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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
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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,<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> as the state of things in South Africa. It is to be regretted that, though a Party Branch<sup>3</sup> has appealed to the English ~~and~~ <sup>Party</sup><sup>4</sup> for support

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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<sup>5</sup> and the change of plan regarding my journey I am in ~~a~~<sup>the</sup> 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)

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**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).