

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.<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup>

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 PRESIDUM 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 PRESIDUM OF THE COMMINTERN.

(per Comrade Kuusinen, 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.<sup>1</sup> 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,<sup>2</sup> 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,<sup>3</sup> 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,<sup>4</sup> 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<sup>5</sup> '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  
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RGASPI: 495/64/10/1-2.

Original in English.

Typed.

Inscription: 26a.  
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5. lately.