

It is found that white members joining the Party are almost entirely ignorant of the race issue which is of such great importance in South Africa. On the other hand the Party's task amongst natives joining is to teach the class issue which is very little understood by them. A somewhat common distortion of the race outlook in South Africa is the understanding of having nothing to do with the Party because it contains some white men. It is sometimes said that natives would join the Party if it were an entirely black party as they cannot trust a single white man, no matter what his professions or actions may be.

This obviously is the outlook of only a small section and not that of the masses.

With the raising of the national revolutionary issue in South Africa the face of the Party is definitely turned towards the masses and it becomes for the first time a clearly independent revolutionary party.

It can be said that important gains have been made since the adoption of the new Party line. Wide masses of workers and peasants have for the first time heard the Party message and considerable recruiting has been achieved. To transform this mass adherence into concrete organisational achievements is the immediate task of the Party.

It can be reasonably expected that only a section of these masses will be definitely retained in the Party machine, due to the enormous obstacles of finance, experienced functionaries and the like, and also due to the rapidly increasing persecution now being met by the Party.

There are a number of native comrades who are capable of taking the Oriental University[4] course, and it is of paramount importance that the[5] should be brought over for this purpose. The difficulty of obtaining passports in South Africa has prevented this being done from that end. This question is in the forefront of the requests of the Party in South Africa in asking that efforts be

4. KUTV.
5. they.

made at this end to secure that one or more native comrades shall be able to leave.

The right wing danger in the Party is not a serious danger affecting Party propaganda, but is more of an academic character, conducted by intellectual European elements and it maintains itself in the form of a small group which does not actually participate in the main work of the Party, and is tolerated by the rank and file chiefly because of organisational assistance it can render during the present stage towards a stronger native cadre in the Party.

The difficulties of language constitutes another great obstacle for the Party, and literature needs to be printed in four languages, English, Sesutu (the Basutoland tribes), Zulu and Xosa (the tribes of the Transkeian territories).

The Party is woefully short of elementary pamphlets. It has only two pamphlets done in a native language. This is largely a question of resources to cover the necessary printing costs. Although considerable progress has been achieved since the four languages have been utilised in the Party paper, 'the S.A. Worker', it is very important that arrangements be made for the issuing of regular pamphlets in the different languages.

The present membership of the Party is approximately the same, namely 3,000, but if based on financial standing the number would barely reach 300. It has been found extremely difficult to secure the regular payment of dues, apart from cases of misappropriation, natives have objected to paying dues to 'white officials at Head office'.

The poverty of members is no argument, witness the phenomenal contributions by natives to I.C.U. funds. Under the circumstances it is exceedingly difficult to gauge the actual Party membership.

xxx xxx xxx

In conclusion, many of these weaknesses have received close attention and the measures introduced through the developing new leadership will correct them.

Enormous revolutionary struggles lies ahead of the South African masses in the immediate future, and the growing consciousness arising out of the sharpening contradictions will make very favourable opportunities for the Party in South Africa to place itself at the head of the revolutionary struggles of the masses.

(sgn) D.G. Wolton[6]

RGASPI, 495/64/81/125–9.
Original in English.
Typed.
Stamped: 1) CONTROL (in Russian)
2) Unclear (in Russian)

6. Despite the word 'sgn' there is no original signature in the text.

75
Report of B. Idelson to ECCI, 25 September 1929 (Extract)

Confidential.

REPORT OF COMRADE X (ECCI REPRESENTATIVE IN SOUTH AFRICA).

In accordance with the development of the labour movement since the imperialist war, our Party has gone through ~~a number of~~ certain stages of development. The first stage was that of its birth. That was in the period when the position of the white workers as a result of the war and the post-war crisis (which made itself felt also in South Africa) was greatly shattered. The labour aristocracy for the first time declared strikes against wage cuts (the railway workers in 1914, the miners in 1922), the white workers intensively began to organise. Hence the wave of passing radicalism and opposition tendencies in the organisations of the white workers – the Labour Party and the unions. At the extreme left were the founders of the future Communist Party. Neither their radicalism nor their anti-war stand as yet indicated their firmness. Not only workers who settled in the country were then anti-imperialists, but also that section of the bourgeoisie which considered South Africa its home and was not anxious to fight in the interests of Great Britain.

Thus the Communist Party originated as a Party of the white workers. When the situation improved and some categories of white workers again received higher wages (although not a single group of these workers had as yet reached its previous level of earnings), the tiny Communist Party began to melt away at a very rapid rate. A small handful of white comrades remained in the organisation. What contributed to this desertion was also the fact that for the first time the white worker began to feel the competition of the Negro and the fear of losing his position. For this reason, nothing helped so much in the cleansing of our Party as its position in relation to the Negroes, although it made a good many mistakes on this question. The chance elements that still remained in the Communist Party (in that period) withdrew from it as they could not agree with the Communists on the national question.

Then the second stage of development of the Communist Party began. That stage is characterised by the fact that the Communist Party devotes more attention to the Negroes than to the whites. The process of radicalisation of the white workers (of which I spoke above) became comparatively slow, the change of ideas in the ranks of the white workers, even the most dissatisfied with their fate, slowed down. One could not expect an influx to the Party from those quarters at the moment although many white workers undoubtedly realise that they have interests in ~~coming~~ common with the Negro labour movement and will eventually come to the Communist Party. On the other

hand, the Negro workers, although their class-consciousness still lags behind, are on the whole already gravitating not only towards economic, but also towards political organisation, which can be in the Communist Party only. Hence, the prospects of the Communist Party to become in the immediate future much more of a Negro Party than a Party of whites. Of course, all efforts of the Party must be directed towards a unification of the white and black progressive workers in its ranks.

This second stage of its development is now beginning. The Party enters that stage as a feeble organisation. It suffices to examine its organisational status to understand that situation. It is difficult to establish as to how many members the Party has, as no membership dues is paid in general. In some locals[1] the Party had big success in the first stages of its agitation. In Pochevstrom,[2] for example, a comparatively small town situated in a farming district, over 1,500 Negroes, almost all of them agricultural labourers, joined the Party all at once. However, that organisation cannot have a paid secretary, it is not divided into groups and does not function as a Party although the sentiment in Pochevstrom is excellent and every meeting called by the Party attracted thousands of people. The picture is the same in Ferrenihen,[3] another town where the Party has 500 members who joined in the same way, but whom one could hardly call real Party members. Thus the organisational forms already universally adopted in Europe, do not yet exist in South Africa. Not only nuclei, but even what we used to call local groups, are non-existent. Local groups exist only where most of the Party members are whites, i.e. in Johannesburg and in Capetown. But among the white Party members there are no miners and no agricultural labourers. They are either intellectuals or office workers. Very few of them are politically active or political leaders.

It is also difficult to judge the social composition of the Party as there is no information on the matter and as no consolidated organisation exists. But wherever we have had Negro members, most of them were not industrial workers. The Party has Negro workers in its ranks in Johannesburg, in the recently organised branch in the Capetown Negro settlement (where the Negroes live outside of the town as they have no right to settle within the town limits). But these workers are employed in small and second rate industries. In Natal where there is an industry (food, agriculture, transportation, metallurgical) and where there are Negro workers, our Party has practically no members. The Party has no miners in its ranks, neither whites nor blacks. This is partly due to the great difficulty of reaching the black miners who live in camps and are always under guard.

1. Local branches.
2. Potchefstroom.
3. Vereeniging.

This situation in the Party organisations has a corresponding situation in the Party apparatus. The Polit-Bureau, for example, apart from the fact that it is politically very weak, functions from the organisational viewpoint poorly. Its composition changes too often and the comrades do not fully realise the responsibility and significance of their office. Questions discussed by the Polit-Bureau are therefore rarely of a political nature, attention is in most cases paid to organisational details. This is reflected also in the Secretariat. Since the Party Congress the latter consisted of one white and one black comrade, but it worked in general without any political guidance of the Polit-Bureau. These organisational defects which can to one degree or another be found in Europe became more pronounced chiefly because the leading body of the Central Committee had no political perspectives in its work and no realisation of the fact that the Party must always work politically, that it must work outside. The question of working methods, therefore, did not interest the comrades very much and as a result there is no division of labour within the leading bodies of the Party, no signs of departments, etc. Agitation and propaganda which in the given phase of development is undoubtedly of the greatest importance is thus carried ~~on now and then~~ haphazardly and its results are indefinite and very poor. For instance, the publication of pamphlets and leaflets, etc., which is such an important item, which might give good results considering that there is practically no literature for Negroes, even bourgeois literature and literature spread by the other opponents of the Communist Party, is practically unknown (of course the financial side plays an important, but not the only part) in this. The paper[4] was also badly managed. In the past the Party secured much money for this purpose (money contributions), but all was in vain, and the monthly publication is now very very poor in every respect. There are possibilities for the dissemination of the paper, but they must still be taken. Its influence among the Negroes can be very great.

Control of trade union work equally suffers. Of course it is not only the lack of organisation that is to blame but also the insufficient understanding of the importance of that work. If we consider the question from the organisational point of view, there was no special attention paid to it and it was not regarded as a special sphere of work.

CC Plenums were very rarely held. The last Congress decided that such Plenums should be held every three months. More frequent sessions would be difficult as the distance from the various parts of South Africa is very great, railway fares very high, and the Party would not be in a position to pay the bill. But if we remember that the Secretariat has badly and even not at all instructed the comrades in the locals and carried on no correspondence with them, sent them no political information and no organisational advice, etc., this rareness in the holding of Plenums certainly did not tend to raise the activity of the Party. Besides, the comrades ostensibly have no experience in organising such

4. The Party official organ, *Umsebenzi*.

meetings. Practically no material is being prepared for Plenums, questions are not preliminarily dealt with and as a result whatever discussions take place are of an accidental character and lead to nothing. These defects are of course due to the fact that the Party is young and inexperienced. Not much can be expected from the white comrades. There are very few among them free from the old traditions and capable of grasping things in a new light. As to the Negro comrades there we still have a process of becoming. Among them we meet quite often with capable people, but the situation is not such as would favour their development. The fact, for example, that Laguma (not a Negro but a coloured man, once a Party delegate in M.)[5] who was a man upon whom one could have great hopes and who made a very good impression on the comrades in M., very soon left the Communists and went over to the bourgeoisie for reasons far from being of an ideological character, is very characteristic of the situation in South Africa. The Communist Party has not yet become so influential, has not yet created an ideologically firmly welded group to be able to paralyse the demoralising influences from without. What also interferes with the promotion of native comrades is the fact that a very small percent of them are illiterate and sufficiently educated. The Party must reckon with the possibility of a repetition of cases similar to those of Laguma and other natives who were at one time on the side of the CP.

One should particularly mention the financial situation in the Party. I have never come across a Party as poor as that of South Africa. The comrades have been unable even to organise regular dues payments and collections among the masses for the Party. The Party always lived chiefly on contributions made by individuals. Formerly the 'radical' whites who belonged to the Party as well as the sympathizers made comparatively big contributions, but now they give little and most of them nothing. But apart from the quantitative side, this method as such has an extremely demoralising effect, and it is obvious that such 'collections' must by all means be discontinued. The motives prompting these people to make donations for the Party have nothing to do with sympathies towards the Communist movement. The comrades have hitherto been extremely lazy in the collection of funds among the masses firstly on the ground that the Negroes are very poor, and secondly that all authorities (like Kadali) appealed to the masses for money and deceived them afterwards. The argument is that we must not show that we appeal to them for money. Needless to show that this viewpoint is absurd and that it is advanced more as a means of justifying the Party's inactivity.

