

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.

**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 loss¹ 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.

[...]

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(in German)

2. South African Association of Employees' Organisations.

**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 attendance by a representative of trade unions (Swales and Purcell³) 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.