

Comrade Kalk Will Com. Bach answer me this: in effect did his fight not undermine the confidence of many Party members in the Native leadership?

Comrade Bach. I understand clearly that political differences must weaken the leadership. But subjectively you cannot accuse me of being against the Native leadership as such. I ask that a vote be taken on my motion.

Comrade Diamond. I submit that Com. Bach's motion is equivalent to a vote of non-confidence in Comrade Kotane. I therefore propose a vote of confidence in Comrade Kotane.

Comrade Bach. I withdraw my motion.

(The motion of confidence in Comrade Kotane was not put to the vote)

THE CHAIRMAN THEN CLOSED THE MEETING.

RGASPI, 495/64/137/30-3, 64-5. For the full text of the document see; RGASPI, 495/64/137/29-65.

Original in English.

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**Resolutions of Political Commission, ECCI,  
3 June 1934<sup>1</sup>**

Confidential

**THE NEXT TASKS IN THE SPHERE OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL  
CONSTRUCTION OF THE PARTY (SOUTH AFR.)**  
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The next four years that have elapsed since the VII Congress of the Party were years of a severe struggle inside the Party against the survivals of Bunting-ism, for the line of the Comintern, on questions pertaining to the colonial revolution, years of an unprecedented sharpening of the antagonisms between the toiling mass and Anglo-Boer imperialism, between the working class and the bourgeoisie. On this basis the Party succeeded to a considerable degree in increasing its influence upon the broad masses of the toilers, in heightening its authority in the eyes of the toiling native population, and in making some headway in the mutual relations of the white and the native workers. However, the organizational consolidation of this growing influence of the Party is exceedingly weak. The Party was not able to reconstruct itself on the basis of

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1. It seems most likely that this resolution, approved by the Political Commission of the ECCI before Marks's and Mofutsanyana's departure from Moscow in August-September, provided the basis for them to oust Kotane as secretary of the CPSA at the end of 1934. From the way the document is formulated (e.g. 'the Congress puts forward the task . . .', etc.) it would seem that it was intended as a more or less exact text of the resolution of the next party congress.

the organizational principles of Bolshevism, it did not overcome the remnants of the Laborite traditions which came to it as a heritage from the old opportunist leadership.

The main shortcomings in the organizational construction of the Party are the following:

1. The Party has not yet reconstructed itself on the basis of factory cells. The existing factory cells work very badly and do not get sufficient help and leadership from the Party committees.

2. There is not a growth in membership in the Party as a result of the lack of systematic recruiting work, incorrect methods of recruiting and large fluctuation. The Party came to the Congress so weak numerically that it is more like a group of people who think alike than a real revolutionary Party of the working class.

3. The revolutionary trade unions work extremely badly as a result of the existence of strong sectarian tendencies, the leaders' fear of the masses, the bad work of the Communist fractions in the unions, the supplanting of Bolshevik leadership by means of convincing and winning the confidence of the masses, by bare administration from the Party.

4. The principle of inner Party democracy is systematically violated in the Party – the Party Committees are not elected, they do not report before the Party members, the members of the Party are not drawn into the discussions of the main questions of Party work.

5. There is an absence of the necessary concern for the promotion, the training and the preparation of new Party cadres from among the lower worker Party activists. For this reason, the Congress puts forward the task of the fundamental organizational construction of the Party on the basis of the organizational principles of Bolshevism, the task of the fundamental changing of the entire system of Party work, as the most urgent and important task of the Party.

#### FACTORY CELLS

1. The main task of the Party in the field of organizational construction is to transfer the central weight of Party work to the factories, the strengthening of the existing factory cells and the formation of new ones in those factories where there have not been many up to the present. Every factory must become our 'stronghold' – this must be the slogan for the organizational reconstruction of the Party. The Party factory cell must become the basic lower organization of the Party. It unites all the Communists who work in a given factory, regardless of where they live. The Congress instructs the CC and the District Committees of the Party to make a registration of all the Communists, according to their place of work, and to organize cells in those factories where there are not less than 3 Party members.