The main political impediment in the work of our Party was the failure to understand our position on the national question. The last decisions of the CI concerning South Africa remained most unclear for most (if not for all) of our comrades. This of course was reflected in all activities of the Party, the general political activity, work in the trade union movement and in the various labour

5. Moscow.

organisations both of Negroes and whites, etc. etc. That was particularly clear in the last elections.

As to the last CI resolution on S.A. I found that the comrades loyally wanted to carry it into effect, but as they did not understand it they could not properly do it. The 'Negro Republic' slogan was used in their agitation, but the arguments used were extremely unconvincing and unclear. That was due to the fact that firstly the general position of the CI on the colonial question, our point of view, was not known, and but very few had studied it. There were even no documents on the subject.[x] In general the political level of our South African militants is not high enough and their knowledge of the CI and its decisions, etc., is very poor.

Secondly, the comrades made no analysis whatever of the situation in the country, the correlation of classes, the driving forces in South Africa, politics, etc. As a result, it appeared to them that the resolution of the ECCI did not correspond to the situation in the country. Their arguments were extremely[6] abstract, leaving entirely out of consideration the class problems. Thirdly, the traditions both of the white as well as the coloured comrades played quite a part. The whites wholly reflected the views of the white labour aristocracy in their arguments against the resolution. 'How can we go to the white worker and tell him that he will occupy a subordinate position in the country when he feels that the Negroes are not prepared to administer the country?' was their argument. Such was the essence of the traditional moods, of course expressed in extremely mild forms, showing doubts and openly objecting to the resolution. They were fully in its favour and passionately defended it, but without understanding the class elements in the resolution. They did it from the viewpoint of their general national position which they brought into the CP from without.

This having been the case, the resolution had to be taken up a second time by the Central Committee, although it was discussed once prior to my arrival, so as to give the comrades a correct understanding of the problem. In my subsequent activity, in newspaper articles, speeches, etc., I had to draw attention again and again to the point of view of the resolution so that the comrades may understand it in practice. It should be observed that on the whole this gave good results. The 'Negro Republic' slogan which was formerly entirely ignored by the bourgeois parties and the press, became a most unpleasant surprise for them and the nationalists, as well as the representatives

x It is characteristic that the last Resolution of the CI concerning their own party was not in their possession (now they have it), and it was being discussed before my arrival without having read it first.

6. There is a crossed-out word after 'extremely'.

of the South African Party, began to attack it, and articles against the slogan have become ever more frequent.[xx] It became a scarecrow with which the nationalists scared the white elector. For the Party itself it served (like any other resolution of course) as a political guide which introduced constancy and direction in its policy.

The trade union work of our Party also reveals certain peculiar tendencies. In relation to the white trade union movement and unions some of the comrades do not sufficiently understand the reactionary role of these organisations which indeed hamper the unification of the struggle of the white and black workers. Therefore, our comrades do not sufficiently work and fight for the idea of community of interests, they do not sufficiently agitate for that idea, for joint action on the part of all races, and do not popularise to a sufficient degree this thought so as to draw a sharp line between our viewpoint and the point of view of the non-Communist trade union leaders. Even if this line were unpopular among the white workers at first it would have gradually brought closer to us the most radical and the poorer sections of the white workers. Besides the constant worsening of the situation in the ....[7] created among the South African trade union leaders, a peculiar type of 'Left' trade unionists (some of them ex-members of the CP, such as Andrews and others) standing 'in principle' for unity, ready even to express verbal adherence without, however, being willing to take any real and determined steps in this direction. Other Communists (whites and Negroes), on the contrary, will on no condition consider the white unions, believing that work in them is absolutely superfluous and of no importance, seeing no good reason why the ground should now be prepared for the unification of the white and black workers in the struggle. These comrades at the same time have a poor understanding of the role and the tasks of the trade union movement in general, and in relation to the native trade union federation which is under our influence they think that it must merge with the Party and that the Party itself, without the unions, should conduct the economic struggle. Needless to say that both of these viewpoints have been fought against by me and one can say that a certain amount of clarity has consequently already been introduced in the trade union question.

The position of the 'Federation of Non-European Workers' must become an object closely under the observation of the Profintern. The instructions issued by the latter were good and comprehensive as far as such instructions can be given at such a distance. But in future I think the Federation will have to be asked more often as to its concrete work, and by such means its activity will have to be stimulated. The fact of the matter is that the first successes of the Federation

[xx] This was most clearly reflected in the 'Chamber of Mines' which found it very difficult to argue against the slogan. That of course showed the comrades the meaning of the slogan in practice.

7. The break in the text is in the original.

belong to the experimental phase, the Federation arose in opposition to and after the split of the I.C.I.,[8] after the latter had played its treacherous role and actually fallen apart. It should be remembered that Kadali founded the I.C.I. not so much on the trade union principle, the principle of the class struggle, as on general national principles. Therefore, the members of the I.C.I. who were (at that time) estimated at 100,000 were weakly attached to the organisation. After Kadali's corrupt and adventurous moves many of the ICI members left the organisation and both of its sections (Kadali and Billinger[9]) are quite weak opponents. The foundation of the Federation was a reply to that development of the ICI. Its prestige is gradually growing although not at a very rapid pace. Its weakest side is its complete disorganisation. Until recently, the Federation did not have even any embryonic forms of organisation. Its finances were hopelessly neglected and there was the danger that another Kadali affair would arise. New members were recruited without any plan or purpose. The organisation of the trade union apparatus in the locals and in the factories made no headway. No leading bodies existed and the 'leadership' of our Party consisted in the fact that a member of our Party was at the head of the Federation (Comrade Weinbren, a white man). All this of course is something which must be speedily corrected. The first steps have already been taken, but the RILU must take control of things. The outlook is very good for the Federation. Apart from the organisational consolidation of the existing unions, it can extend its influence to such very important categories of workers which are not yet in its ranks, for instance the miners, agricultural labourers, transport workers, etc.

As to the activities of our Party in the agrarian districts, one must assert that it has practically as yet not begun. Outside of a few haphazard meetings, very little has as yet been done. During the election campaign Bunt[10] had an opportunity to tour Transkai where he won the sympathies of the native Negro population. Notwithstanding the small number of votes received by B.,[11] the sympathies for the Party are great. In general, there are few Negroes having the right to vote, but many of these did not vote for B. or voted for the bourgeois party (the South African party) out of fear and under threat. But the masses of the native population met B. with the greatest enthusiasm. The trouble is that our Party has no programme of action as regards the native rural population. As to the agricultural labourers, the Party has not yet studied their demands, the methods of their organisation, etc. This question has only now been taken up for serious consideration. On the other hand, the Party (and also Bunt. in his campaign) has hitherto confined itself to general agitation on which basis thousands frequently joined the Party. But on the next day the Party did not

8. Here and further on in this document: ICU.
9. Ballinger.
10. Bunting.
11. Bunting.

know what to do with them as it could not give its new members anything but agitation. Instead of organising them on the basis of economic and political demands, they dubbed them Communists, without going any further. It would be a very difficult and drawn out process to train and develop these masses into real Party members, and the Party would do better if it would try to organise the most active, conscious, and prepared elements, give them an ideological foundation, develop them and give them some work to do. So long as the Party will not be ideologically strong and trained along international lines, it can never become a serious mass organisation.

The Party must pay much more attention to the native intellectuals. There can be no doubt that we could still snatch away from their ranks the uncorrupted elements who feel strongly on national questions, who stand close to the masses. Many of them are already under bourgeois influence as they have been poisoned in the schools with religious bunk, and have adopted many harmful views. But these influences have not gone deep and if proper work were done on our part, good elements would come to us from that camp. That work has already begun, but it is hard to tell how it will develop further.

Apart from the proposals arising from the given characteristics, I should like to offer a few others. Firstly, it would be advisable to give the Party a comrade for about a year or more (preferably an English-man) for organisational work, a comrade who could freely live and work in the country and who would be suitable for the job (a man with an independent political orientation), a practical politician, one who would be able to show the comrades how to work, one who understands the trade union movement and who could be an organiser). That would be of great help to the Party. Secondly, more instructions should be given to the comrades and correspondence carried on with them more regularly. They have no addresses, but chiefly they lack the desire to correspond with the ECCI. This perhaps is the result of some misunderstandings and personal impressions received by some of the comrades, but, be it as it may, this must be overcome. The same is true with regard to the British Party. They have paid very little attention to South Africa. Thirdly, the comrades should be better supplied with literature and propaganda matter. In this respect things are in a very sad state. The young and new comrades have nothing to read. They cannot develop theoretically. They should be provided also with international information. They are torn away from events. They should also be assisted in their agitation and particularly propaganda. The British Party ought to send them pamphlets in the English language for distribution (sale) as a means of popularisation of the Communist movement. Perhaps special pamphlets should be written. In this case they should be supplied with the available material. They should be helped to organise a library for the active Party members. Considering their poverty, they could not do that on their own, and yet it is of utmost importance. They possess a most un systematic and diverse collection of pamphlets. They have nothing of Lenin.

I make no proposals, 1) because I don't know how the question is going to be settled, 2) because they themselves must make some effort in this respect.

RGASPI, 495/64/81/45–56.
Original in English (Comintern translation of the Russian original text).
Inscription: K/JS/Tr. From Russian
8403/10
25.9.1929

76
Letter from Maphutseng Lefela to Profintern, 9 October 1929

Lekhotleng la Bafo,[1]
Mapoteng, Box 33
Fickburg
O.F.State
South Africa
9/10/29.

Mr. J.W. Ford

Sir

It is with due respect that I explain for your information that in Basutoland we have started an organisation known by the name of Lekhotla la Bafo. The aim and objective of this organisation is to champion the cause of the common people who are politically gagged and ostracised from the legislative bodies of the territory notwithstanding the fact that the late chief Moshesh, the founder and collector of the present Basuto nation, had established an institution known as Pitso through which his people were able to give their chiefs and the Government their opinion in regard to the national affairs under his government.

Since 1903 the Government abolished this Council and gradually but ruthlessly turned, through legal disabilities, the chiefs titulars, puppets, dupes, parasites and agents and tools of oppression to the people so as to sow the seeds of division and dissafocation of the people against their chiefs to prepare the way for him to deprive the nation of its rights. In doing this the Government officers have succeeded until we organised this Association to fight for the poor oppressed people of Basutoland. The Government officers

1. Lekhotla la Bafo.

have antagonised the chiefs against us and use coercive measures against us in our work to stifle our Association.

The only organisation in South Africa that has extended a helping hand to us is the Communist Party. We have already affiliated our organisation with the League Against Imperialism.

From the Communist Party we had the chance to get and read the Negro Worker edited by you and as I do not get it regularly I applied for its subscription to the Communist Party and I was given to know that it is not for sale; and as this journal is most needful and instructive I beg to lodge my application before you to send me few copies of the above mentioned journal to keep our organisation in close connection with the world movement of Negro Workers.

