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**Letter from D.I. Jones to V.I. Lenin,
5 April 1922¹**

Room 7, Lux Hotel,² Moscow.
5th April 1922.

Comrade N. Lenin,
Kremlin.

Dear Comrade Lenin,

I am sending you herewith copies of memorandums³ 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

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.

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**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

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 sobranie sochinenii* (*Complete Collected Works*) Moscow, vol. 54, p. 243).

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 department¹ 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 50² 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 comrades³ 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
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(in Russian)

RGASPI,495/64/10/4.

Original in English.

Typed. Copy.

Inscription: 26 b.  
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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.

**Letter from I. Amter¹ 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'.