Within a short space of time we shall organize the agricultural Association with which to protect our people from further falling prey and victims to the local capitalist agents, which we shall affiliate to your organisation.

I am,
Sir
Your humble servant
Maphutseng Lefela

RGASPI, 534/7/77/49–50.
Original in English.
Handwritten.
Stamped: Profintern Secretariat No. 16/23/2 – 22.XI.1929 (in Russian).
Inscription: 'See minutes no. 63 of the Secretariat about the affiliation to Profintern of the Federation of Natives of Basutoland'[2] (in Russian).

2. From minutes no. 63 of the meeting of the Secretariat of the Profintern, 15 November 1929: 'Question: Organisation of Natives of Basutholand joining the Profintern (c. Lozovsky). Decided: To note the information about the joining. To charge the ITUCNW together with the Eastern Department of the Profintern to draft a reply from the Executive Bureau on establishing contacts and the request to explain what kind of information this is. (RGASPI, 534/3/408/1).
The reply of 24 November 1929 signed by the secretary of the Profintern, A. Lozovsky, and addressed to the Acting President of the Lekhotla la Bafo, J. Tsuene, read: 'Dear Comrade, it gives me a great pleasure to confirm the receipt of your application for joining the Profintern. It is a great support of our work when organisations of the oppressed and exploited peoples appeal to us for assistance and advice [...] I ask you to pass on fraternal greetings of the Profintern to the oppressed people of Basutholand and to assure it of the moral support of its struggle against capitalism and imperialism on the part of the world revolutionary trade union movement headed by the Profintern'. (RGASPI, 534/6/24/69).
In May 1930 the Secretariat of the Profintern received M. Lefela's letter of 24 April 1930 addressed to George Padmore, at that time member of the Executive Bureau of the Profintern. The letter contained confirmation of the receipt of *The Negro Worker* and the request to publish M. Lefela's article and Lekhotla la Bafo's open letter to heads of 12 states and to the British Colonial secretary (both enclosed). (RGASPI, 534/7/77/55–74).

77
Draft Telegram, Political Secretariat, ECCI to CPSA, 15 October 1929[1]

Confidential

MATERIAL FOR THE SESSION OF THE POLIT-SECRETARIAT,
OCTOBER 16, 1929.

Draft Telegram to South Africa

The struggle against the Native Bill must be waged not through petitions, but in a revolutionary manner. The Party must take the initiative and the leadership in this struggle without fusing with and without giving over the leadership to the reformists, as has been the case with Gumede. The auxiliary organisations can be utilised only if they are based on a mass movement and on local organisations – committees of action, etc. Proclaim December 16[2] as a day of national disgrace and struggle, conduct broad militant demonstrations under the slogans:

1. Down with the Native Bill, the pass law, and all restrictions of the rights of the natives.
2. Down with the entire system of oppression and plunder of the natives' land.
3. Long live the native republic.
4. United front of the native toilers and the white workers under the leadership of the Communist Party.

Factory meetings should be held on the eve, by all means penetrating the mines. With the aid of the trade unions and other organisations, short strikes with political slogans and demands that December 16th be paid for, should be declared.

1. The Russian original (RGASPI, 495/64/84/14) contains the following postscript: 'Com. Manuilsky! The Eastern secretariat (including myself) supports sending this telegram immediately, a letter would take two months. G. Safarov.' (in Russian). Nasonov crossed this text out and wrote below it: 'The present directive is offered by the Negro Section and has been approved of by the Eastsecretariat. It is necessary to send it as a telegram because the letter may take until the end of November – the beginning of December. Nasonov' (in Russian).
2. Dingane Day. See footnote 1 to document 73, vol. I.

This is proposed by the Negro Section in agreement with the Eastern Secretariat.

The telegram should be despatched as a letter would not reach before the end of November or the beginning of December.

Nasonov.

RGASPI, 495/64/84/17.
Original in English (Comintern translation of the Russian original text).
Typed.
Inscription: Urgent. Confidential.

78
Coded Telegram from S.P. Bunting to Comintern, 25 October [1929][1]

Petition form of mass protest involves local organisations no danger fusion reformist leadership suggestions December noted send up to date funds.

Bunting.[2]

RGASPI, 495/19/189/21.
Original in English.
Typed.
Inscriptions: 1) From Johannesburg 25/10, 16.10 (all typed)
2) Received 30/10, 13.00 (in German)
3) Decoded 1/XI, 09.45 (in German)

1. The year established on the basis of the contents of the document.
2. The Russian translation of the full text of the telegram follows on the same list with incorrect transliteration of Bunting's name: 'Bentink'.

79
Letter from E. Roux to ECCI, 30 October 1929

Communist Party of South Africa
P.O. Box 4179,
Johannesburg.
30 October 1929

To the E.C.C.I.

Dear Comrades,

We have received the following cable, dated Berlin, 22 October:

'Struggle against native bills and all other oppression must be waged not through petitions, but (in a) revolutionary manner. (The) Party must take initiative and leadership in (the) struggle without fusing with or giving leadership to reformists, as is (the) case (with the) League of Rights. (Au)xiliary organisations can be utilised only if based on mass movement and on local organisations – committees (of) action, etc. Proclaim December 16 as day (of) national disgrace and struggle. Conduct broad militant demonstrations under the slogans: (1) Down with Native Bills, pass law, all restrictions of rights of natives. (2) Down with entire system of oppression and plunder of Natives' land. (3) Long live Native Republic. (4) United front of Native toilers and white workers under the leadership of the (Communist) Party. Factory meetings should be held on the eve of the demonstration. By all means penetrate the mines. With the help of Weinbren's and other organisations on December 14 call stoppage for the whole day; if not possible then stoppage before time under political slogans and demand pay for December 16. Inform us of receipt of cable. Your friend E.C.C.I.'[1]

Our reply by cable was sent on 25 October, as follows:

'Petition (is a) form of mass protest; involves local organisations; no danger (of) fusion (or) reformist leadership. Suggestions December noted.'[2]

We enclose copies of the constitution, ~~petition form~~ and circular letter[3] of the League of African Rights. In taking the initiative in the formation of the League, we have been acting on the decision of the Sixth Congress (and also the suggestion of Comrade Merker, when he was here in June) to try to unite 'existing embryonic national organisations among the Natives, such as the

1. For the draft version of the telegram referred to by Roux see document 77. Notice that the final version of the telegram quoted here contained an additional sentence demanding a general strike on 14 December. The words in brackets are, obviously, the result of the deciphering of the cabled text by the Party leadership.
2. See document 78, vol. I.
3. See document 73, vol. I.

African National Congress'. 'The Party, while retaining its full independence, should participate in these organisations, should seek to broaden and extend their activity'. (See 'The South African Questions': 'Communist International', English Edition, 15 December 1928).

As you will see from the circular letter, we do not aim at making the League a mere organisation of leaders, but desire to develop it on the basis of affiliation of local organisations, formation of local groups, etc. There is no danger of the Party fusing with reformist organisations or losing its identity or its leadership of the mass struggle. So far the bulk of the Native leaders have held aloof from the League. Kadalie is opposing it, ostensibly on the ground that his organisation has already put forward demands similar to those of the League, but really because he fears the League will still further undermine his own declining influence. Gumede has joined the League in his individual capacity. His organisation as such has held aloof, though in some districts members of African National Congress and of both I.C.U.'s are assisting the League. Modiagotla, of the Ballinger I.C.U., has joined, but other leaders of this organisation, including Ballinger, are opposed to joining. The participation of Native leaders and of national organisations has been sought and would be welcome if it were forthcoming; but primarily we are appealing to the Native masses over the heads of their leaders to unite in opposition to the Hertzog bills. It must be remembered that existing Native organisations are weak and have a very small membership, the main mass of Natives throughout the country being completely unattached politically. To sweep into political activity the vast mass of unorganised Natives is the main task of the League.

In an attempt to give some substance to the work of the League, other than mere haphazard propaganda meetings, and in order to get many hundreds of thousands of Natives to participate personally in the struggle for national freedom, we have started a 'Petition of African Rights'. Like the 'Great Charter' of XIX Century England, the petition embodies certain elementary popular demands of the democratic revolution. Together with the slogan 'Mayibuye!' ('Return to us our country!') it forms a programme of immediate demands on which we hope to unite the whole of the African people. This petition cannot be described as a mere reformist gesture. In fact the reformists have already taken fright at the petition and are boycotting it accordingly. They desire that a few 'good boy' native leaders should request the Government to modify its Native policy. The mass character of the petition, penetrating as we hope it will to every corner of the country and expressing the aspirations of millions of Africans, is such as the missionaries and other bourgeois reformists cannot countenance, though they cannot openly oppose its demands without discrediting themselves in the eyes of the masses.

The petition is couched in the form of a demand. Like an election campaign or a referendum (c.f. recent campaigns initiated by the German C.P. against the return of the Kaiser's property and the building of cruisers) it can be used to spread revolutionary propaganda among the broad masses who would not be

reached otherwise. The collection of signatures goes hand in hand with the holding of meetings, mass demonstrations and the campaign for a nation-wide protest with street processions on Dingaan's Day.[4] We hope also to make the presentation of the petition to Parliament an occasion for mass demonstrations in Capetown, accompanied by a demand for the bearers of the petition to be heard at the bar of the House.

We are already meeting with evidence that the signing of the petition is not a 'safe' reformist gesture, but an act demanding a certain amount of courage and will on the part of those who sign. During Comrade Bunting's recent election campaign in Tembuland there were many sympathetic natives who failed to vote from fear. 'If we vote Communist we shall be killed', they said. Similarly some are afraid to sign the petition lest they be subsequently punished by the Government for this act of defiance. We have had great difficulty in persuading them that the Government is unlikely to prosecute individual signatories.

In view of these facts we cannot agree that the petition should be dropped as reformist in character. We hope that our reasons will convince you of this.

Another and more permanent use for the League is as an auxiliary organisation to spread the influence of the Communist Party among the Native peasantry and toilers in the small towns and country districts. We are not anxious to enrol directly in the C.P. those politically immature elements who nevertheless display at times considerable enthusiasm for the national cause and are anxious to join an organisation. It has already been agreed, in discussions with the C.I. and in conversations between ourselves and Comrade Merker, and between Comrade Roux and the colonial department of the C.P.G.B., that suitable nationalist organisations, peasant organisations, etc., should be set up to cater for these elements. It is of course understood that these organisations should come under the general political leadership of the Communist Party, while retaining their organisational independence and mass character. The league is such an organisation. It is also a step towards the unification on federal lines of all existing national organisations and leaders still capable of waging a fight against imperialism. Conditions are very complicated and difficult here and the C.P.S.A. must be allowed to experiment in finding out the best methods of awakening, organising and uniting the different sections of the African people.

We are also concerned with a probable approaching period of illegality. The Minister of Justice and the Minister of Native Affairs have announced their intention of revising the Native Administration Act of 1927, which was intended to stop revolutionary propaganda among Natives, but which proved unsatisfactory for that purpose. (You probably know how convictions of Communists under the 'hostility clause' have recently been squashed by the

4. See footnote 1 to document 73 and footnote 2 to document 77.

supreme court.) Now that the Government has learnt by its mistakes of the past, and particularly now that it has a complete majority and is assured of the co-operation of the S.A.P. opposition (see recent speech of Smuts advocating that the Native Administration Act should be 'tightened up') we may expect drastic legislation against Native agitators and particularly against the Communist Party. Pirow, Minister of Justice, has stated that he intends to introduce legislation enabling the Government to deport those who agitate among Natives, 'particularly Europeans not born in the country'.[5]

The organisation of the League of African Rights is thus in one sense a preparation for approaching illegality of the C.P. It is less likely to be proscribed than the C.P. itself, but this is not so important as the fact that, as a result of the formation of the L.A.R., we are broadening our influence and making contacts among natives all over the country, thus improving our chances of resistance should the Government attempt to drive us underground.

We agree with your suggestions regarding slogans for the C.P. and the demand for pay for workers on Dingaan's Day. As for a stoppage on Saturday, 14 December, we do not think we are strong enough to bring this off. The Federation itself is very weak as a result of internal divisions over a long period, and the big industries, even in Johannesburg, are unorganised. However, in co-operation with the Federation, we shall act, if sufficient support is forthcoming.

We shall report more fully later on the progress of the campaign and the results of the Dingaan's Day demonstrations.

Yours fraternally,
E.R. Roux
P.P. Executive Bureau
Communist Party of South Africa

RGASPI, 495/64/85/33–6.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: 3900 – 27.NOV.1929

5. Roux stresses this point because of the prominence of East-European born Jews in the leadership of the Party.

80
Statement of Executive Bureau, CPSA, to Colonial Committee, CPGB, 5 November 1929

REPLY TO POLITICAL LETTER OF THE COLONIAL COMMITTEE OF THE C.P.G.B. BY THE EXECUTIVE BUREAU OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY (S.A.). 5TH NOVEMBER 1929.

Dear Comrades,

We enclose a reply by Comrade S.P. Bunting to your letter of the 4th February 1929. We do not agree with all the statements made by Comrade Bunting, but we think his letter contains a wealth of information regarding conditions in South Africa, and we accordingly forward it for your consideration. It must be stated, however, that many divergent views on the subject are held by members of our Ex. Bu.

Our main criticism of the letter is that it rather belittles the importance and strength of the African Native Nationalist movement. It is no doubt true that this movement is still weak and divided, but the picture painted by Comrade S.P. Bunting gives a wrong idea of its revolutionary potentialities. The recent events at Durban,[1] and at Robertson in the Cape,[2] prove the militancy, on occasion, of the I.C.U. Yase Natal and the Cape African Congress.[3] In view of these facts it cannot be denied that other organisations than the C.P. are capable of putting up a fight against imperialism. As a matter of fact, there are signs of a rising tide of nationalism among the natives. For instance, the Executive of the Cape African Congress recently adopted a resolution that 'the Slogan "Africa for the Africans" should become the settled policy of the Congress throughout the four

1. The so called 'beer riots' in Durban in June 1929 – the boycott of municipal beer halls which were created for Africans by local authorities in an attempt to regulate and restrict alcohol consumption by the urban African population and to curb 'illegal' beer brewing by local women. 'The Durban system' of municipals beer halls that was first introduced in 1909 and then developed throughout the British empire never worked; rather it created a point of discontent and a rallying issue for various political forces. The Durban boycott and demonstrations were harshly suppressed by police. Despite the prominent presence of Durban communists, first of all, of Johannes Nkosi, the boycott was not organised directly by the CPSA; ICU Yase Natal played the most important role on the ground.
2. A demonstration in Robertson on 24 May 1929 organised by the Western Cape branch of the ANC ended in clashes between the participants and white farmers and the police. This was followed by a night of rioting during which lights were broken and cars stoned in the town.
3. African National Congress in the Cape.

provinces;[4] that the policy of non-cooperation between whites and non-whites should wherever practicable, become that of the Congress; that secession from the white churches to non-european churches become part of the Congress doctrinal propaganda; removal of white pictures from the homes of non-europeans should be encouraged in order to enhance race reliance and efficiency.' – Star 24/10/29.

On the question of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, the agrarian revolution, the absence of a native feudal class, and a native bourgeoisie, we think that Comr. Bunting gives most of the facts but rather distorts the picture as we see it. Though it is no doubt true that the complete racial emancipation of the African will probably not be achieved before the social revolution, it is still possible to distinguish the present democratic phase of the revolution when national-racial demands (and liberal demands such as education) take first place, from a theoretical later stage when the African proletariat will be stronger and more homogeneous and when the demands of the social revolution will predominate.

The fact that large numbers of the native peasants are indentured for work on the mines and farms does not alter the essentially imperialist character of the exploitation of the peasantry in the reserves and the need for an agrarian revolution to set matters right. Even in the detribalised areas native land hunger and conditions are as strong as, may stronger than, in the reserves. We are therefore justified in endorsing the statement of the Sixth Congress that 'the national question in S. Africa, which is based on the agrarian question, lies at the foundation of the revolution in S. Africa. The black peasantry constitutes the basic moving force of the revolution in alliance with, and under the leadership of the working class.' With regard to a native feudal class it is true that such a class is practically non-existent in S. Africa. Nevertheless the role of the chief must be taken into account. The chiefs have certain traditional powers and privileges which imperialism utilises to strengthen its hold over the tribesmen and their country.

On the question of the native bourgeoisie Comr. Bunting underestimates the role of such petty bourgeois elements as exist (teachers, clerics, independent artisans, small traders etc.) though again most of his facts are correct. The native intelligentsia and petty bourgeoisie, though small in numbers, are of great importance in the present stage of the democratic revolution and should not be ignored. The fact that many of them are in the

4. Most probably, the slogan 'Africa for the Africans' was adopted under the influence of James M. Thaele, president of the Western Cape branch of the ANC. Thaele studied and got his degrees in the USA and was strongly influenced by Garveyism. He had a militant race consciousness and often used the slogan 'Africa for the Africans' in his speeches and writing.

pay of the Government is no reason for underestimating their importance as Comrade Bunting tends to do.

With Communist Greetings,
Fraternally Yours,
A. Nzula,
on behalf of the Executive Bureau
of C.P.S.A.

RGASPI, 495/64/85/14.
Original in English.
Typed.
Stamped: 57 – 1.JAN.1930

81
The *Daily Mail* about the Role of Comintern in Events in South Africa, 20 November 1929

NEWS FROM ABROAD, TASS, 20 NOVEMBER 1929
MORNING ISSUE, NO. 2, FV.[1]

On Native Disturbances in South Africa

To Com. Piatnitsky

London, 19/XI (TASS[2]). According to the 'Daily Mail', the role of 'Moscow' in the disturbances of South African natives is confirmed by the news that on 26 September the government of the Union of South Africa intercepted telegrams sent to communist leaders in Durban. In these telegrams the uprising of the natives is set for 16 December. In this connection last week the authorities sent troops to Native settlements situated on the coastal strip and in the Durban area. It is reported that the authorities expect the arrival of a ship to Kapstadt[3] in order to capture some documents and luggage.

RGASPI, 495/19/189/22.
Original in Russian.
Typed.

1. The meaning of this abbreviation is not clear.
2. Soviet news press agency, 'Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union'.
3. Cape Town.

82
Draft telegram, CPGB to CPSA, 10–11 December 1929

DRAFT OF CABLE TO COMMUNIST PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Strongly support E.C.C.I. cable regarding League[1] emphatically condemn white chauvinism expressed such intermediate organisation for politically immature elements unanxious have in party (stop) Reformist programme and petition not equivalent mass revolutionary agitation but correct form united front from below for immediate issues mass struggle as seen League against Imperialism (stop) Suggest make Conference demonstration with native republic slogan leadership Communist Party postponing organisation League African Rights we deny agreement stated your letter to ECCI writing.[2]

RGASPI, 495/64/85/13.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: 57 – 1.JAN.1930
Inscriptions 1) England (in Russian)
2) 1929 (in Russian)
3) 10/11 Dec 1929

83
Letter from A. Nzula to ECCI, 11 December 1929

Communist Party (S.A.).
Johannesburg.
11 December 1929.

E.C.C.I.

Dear Comrades,

Since we wrote to you in reply to your letter about the League of African Rights, matters of some importance have taken place. The new minister of

1. League of African Rights.
2. See Roux' reference to his discussions with the Colonial Department of the CPGB (document 79, vol. I).

Justice, Mr. O. Pirow, catering for the most savage slave driving backveld[1] Dutch (and English e.g. Durban) vote, has launched a reckless campaign to stop Communist propaganda.

With the silent consent of his Cabinet colleagues he has by a few weeks' display of 'the jackboot in native affairs' as a local Daily called it, intensified the always latent ferocity of whites to blacks quite 100 per cent, indeed he has even disgusted the more liberal elements of the white bourgeoisie and has thus perhaps shattered General Hertzog's scheme of a united white front against blacks, for the Rand capitalist papers have attacked him pretty severely. The labour party, both sections, however has been silent and so have the usually negrophile churches, even the Trade Unions (white) have been rather[2] sluggish in the matter compared with Pirow's bourgeois opponents. These latter, however, unite with him in condemning the Communists in any event, though they correctly add that the right way to deal with agitators is to remove grievances.

Pirow, with the blessings in advance of his political opponent Smuts who in the last Parliament said that the sedition clause in the Native Administration Act, reduced to tatters by judgements of the Supreme Court, would have to be strengthened came out for it with amendments to the Riotous Assemblies Act of 1914 (itself a panic measure following on the general (white) strike of that year, which ended in 9 deportations, whereby appeals to the Courts will be barred andthe opinion of the Minister himself will henceforth be the conclusive test of sedition on the strength of which anyone can be imprisoned, lashed and, if not born in South Africa, deported – the avowed object being especially to get at some of the white communists whom the Dutch hate above all others. Public meetings will be made impossible for the natives if the Bill becomes law.

This measure, which is to have precedence in the Parliamentary session which openson the 17th proximo, at once called forth a united native protest in Johannesburg, and at our suggestion Pirow's effigy was publicly burnt – a procedure which seems to have shocked even Pirow's opponents into an equal denunciation of us and of Pirow. Pirow's reply was a staggering armed attack on Durban in the form of a[3] raid for unpaid taxes. A Government Commission following on the raids admitted that there was no communist 'plot'. As a matter of fact there was no rising but merely a prolonged boycott of municipal native beer halls.[4] Our Party branch there only has a few devoted comrades but its influence is growing, all over S. Africa. Finally, Pirow has announced a new bill imposing a tax of £5, and lashes on any native (with certain exceptions) who does not work at least 3 months in any year, the

1. The reference is to rural Afrikaners.
2. There is a typed-over word before 'rather'.
3. There are typed-over letters before 'a'.
4. See footnote 1 to document 80, vol. I.

3 months not to be worked consecutively but to be worked piecemeal whenever the master chooses, throughout the year.[5]

These bills and the Durban raid have secured some support not only from Dutch farmers but also from the British jingoes of Natal and British farmers elsewhere, although against these must be set off the shock given to the humanitarian or libertarian sentiments of others, especially English elements, leading to a running controversy in the press led by the Joint Councils of Europeans and Natives.

But there is more thanmere vote catching in Pirow's 'madness', he is expressing the inevitable tendency of modern imperialism to fasten ever heavier chains of slavery on the colonial peoples. After all it is he who is the exponent of 'normal' capitalist development, his liberal critics in asking for a relaxation, while adhering to imperialism are showing themselves[6] to be merely sentimental and anachronistic. Nevertheless we must use these liberal tendencies to split the white anti-native front.[7]

We have noted with some amusement Comrade Ford's attack on us as social democrats and a disgrace to the Comintern (also[8] echoed in an interview[9] on S. African affairs with Bessedowski, as published recently in our papers in which Bessedowski said that Comrade Piatnitzky and others expressed themselves very contemptuously about our Party – though sending us £12,000 a year?) as contrasted with the laudation of our Party and of the Comintern as having provided it with new life at the VIth Congress, which was cabled ~~~ as alleged extracts from Pravda as ~~as~~ food for overseas or backveld consumption, about riots in Durban. As a matter of fact we have been quite active in proportion to our resources, throughout, and our course and policy have suffered no change before or after Durban riots. Even now with the ~~ cloud of threats gathering even thicker over our heads, we do not feel at all sure that the Government will be able to suppress our movement very materially.

But we would ask you not to be always seeking occasion for vilification of us on the one hand or public laudation of yourselves at our expense on the other. It is not impressive nor is it comradely. We know the forces we are up against and our ~~dwingling~~ limited ~~~~ resources in men and money; and we do not only do our best but better than, if we may say so, you can teach us to do when it comes to local details. Today we have a certain moral leadership of the native movement, somu much so that those who want to fill their pockets out of it find it pays them to do so under our aegis, though we ourselves cannot do it.

5. There is a double line in pencil in the left margin opposite this sentence starting from 'Finally, . . . '.
6. There is a typed-over word after 'themselves'.
7. There is a double line in pencil in the left margin opposite the last two sentences starting from 'anachronistic . . . '.
8. There is a typed-over word before 'also'.
9. There is a typed-over word after 'interview'.

However they all help to swell the storm of protest, though as we anticipated it will not be possible to carry out your suggestion of a general strike on the 14th inst of which Pirow, quoting your cablegram (tapped through the Post Office) made such a feature in his speech. And by the way we think all our letters are being tapped. Yours fraternally

A. Nzula,
on behalf of Ex Bureau CP. S.A.

RGASPI, 495/64/85/50–1.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.
Inscription: Archives X (in Russian)

84
Letter from Krestintern to Maphutseng Lefela, 2 February 1930

No. 58 2.II-30.

Mr. Maphtusing Lefela,
Lekhoting la Bafo,
Mapoting, box 33
Ficksburg, O.F.State
South Africa

Dear Friend, –

We recently learned[1] about the existence of your organisations, and according to the scanty information, which we have been able to obtain, we are under the impression that your organisation is pre-eminently peasant in character. In view of the fact, that the International Peasants' Council,[2] in whose name we are writing to you, is an organ that unites revolutionary peasant organisations of all countries and of all parts of the world, it is, consequently, very much interested to establish connection with your organisation. We shall therefore, be very thankful to you if you send us

Doc. 83
10. See documents 79 and 81, vol. I.

Doc. 84
1. Obviously, from the Secretariat of the Profintern. See document 76, vol. I.
2. The official name of the Krestintern.

more detailed information as to the economic, social and political conditions of your people, as well as information concerning the history, programme, composition and activity of your organisation. We also request you to send us any printed matter, that you possibly have, concerning your country. We need all the above mentioned, in order to have the possibility of acquainting ourselves with the activities of your organisation and to inform about it the broad circles of revolutionary peasants of other countries, with the help of our literature, so that in the future, if there will be a possibility, we may be able to establish permanent contact with you.

With comradely greetings
THE MANAGER OF EASTERN
AND COLONIAL DEPARTMENT
(Banderas)

RGASPI, 535/2/195/4.
Original in English. Comintern translation of the Russian original text.
Typed. Copy.

85
Letter from J. Tsuene to D. Banderas, 25 March 1930.

Lekhotleng la Bafo
Mapoteng
Box 3
Ficksburg
O.F.S.
South Africa
25/3/30

Mr. D. Banderas

Sir

We have the respect to have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 2 February 1930 addressed to Mr. Maphutseng Lefela by you of behalf of the International Peasants' Council. A detailed reply as requested will be sent to you in due course which is now under preparation.

We are peasants in character despite the fact that our organisation is carried on political lines to protect our rights and freedom.

We make our living by working on the land which is held on communal tenure in accordance with our Sesuto laws and customs, and therefore the

people of Basutoland are peasant proprietors. Our laws, social, economic and political are unduly interfered with and rapidly violated by the local agents of our enemy and work hard to introduce laws, methods and tactics to facilitate the flourish of Imperialism in our country.

According to the conditions under which Moshesh, the founder and collector of this nation, asked the British Government to take him under protection, Basutoland is a protectorate with the right to enjoy internal self Government of Basuto people under their hereditary chiefs who are entrusted with the right of looking after the welfare of Basuto nation. The chiefs more especially the Paramount chief, on their part have no power according to Sesuto laws to do anything of national importance without first calling the people to a national gathering to consult them about the measure they wish to adopt. But all these are now subverted, the chiefs are turned into the puppets of the local officers of the Government who no longer represent the British Government in accordance with her pledge to protect Basuto nation from its political enemy now the Union Government with the full liberty to enjoy semi-independence under her protection. But the local Government officers through Proclamations have deprived Basuto people of all their rights and our national assembly which had power over legislation had been abolished in 1903 and new laws in vogue are taught to the people through incarceration. Many European Imperialists are imported into the country under various ways and heavy taxes, direct and indirect are imposed upon the people. The flocks of sheep and goats owned by Basuto people are exterminated through poisonous dip to accelerate poverty to overtake Basuto people so that they may become the exploited wage earning slaves of European capitalists in the land composed of traders and in the surrounding provinces of the Union Government.

It is under these circumstances that Lekhotla la Bafo was constituted as an organ to fight for our internal self Government embodied in the conditions laid by Moshesh before British Government for acceptance under protection under which Basutoland was recognized as a protectorate. Since the local officers of the Government have become the agents of our political enemy – the Union Government – they detest our organisation and therefore work hard to seek for the means and pretexts of crushing our Association before the world at large could know of its existence and the true political position filled by Basutoland under the British Empire. For this reason we welcome the establishment of permanent contact with your organisation and we should be very thankful if you would accept our Association to affiliate with your International Peasants' Council so that you may help us, as already suggested by you, to disseminate our reports of activities and persecution we received at the hands of our rulers, sent to you by us for the information of other oppressed races of the world. We may be glad if you would give us to know other sincere organisations with which we may come in contact so that they may help us in the matter of disseminating our reports to them and give us moral support in our struggles

against our political enemy which organises more than ever before to take drastic steps to bring about the incorporation of our country in the Union Government.

Regarding the printed matter relating to the history of our country we beg to refer you to the following books:

1. The History of South Africa by George McCall Theal in eleven volumes published by George Allen and Unwin, London.
2. 'The Basutos' in two volumes by Sir Godfrey Lagden published by Hatchinson & Co. Paternoster Row, London.
3. Basutoland Records in three volumes.[1]

In regard to Basutoland Records you may write to large bookstores both in London and South Africa, the most important of which in South Africa are the following:

1. Mr. T. Maskew Miller
   29 Adderley Street
   Cape Town, South Africa

2. J.C. Juta Esqr.
   Cape Town, South Africa

Basutoland Records are most reliable because in them are compiled the letters concerning Basutoland which passed between Moshesh, the Government of Cape Colony, the Government of the Orange Free State and the British Government at home.

Another important bookstore is that of Mr. J.L. Van Schaik, Box 724, Pretoria, South Africa.

We have the honour to be, Sir, your humble servants,
H.M.D. Tsuene
Acting President
On behalf of Lekhotla la Bafo.

RGASPI, 535/2/195/13–16.
Original in English.
Handwritten.
Stamped: Incom. No. 241, 27/IV 1930 (in Russian)
Inscriptions: 1) To c. Banderas (in Russian)
2) Translate. D. Banderas (in Russian)
3) C. Noval (in Russian)

1. The reference is to G.M. Theal. Basutoland Records. 3 vols, 1883.

86
Letter from Presidium, ECCI, to CPSA, 25 April 1930 (Extracts)[1]

Confidential
10.IV.1930

TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Dear Comrades,

[...]

The Party leaders are committing serious mistakes of a Right opportunist character. The reason for this is the fact that the Party leaders have not yet carried out the 1928 resolution of the CI which demands that the Party take the initiative in and lead the struggle of the natives against the foreign yoke under the slogan 'Independent Native Republic'. The slogan of an Independent Native Republic means, primarily, the return of the land, to the landless population and those with little land, which is impossible without revolutionary liberation from British imperialism and the organisation of a revolutionary workers' and peasants' government on the basis of Soviets. The correctness of this slogan has been doubly confirmed by the desperate attacks of the South African ruling classes against it, by the opposition of former members of the Party known for the chauvinism and opportunism, e.g. Andrews, and especially by the development of the native national movement. The principal feature of the Right opportunist mistakes committed by the Party is the failure to understand the decisive importance of the hegemony of the proletariat and the complete independence of the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat, the Communist Party, in the nationalist revolutionary movement, and the failure to understand the significance of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the social revolution.

[...]

Failure to understand the bourgeois-democratic and the socialist tasks of the South African proletariat is reflected in the fact that both the leaders and the

1. The rest of the document contains a description of the economic and political situation in South Africa.

members of the Party have not yet understood the real significance of the slogan of Independent Native Republic.[...]

PRESIDIUM OF THE E.C.C.I.

RGASPI, 495/20/653/114, 115. For the full text of the document see: RGASPI, 495/20/653/112–22.
Original in English (Comintern translation of the Russian original text).
Typed. Copy.
Stamped: Approved at the meet. of Presidium
of 10 Apr.
minutes no. 25

87
Proposals of Eastern Secretariat, ECCI, to Political Commission, ECCI, 20 May 1930[1]

Confidential
20.5.1930

FOR THE POLITICAL COMMISSION

PROPOSALS IN REGARD TO SENDING INSTRUCTORS TO THE NEGRO COLONIES AND FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COURSE FOR THE TRAINING OF SUCH INSTRUCTORS IN MOSCOW

Proceeding from the necessity of immediately sending instructors to the Negro colonies, concentrating first of all upon those colonies where there exist independent labour movements, revolutionary nationalist organisations, or in which big revolts have taken place recently, we propose that comrades be immediately sent to the following countries.

British African Colonies.

SOUTH AFRICA: In view of the urgent necessity of developing native cadres and in view of the difficulty in getting natives out of the country for training elsewhere, it is advisable at the present time to send one comrade to South Africa to organise there a short course of 15 or 20 comrades.

EAST AFRICA: Kenya, Nyasaland, Rhodesia, Uganda, Tanganyika. One comrade for all these territories with centre in Nairobi, Kenya.

1. Most probably, this document was prepared by the Negro Bureau of the Eastern Secretariat. It is not clear whether it was approved.

WEST AFRICA: Nigeria, Ashanti, Gambia, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone.

Two comrades, centres to be Bathurst, Gambia (a large strike took place here recently) and Lagos, Nigeria (this province recently the scene of a native revolt).

French and Belgian African Colonies.

FRENCH AFRICA: Senegal, Upper and Lower Volta, Dahomey, Mauretania. One comrade, centre to be in Dakar, Senegal (this province is the main recruiting ground for France's 'black army').

SUDAN AND FRENCH AND BELGIAN CONGO: One comrade to cover all these territories. Centre in French Congo which has been the scene of a number large revolts in the past ten years.

WEST INDIES: French, American and British.

Two comrades, one for English speaking islands, Jamaica, Trinidad, and one for the Latin speaking islands, Haiti, Porto Rico, Gaudelupe, Martinique. In the English group to start first with Jamaica, the centre to be Kingstown (we already have some connections here). In the Latin group to start with Haiti (scene of the recent revolt).

The instructors who are to be immediately sent should be secured from British, French, American and Belgian Parties and from among the students now finishing their course at the Lenin School and KUTV.

The first group of instructors should receive one or two months preliminary preparations in Moscow, in order to become acquainted with the countries to which they will be sent and their task as instructors.

All instructors should at the same time have a mandate for the selection of students for training in Moscow.

A PERMANENT COURSE FOR THE TRAINING OF INSTRUCTORS

1) A permanent course should be organised in Moscow under the Lenin School for the training of instructors for the Negro colonies.

2) The students for this course should include both white and Negro comrades to be selected from among the contingents for both KUTV and the Lenin School.

3) In this connection we propose that Communist Parties of the metropolitan countries having Negro populations, Great Britain, France, Belgian and the American countries with large Negro populations, United States, Brasil, Panama, Cuba, etc., should be instructed at once to send Negro students both to KUTV and the Lenin School. (a.) The Lenin School: the Negro comrades be included in all contingents from these respective countries. (b.) KUTV, that the following numbers be sent by the respective Parties: Great Britain – 10, France – 15, Belgium – 5, United States – 30, Brasil – 5, Panama – 2, Cuba – 3, total – 70.

RGASPI, 495/155/86/3–5.
Original in English.
Typed.

88
Letter from ECCI to CPSA, 10 September 1930 (Extracts)

Confidential

IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE PARTY WORK

To the CP of South Africa.

The main tasks facing the CP of South Africa were set out by the VI Congress of the CI and were worked out in special detail in the letter from the ECCI of May 5th, 1930. These tasks are still in force at the present moment. The organisational task is especially urgent at the present moment. It is closely connected with the fact that the leaders of the Party, according to all information, only accept the policy of the CI as a formality, and in practice do nothing to overcome the great opportunist deviations which were pointed out in the May Letter, or for the organisational strengthening of the Party.

There is no doubt that the CI Letter of May 5th, 1930 continues to lie in some office drawer at the CC, and has newer been seriously considered, even in the CC for the purpose of carrying it into practice. It is time to put a stop to such a state of affairs, when the CC does not inform the mass of members of important documents from the CI, and when as a result of this the line decided on by the CI is delayed. The chief question which faces the Party at the present time is that the Party, in its daily work among the workers, agricultural workers and the broad masses of peasants, has no contacts with them. Its contacts with the masses is limited to the calling of chance meetings. As a result the masses know very little about the Party. Although a few members of the Party take an active part in the struggle of the working class, the agricultural workers and the oppressed mass of the village population, this is done without the necessary guidance from the Party organs and they have to act in a haphazard manner at their own risk. In the present condition of the Party, it cannot independently come forward in the developing mass struggle (Durban, Worchester) which definitely prove that the mass is rapidly becoming revolutionised. Another proof of the extreme weakness of the Party is the absence of Red trade unions in places where there are compact groups of Party members and no reformist trade union organisations.

The Party organisations in the localities have no definite formation. The local committees do not work regularly and do not receive proper guidance from the CC, and in reality they only exist on paper. Every leader of an organisation gives Party directives independently, and does not think it necessary to send them for discussion even to the active groups of Party members. The Party members have no definite Party work to perform and are

not attracted into Party life. Many members do not even know the duties of Party members.

Recruiting of Party members is done in a haphazard manners, usually by taking down names at meetings.

The Party must radically reorganise all its work from top to bottom. It is necessary to develop the boldest self-criticism of the shortcomings of Party work, and principally of the labourist and social-democratic remnants, opportunism and sectarianism in practice.

A sharp struggle must be carried on against all relics of white chauvinism, contemptuous and patronising attitudes to proletarian and semi-proletarian Negroes, against ignoring of the slogan 'an Independent native republic', against refusals to select and train Negro cadres for the leadership of all Party work when there is an absolute majority of Negroes in the Party. The Party must be converted into a mass Party, a centralised organisation based on nuclei in factories, mines, farms and plantations. In addition the work of all Party organisations must be imbued with the most attentive attitude to the daily needs of the working masses, must have for its basis the most patient and insistent political and organisatonal preparation of mass revolutionary activity around the immediate economic demands of the masses, developing these partial economic struggles in the future into mass political acts directed against imperialist rule and the national bourgeoisie.

Supplementary to the May resolution, the CI puts forward the following concrete tasks:

1) The CC must immediately commence the regular publication of a Party organ, in charge of which will be a responsible editor, a member of the CC, who will be directly answerable to the CC for the work of the editing board, and for the political line of the paper. The Party organ must not only be for propaganda and agitation, but for organising purposes. It is absolutely necessary that the central organ should be a good driving belt to transmit the line of the CC, to explain the programme of action of the Party and to assist the local Party organisations to carry out the directives of the CC. The CC must set itself a most important task of forming around the paper support groups in the factories and villages, and also a system of worker correspondents. In every factory, mine, plantation or farm, correspondents should be recruited, and also readers and distributers of the paper. From time to time it is necessary to call meetings, readers' conferences of distributers and worker correspondents, with the aim of discussing questions connected with the improvement at the contents of the paper and the improvement of each distribution.

2) An immediate start must be made on the reorganisation of the apparatus of the CC itself. It is necessary to set up from among the membership of the CC, a bureau consisting of three members, two candidates and a permanent secretary. The bureau must guide the work of the Party in the intervals between plenary sessions of the CC, must prepare for plenums of the CC, must decide all current questions of the leadership of Party work. The secretary will

be the executive organ of the bureau. In addition, a trade union department, agitprop department and women's department must be organised in the CC under the direct guidance of the bureau, and at their head must be comrades appointed by the CC. These comrades will organise groups of active members who will systematically assist them in their work.

Financial and accounting work of the CC will be carried on by the treasurer of the bureau, who will systematically report to the bureau and the plenums of the CC.

3) The leadership of the CC of the Party over local organisations will be carried out by local elected Party committees (town committee, section committee and district committee), which will unite the Party nuclei of definite factories, and which are elected at conferences of representatives of these nuclei and are required to report to them. To carry on all this practical daily work, a bureau of the committee will be appointed, and will organise its regular work in the same manner as the CC (Org. Department, Agitprop, Women's, trade union departments). In the committees, all questions will be decided collectively at sessions of the bureau and plenums of the committee.

The basis of all the work of the local committees is the proper arrangement of the work in factories, mines, plantations and farms, the welding together of a permanent body of nuclei, the organisation of the Communist training of Party members, recruiting and the carrying out of the whole of the Party policy in practice. The nuclei consist of all Party members who work in the given undertaking. The nuclei elect a bureau and a secretary for constant guidance and control of the fulfilment of regular Party work by every Party member. The nucleus must call a meeting of its members not less than twice a month to discuss decisions of the Party and of the Comintern and practical measures for carrying them into practice, and also urgent and vital questions from the life of the factory, and also work among the masses. It is especially important that the nuclei should rapidly and energetically react to all burning questions from the life of the factories.

4) Party nuclei must also take the initiative in forming factory groups of mass proletarian organisations, in the first place, factory groups of revolutionary trade unions and revolutionary trade union oppositions, but also groups of the ICWPA,[1] sport organisations, workers' self-defence.

In places where the Party members are not linked together in a single factory, according to the decisions of the III International organisational meeting, they may be joined in nuclei on the territorial principle (street nuclei, village nuclei). For the systematic preparation of cadres, the CC must form in the near future a school to which those comrades who have shown themselves in the best light in local work should be attracted, and especially Negro activists. At the same time the Party nuclei, at first only the larger ones, should

1. International Class War Prisoners' Aid – the British section of the International Red Aid.

organise with the assistance of the Party committees, circles to work out the Party programme, to explain its chief tasks and to furnish the basis of a Marxist-Leninist education. The Party nuclei must, not in words but in deeds, prepare to formulate and carry out a practical Party line, and all its members must take part in the active discussion and decision of all questions, and especially must analyse in detail all questions connected with the life of the factory with wich they are connected, the conditions of labour and life of the workers and burning questions touching their interests. The Party nucleus must carefully estimate the moods of the working class, must formulate their dissatisfaction in the form of demands, explain the meaning of the latter and mobilise the masses in the struggle for carrying them out.

When reorganising the Party, it is necessary first of all to penetrate important factories which have been included in previous struggles or in factories where struggles are expected. In this category we have: mining undertaking, plantations, industrial and transport undertakings.

The Party must understand that the training of cadres should not be limited to work among Party members. The Party must consolidate organisationally the broad sections of sympathetic non-Party workers.

The training of this non-Party active and the attraction of it in the Party will be carried out by calling regular meetings, conferences, delegate meetings, at which will be discussed their most burning questions, the shortcomings of mass work, the Party press, etc. Such stubborn and systematic work among the non-Party actives is also a preparation for recruiting to the Party.

Recruiting of new members is the regular duty of every Party nucleus.

5) The most important mass organisations through which the Party will transmit its influence to the working masses are the Red trade unions. On this question there is a special detailed resolution from the V Congress of the RILU. The most urgent task of the trade union department of the Party consists of forming Party fractions in all trade union organisations, and the fractions will be under the direct guidance and control of the trade union department and will give regular reports to it. The Party must also without fail organise systematic work in the reformist trade unions, must form opposition groups there and must link up these groups with the Red trade unions, especially in view of the fact that the white workers are not organised in Red trade unions. The trade unions affiliated to the SANTU (South African Native Trade Unions) must set themselves the task of organising a revolutionary opposition in the trade unions belonging to the SATUC. It is absolutely impermissible to have such a state of affairs when the Party, having a fairly large group of members among agricultural workers, has not commenced to organise a red trade union among them. The organisation of agricultural workers' unions must be the first task of the Party.

Under modern conditions the organisation of the unemployed becomes of extreme importance. This can and must attract into the struggle the most backward sections of the proletariat, and remove the barrier between white

and black workers (see decision of V Congress of RILU, which shows in detail the forms and methods of work in this sphere).

6) The anti-imperialist struggle for freedom of the toiling native population must not only receive the fullest and widest support from the Party, but must be at the centre of its attention and must be organised by the Party.

The Party must carry on systematic work to expose the treachery of social-reformist organisations and leaders (The African Congress, Kadalli, etc.). The attention of the masses must be concentrated on the struggle against all slave conditions and the political lack of rights of the Negro population, and at the same time this struggle must be linked up with the direct struggle of the working class and the struggle of the peasant masses and agricultural workers against the farmers, landowners, planters, etc.

Mass activity of organisations for the purpose of repulsing imperialist violence must be supported by proletarian methods of struggle, chiefly by mass political strikes and demonstrations, which will be carefully prepared for by all previous work.

By organising in the cities, villages, plantations and mines elected committees of action representing all the workers for the purpose of carrying out such activity, the Party must make use of the directions in the organisational resolution of the V Congress of the RILU so as to carry on tireless work to guarantee proper Party leadership and to struggle against the working masses becoming subservient to petty-bourgeois elements. The organisation of the Anti-Imperialist League in South Africa may serve as that form of mass organisation which will guarantee the proper proletarian leadership in the anti-imperialist struggle of the TOILING Negro masses.

7) The main line of Party work in the country will be on the one hand the organisation of agricultural workers in trade unions and on the other hand support for the development of the mass peasant movement, the movement of landless peasants, small rentiers and sharecrop farmers for the lowering of rents, against taxes, against forms of compulsory and slavish work, for the carrying out of the slogan 'a South African native republic'.

The Party must take steps to see that the trade unions endeavour to find proper forms of contact with groups of workers who are returning to their own villages.

In addition to this it is necessary to extend as widely as possible the contacts of workers' organisations with every kind of radicalism and revolutionary peasant committees of action and with organisations which have been formed in connection with the struggle for the partial demands of peasants.

8) In connection with the sharpened form of the strike struggle and with the growth of repression against revolutionary proletarian organisations, the Party must immediately commence to form mass organisations of proletarian defence based on the factories, mines, plantations and villages. All white workers should be attracted to join workers' defence corps and their international education should be extended in every possible way.

The Party must also not forget that success in its work will inevitably cause the government to move against it. This makes it necessary for the Party, at the same time as it develops its legal organs, to prepare an illegal apparatus composed of the most reliable and faithful comrades.

9) The Party must immediately widely and seriously discuss the letter from the ECCI dated May 5th, 1930 and also the present letter. It must draw all the necessary conclusions from these letters, must carry them into practice with Bolshevist directness and decisiveness. Only in this way can the Party ranks be strengthened and the Party converted into a real Bolshevist vanguard.

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Report of E.S. Sachs to ECCI, 8 October 1930

Johannesburg.
8th October, 1930.

REPORT.

I arrived home on the 1st October[1] and on the second attended a meeting of the E.B. of the Party, at which I submitted a report on

(a) World Negro Conference;
(b) R.I.L.U. Congress.
(c) Discussion with C.I. letter of the 5th May and latest resolution.

I was informed that the C.I. letter of 5th May was not received here and I must ask you, therefore, to forward a copy of the letter to us immediately as well as a copy of the resolution adopted recently.

Use this address for all private matter:

1. Sachs attended the International Conference of Negro Workers in Hamburg and 5th Congress of the Profintern in Moscow, both in July 1930.

Miss B. Morris,
P.O. Box 4410,
Johannesburg,
South Africa.

I propose dealing in this short report only with the state of the Party and will send a report of the general situation shortly.

1. I found the Party here in a worse state than four months ago. Hardly any work of importance is done by the E.B. or other party organisations or even considered and all the time is taken up in faction fights, which, although superficially appear to be of a personal character, reveal on closer examination a revolt on the part of the followers of the C.I. line against the Bunting leadership. So far, however, the quarrels still bear a purely personal character, but I feel sure that the letter and resolution will have a very good influence and may assist in the creating of a nucleus of a Party for South Africa.

2. At the E.B. meeting, which was attended by four white and two native comrades, very little was done. One of the Native comrades present, Nzula, who is by far the best, most able and loyal member of the Party was drunk (I have no hesitation in saying that he was driven to drink partly by the Party leadership, who threw him out of the General Secretaryship of the Party, which position he filled for some time with great ability, and has always tried to find fault with him because he would not kow tow to white chauvinism and stood for the C.I. line). A quarrel, which was started between the Buntings and Nzula, broke up the meeting.

Before the meeting broke up, however, I managed to raise a series of important points, but from the very beginning, I could see clearly that Bunting and his followers do not want to see the mire in which the Party has been rotting for years disturbed and would sabotage any effort to rebuild the Party.

3. I informed the E.B. of the discussions I had with you and that, together with a study of Lenin on the National and Colonial question have convinced me of the correctness of the C.I. line for which I was going to work wholeheartedly in the future. This was received with sneers on the part of the Buntings. I then suggested that we should now start a proper discussion on the C.I. policy, not as we had hitherto, where only the few leaders argued and the membership knew nothing about it, but a discussion with the fullest participation of all members. Bunting's reply was, 'What, another discussion. Have not we had enough of it?'

I then raised the question of re-organising the Party on a nuclei and group basis. This would be very opportune at present as the branch meetings in Johannesburg have been turned into one endless squabble and no party work of any description is being done thereat. I suggested that we should immediately elect an organising committee from the E.B. and all the active party members, who are becoming demoralised as a result of the quarrels, should be formed into concentration groups, each group concentrating on the

mines, locations or factories, where we have already a foothold, and instead of the Branch we should have groups inside the places where the workers work or reside. There was no opposition offered, but the suggestion was, nevertheless, passed over without anything being done.

4. I then raised the question of the Railwaymen, who are having their wages cut considerably, and also the attempt of the employers to reduce wages on a national scale in every industry (see Press), but this too failed to rouse any interest. The night before a stormy meeting of 4,000 railwaymen took place at Johannesburg, but there was no one to give a lead. I then raised the question of the line of our followers at the Unity Conference (4th October) and also what policy the Federation should follow. Here again nothing was done, but I was given more or less a free hand to do as I like.

I then stressed the importance of a General Secretary for the Party and suggested a native comrade should be appointed immediately (the Party has no General Secretary at present). Bunting asked where is the money to come from, although he received some £26.[2] recently.

Party Congress and training of cadres I also raised, but these too were received coldly.

However, some headway is being made. With the co-operation of a few comrades we managed to start a training class, which will have at the beginning about twenty native comrades, also a few whites. So far I have taken charge of courses and intend dealing with

(a) The national and colonial question.
(b) Bolshevik organisation.
(c) Work in mass organisations and our relation.

Other comrades are attending to questions of a general theoretical character, and, as soon as funds are available, we shall try to draw students from other parts of the country into the class.

As the Buntings are practically out of it, I feel confident that good results will be shown shortly. Together with one or two other comrades, I am trying to put the letter and resolution of the C.I. into practice. An attempt was made to draw me into the personal quarrels and to discredit me generally, but without success so far.

With regard to the Trade Union Unity Conference, I had to do everything on my own. I drafted the open letter for the Federation, which the Federation adopted, also the statement for our fraction at the Congress, a copy of which I will send you by next mail. There was only one day left for the Congress and

2. '2' is crossed out in the original and another, barely legible, number is written above it in pencil, either '7', or '9'.

everything had to be done in a hurry. The E.B. had not even considered our attitude to the Congress, but endorsed my action.

I will send you a further report next week.

A. GREEN.

ENCLOSURES: (1) Mines leaflet.
(2) Open letter of Federation.
(3) Meeting leaflet.

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Minutes of Ninth Conference, CPSA, 26–8 December 1930 (Extracts)[1]

Strictly Confidential

REPORT ON NINTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
OF COMMUNIST PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA.
(JOHANNESBURG, DECEMBER 26TH–28TH, 1930)

Presidium: The following comrades were nominated and elected: Ngedlane, Jose Mpama, Mackay, Sachs, Safarov, J.W. Ford, Roux and Rathbone.

Opening of Conference: The Chairman of the Presidium (Com. Ngedlane), welcomed the delegates. He paid tribute to the late Com. Nkose[2] and the Conference stood in silence for two minutes in tribute to the memory of the late Com. Nkose.

1. Selected extracts present the first open attack on S.P. Bunting by A. Nzula, E. Roux, and D. Wolton in line with the drive towards the bolshevisation of the Party.
2. Nkosi, a militant propagator of the 'South African native republic' was mortally wounded in Durban during a country-wide campaign to burn pass-books that was launched by the CPSA on 16 December in support of the slogan of independent native republic and in compliance with Comintern's proposed tactics.

Fraternal Delegates: Phofolo of the Independent I.C.U. said: 'My organisation asked me to represent them at this Congress. There is no special message except to say that they wish the Congress every success.'

A letter was read from the General Secretary of the Independent African National Congress, Cape Town, expressing regret at inability to attend Congress owing to the fact that they are having their first Congress on the same dates and also financial difficulties.

General Political Resolution.

Under this item Com. Wolton stated that the Chairman should have reported but owing to short notice asked Com. Wolton to report.

Com. Wolton said:

'We see that the struggle between the various imperialist powers in the world is greatly accentuated. We see that the struggle for markets is becoming a fiercer and wider struggle every day. There are many things which demonstrate these facts. We see an unparalleled wave of depression sweeping all over the world. We have seen a general decline in world prices in agricultural products in every colonial country of the world. We have also witnessed a phenomenal rise in unemployment, which is computed at the present time to have reached two million throughout the capitalist world and we see this figure mounting and rising rapidly. Imperialism today is in a very serious position. In every front we find that WAR DANGER, ATTACK ON SOVIET UNION, etc.

When we come to our conditions, we find there are various deficits: there is a sharp drop in the price of maize; there is increasing difficulty in the gold market.

There is a rise and deepening revolutionary struggle of the masses against the conditions imposed upon them. With the drop in prices and the low standard of life of the working class arising out of the economic crisis, we find an increasing demonstrations on the part of the revolutionary masses throughout the world to fight back against these – to fight against the worsening conditions which are imposed upon them, etc. [...]

Third Session, resumed 2.30 p.m. on 27th December 1930.

RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICA, REPORTER COM. NZULA.

'Comrades, in the report on Party work, I think the first thing we ought to consider is what big undertakings the Party has carried out this year. I would like to draw attention to certain important events that we have taken part in this year and by which we can gauge our success. The first, I think important event this year was the Negro Conference.[3] The C.I. in its policy for S.A. has

3. The reference is to the International Negro Workers' Conference (founding conference of the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers) in Hamburg (Germany) in July 1930 attended by E. Sachs.

laid down the winning over of the Negro masses to the Party. There are still people who think that is of no importance, but then we remember the events that have taken place throughout the African continent during the past two or three years, we realise the importance of paying attention to the Negroes.

Now, Comrades, I think the Negro Conference was of special importance to us and it created a stir in this country. That was the first important event the Party took part in and that we have to report upon.

What was the faults or what were achievements of the preparation for that Conference. The faults were the common faults running throughout the last two years. I will deal with that in a more detailed fashion later on. But in any case the Negro Conference did achieve a certain amount of success. We managed to make the broad masses of the toiling Negroes in this country aware of the importance of that Conference.

I have passed over the work of the Party in regard to the League of African Rights. I was one of those who was in favour of the formation of this League of African Rights, but that was due to a total misunderstanding of the Party line on this question. We were a CP saying the masses are dependent, the masses are not revolutionary, the masses will not riot in the street, the masses will not shoot the police, the masses are cowed down, therefore, what shall we do with them. Let's tell them to petition Pirow. Let's get them to collect a million signatures and make them revolutionary. I do not think anybody is prepared to argue the falsity of the programme of the League of African Rights. It was wrong.

Comrades, then there is also the question of TU organisation. If there is anywhere where we are guilty of criminal negligence, it is in our TU work. In our trade union work we have a big field in Johannesburg itself, we have the mines, we have the transport workers and we have the farms, and what have we done. We put a comrade to organise the TUs and what did we do the rest of the time, but criticise that comrade and find all the faults we could. This is due to the failure of the Party to understand the importance of TUs. We have not been aware of the importance of TU organisation, we have not been aware of the fact that the CP has to build around itself mass organisation, like TUs, like IRA.

On the question of the united front, the same thing has occurred. Let Gumedi go to Bloemfontein[4] and make revolutionary speeches and everything is all right, while forgetting that we cannot have a united front from above.

In spite of all these things, the Party has gained tremendous amount of influence especially amongst the black masses of this country. It has gained that influence in spite of the fact that the Party is lagging behind the militant aspirations of the masses themselves. Take Worcester for instance, while we

4. The reference is probably to the second Non-European Conference which was to be held in Bloemfontein in January 1931 and of which the ANC was part.

were still yapping about a petition, the masses of Worcester prepared actually to carry out a militant revolutionary struggle against the Government of this country.[5] Take for instance, they actually smashed into the sacred precinct of that town, and what was the CP telling them to do: sign a mild petition. What did we do with East London. We started discussing Kadalie, whether he was reliable or whether he was not reliable, whether we should sack Nzula, or not. There were the masses engaged in actual militant struggle and what did the CC of the Party do, discuss the advisability of sending this man or that man, whether he was reliable or not, and the masses came under Kadalie's influence: the Party has no influence in East London. Then there is the Durban riots[6] last year. What did we do? The masses in Durban were moving forward and we told them to keep cool, the forces against you are so big, you have to keep cool. You are being provoked by the Government to be shot down. Keep cool. We did not understand the role of the Party and that is why the Party lagged behind the masses of Africa. There are still people in the CP itself, who will tell you we do not see any revolutionary spirit amongst the native masses; they are cowed down, they are cowards, they cannot stand up for their rights. A disbelief in the native masses having the spirit to fight for their rights, and what has been the result of that expression, it has resulted in the Party lagging behind the masses. The masses have gone forward and the Party is lagging behind. The masses in Durban showed their willingness to go forward, party or no party, but in places where the Party has not been taught a practical lesson like that, we always say the masses are despondent, they are despairing, they are useless. This has resulted in a policy of passivity. The CC of the Party instead of organising the masses in SA is wasting its time in personal quarrels. The Party is turned into a YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association).

We must not lose sight of the Right wing danger in the Party. There are people who are playing lip service to the CI but all their lives are trying to disprove the policy of the CI. They want to prove the failure of the new policy of the Party. They accept it but at the same time they do not take the least trouble to understand what that connotes.

Now we come to the question of discipline. I know there are many people who think I am guilty of serious breaches of discipline. The present Comintern policy was passed by a Congress in 1927,[7] but today you still have people who are prepared to jibe and sneer, to ridicule and make absurd that policy. In a

5. Worcester had the strongest and the most active branch of the ANC in the Western Cape. In early 1930 its membership was about 1,000. In March 1930 it was campaigning under the slogan of 'Black Republic' and clashed with the police. An African was killed in the fight. A big demonstration on May Day also ended in bloodshed leaving five people dead. On 22 June, during a huge meeting with 500–800 in attendance, the leadership was arrested.
6. See footnote 1 to document 80, vol. I.
7. The Comintern line for South Africa was indeed approved in 1927 but by Politsecretariat, not by Congress. The 6th Congress confirmed it in mid-1928 and the Political Secretariat of the ECCI finalised it on 19 October 1928.

Party, if the policy of that party itself means anything, then it means that everybody has to agree to it, if everybody does not agree to it then it means there is no discipline. There has been a total disregard to discipline. Here is a policy passed three years ago and there are people prepared to confuse and confound the new members of the Party on the CI policy.

The achievements in Durban today[8] are due, not to the efforts of the CC, not to the efforts of the leadership of the Party, but to the efforts of single comrades, who have devotion and who are prepared to fight for the Party.

I want you to discuss the question in a more or less dispassionate manner. The CP is entering upon a new stage, when the masses of the proletariat of this country, the black proletariat, are revolting against the forces of oppression. The CP is entering a stage where new tactics are demanded by new conditions. Comrades, the old leadership has proved itself a complete failure. The old leadership did not convey to the new members what has to be done by a Bolshevik party. The old leaders have not taught the new members like myself and the native members. After two years experience I believe that the whole progress of the Party has been vitiated by old traditions, has been vitiated by Right wing and by chauvinist traditions.

I have not covered the whole ground. I want to have as big a discussion on the points raised and not raised as possible. We need a new leadership, without it we are going to commit the same errors, we are going to commit the same mistakes as in the past.

The matter was thrown open for discussion. [. . .]

[Fourth Session, on 28th December, 1930]

Com. E.R. Roux: If we are to continue along the lines of the discussion of most of the speakers tonight, the Party will go to rack and ruin. We see a complete inability on the part of speakers to get away from their own petty squabbles and that is what is wrong with the Party as a whole. I agree with Com. Wolton that the terrible squabbles are a reflection of something fundamentally wrong with the organisation and policy of the Party of South Africa. As the Party was not functioning properly in the first place, it led to a stagnation in the branch. This resulted in the energies of the comrades, which would normally be turned to creative activity in organisation and propaganda, directed to personal squabbles.

What attitude has the CI taken up with regard to the situation in SA. The CI says here in SA we have from all accounts and from our study of the situation a country where the revolutionary movement should be making rapid strides. The CI drafted a resolution on SA sometime ago. In that resolution they made an analysis of the situation here and put forward guiding slogans and tasks for

8. The reference is to the success of the campaign to burn pass-books. The campaign in Durban was the most militant in the country and ended in bloody armed clashes between the protesters and the police during which Nkosi was wounded and subsequently died.

the work here. They at once met with tremendous opposition from the majority of the Party in SA, who did not agree with the practical slogans and theoretical suggestions, put forward by the resolution.

The Buntings and I went to Moscow to the VI Congress. There we showed quite plainly that we were almost completely ignorant of the fundamental principles of Communist propaganda in countries like SA. I have this much criticism to offer of the CI in general. They did not treat us in the way we should have been treated. Instead of spoon-feeding us, instead of treating us as a Party that contained elements that have assimilated the principles of the CI, they treated us in a very insulting way. I say the CI did not treat us in a comradely and school-masterly way, they should have treated us, they simply threw at us certain resolutions and we were told to swallow them, without detailed explanations and comradely help from the CI.

The last resolution is a decent sort of a resolution, because they lay down the general theory with regard SA and explain it so that any person with intelligence can grasp the contents.

I do not say that the fact that the CI was brusque with us is an excuse for our ignorance and misunderstanding of the theory they put forward.

At the VII Congress of our Party, the slogan was adopted. The CP in SA proceeded to make further mistakes as is now admitted in the League of African Rights. Com. Bunting says that is a thing of the past and why should we bring it up again. When comrades put up that point of view they fail to understand the outlook of the CI. As a result of their world wide experience, the CI is able to formulate instructions to different countries. There is now something definitely known as Leninism. We of the CP must assimilate that philosophy otherwise our place is not in the CP, and if we have assimilated that policy and if we study carefully the lines of the development in the CI we cannot make those mistakes we have made in the past.

He stated that it was proved to the CI that the leadership of the Party could not assimilate Leninism and therefore the CI demanded a new leadership.

He denies that we were instructed to form the League of African Rights. We were told to form auxiliary organisations, but not in the form that the League was formed.

During the past 9 months the Party organ has been carried on by me in Capetown. The executive of the Party was in Johannesburg and I was in Capetown. In the course of editing that paper, I realise that I made a lot of serious mistakes in leading articles and general policy. Many of those mistakes would have been avoided if the paper had been edited by a committee who could thoroughly discuss matters.

Just in the same way as I was isolated from the Executive, so the Party is isolated from the CI and we have made many mistakes. And it is fundamentally not a question of a single mistake but our whole outlook is not that of the line of the CI.

We have not got to try and re-organise the Party.

Com. Bunting is not a Leninist, definitely not. I do not say that I am a Leninist. I would not have made so many mistakes if I had been a Leninist. Com. Bunting's attitude with regard to the present resolution and the question of the slogan and the LAR shows that he has not yet assimilated the outlook of the CI. Com. Bunting refuses to use the phraseology of the CI. Bunting always regarded the question of nuclei and the Bolshevisation of the Party as mere academic words that do not affect us.

My mistakes are due to the fact that I am not a student of Leninism. There is a definite philosophy connected with Party work in the trade union movement. When we have got hold of it we can then discuss basic principles.

In the past we have had a CE which was not departmentalised owing to lack of funds and workers. We must have a Polit-Bureau to discuss nothing else but the political situation, to formulate the Party policy and give definite statements with regard to policy as conditions change.

Let us now discuss politics. There are very serious differences of opinion about important political matters and that is what we should be discussing now. Let us work out a Party programme of action. Let us elect on our Executive comrades who are prepared to work on the lines of the resolution.

I agree with Com. Nzula that the masses of South Africa are rising spontaneously in revolt against the authorities. We must find out how they can place the Party at the head of those movements.

[...]

Com. Wolton: Our task now is to draw together the threads from the discussion that has taken place on this resolution. Delegates have clearly shown that we have in our Party a very strong Right wing danger which expresses itself, as the Resolution states, in white chauvinism and opportunism.

He said that there was a direct line connecting the white chauvinist actions of the Right wing through a period of three years which delegates had illustrated in detail. We must not only fight open white chauvinism but the great danger lay in hidden white chauvinism which was covered up by revolutionary phrases.

He said that in the Party attitude to the Dingaan's Day[9] preparations there was also revealed a Left wing tendency to make a heroic gesture without any organisational preparation resulting in sectarian demonstrations in some centres. This danger the Party must be aware of.

The non-Leninist accusations of the Right wing revealed a complete confusion and failure to understand the elementary question of a Bolshevik Party. On the other hand the discussion of delegates has shown a considerable advance in political understanding of the new Party line. Our political conclusions on this resolution must now be given organisational

9. See footnote 1 to document 73, vol. I.

form. Out of the new understanding of our policy and tasks, a new leadership, politically clear, and united on the work ahead of us must be elected from this Congress.

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'*South Africa and the Communist International* is a superb documentary achievement. The editors have made a judicious selection of 193 primary documents from the Comintern's archive that carry the story of South African communism from its birth to the end of the 1930s. The documents are transcribed into English, provided with precise citations, obscure names and pseudonyms identified, and distant events and organizations described. An informative introductory historical essay on the history of the Communist Party of South Africa and the Communist International provides needed context. The documents, some brief but others very lengthy, illuminate the CPSA's origins, the "bolshevisation" campaign of the late 1920s and early 1930s, the mechanisms of Comintern authority, background of the decision to endorse an "independent native republic", the search for ideological deviations, and the tragic fate of the South Africans caught up in Stalin's terror. These two volumes are essential reading for serious students of South African communism and will likely remain so for many decades.' John Earl Haynes, co-author of *The Secret World of American Communism* and *The Soviet World of American Communism*, is 20th century political historian at the US Library of Congress.

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