2. The main tasks of the factory cells are the following:

a) To carry on daily mass agitational work among the workers in the factory by the systematic individual and group agitation by the Party members, which must be one of the basic duties of the Communists. The calling of general workers' meetings or the utilization of meetings called by the white reformist unions or the national reformist organizations for the purpose of the slogans and policy of the Party.

The publication of a factory Party paper, leaflets, etc. The popularization of the Party slogans and decisions and the organization of the masses for their fulfilment.

b) The acceptance and the training of new Party members. The main method for attracting the workers into the Party should be individual recruiting of the best revolutionary elements from the working class, the peasantry and the intellectuals. Acceptance into the Party should take place through the cell, and where there is no cell, through the corresponding Party committee.

Alongside of the unfolding of recruiting of new members, the Party organization should strive to put a stop to fluctuation, welding the new members around the Party. The struggle against fluctuation to take place along the following line: 1) a change in the methods of recruiting along the lines indicated above; 2) the immediate drawing of new comrades into the active work of the cells and giving them the necessary assistance in the work; 3) putting more life into the inner Party work of the cells – and regularity of Party meetings with the discussion of general political questions as well as questions pertaining to the factory, the development of self-criticism and inner Party democracy, etc.; 4) the organization of political study and in the first place, acquainting the new members of the Party with the political line of the Party and its immediate tasks.

c) To mobilize the masses of the workers for the struggle against the employers' offensive and for their daily economic demands. To lead the economic struggle of the workers of their factories, to link up the economic struggles of the workers with the political tasks of the struggle against imperialist rule, for an independent native republic, against the policy of 'civilized' labor,<sup>2</sup> against the policy of social discrimination, for recognition of the native trade unions, etc.

d) To lead the trade union work in the factories through the Communists. To conduct a struggle against social-fascists and national reformist influence, for the united front of the white, native and the colored workers of their factories. To win the confidence in the Party on the part of the main masses of the workers in the factory.

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2. See footnote 3 to document 14, vol. II.

e) The street cells remain as auxiliary lower Party organizations uniting individual Party members from among the intellectuals, household workers, workers' wives, artisans, unemployed workers, etc. The main tasks of the street cells are the following: 1) to carry out the instructions of the higher Party organizations, popularizing them among the masses and mobilizing the masses for their fulfilment; 2) to help the factory and mine cells in distributing leaflets, papers, by individual agitation in the workers' houses, recruiting new members for the Party and raising their political level; 3) The organization of the native population in the locations for the struggle against the eviction of workers and unemployed, against the 'pick-up',<sup>3</sup> against the imposition of taxes, auction sales, etc.

### THE VILLAGE CELLS

The main task of the Party in the agricultural districts within the immediate future is the formation of Communist cells. The Congress instructs the CC and the District Committees to assign a group of Communists within the near future to be sent into the villages for permanent work. The cells should, in the first place, be organized on the big European farms, the sugar plantations in Natal, the cotton plantations in Cape Province.

The practical work of the village cells should be along the following lines:

1. The Party cell is to conduct daily mass and individual agitation among the peasantry, explaining to them the real reasons for their semi-slave condition, mobilizing them for the struggle for land, against taxes and other methods of feudal-imperialist exploitation, popularizing the idea of the anti-imperialist revolution and the native independent republic, as the only way leading to the path of the free development of the peasant economy, popularizing the idea of the alliance of the working class with the peasantry and the hegemony of the proletariat as an indispensable condition, guaranteeing the victory of the anti-imperialist revolution.

2. The Party cells on the reservations are to conduct the daily struggle of the native peasants against the collection of taxes and the sale of the property of those in arrears, for the free watering of the cattle under the supervision of the peasants themselves, for immediate assistance by means of food and seed to the starving peasants who are suffering as a result of the drought and other natural calamities, for the free supply of fertilizer to the peasants and the irrigation of the peasants' fields at the expense of the state. For the practical leadership and organization of the struggle of the peasantry for some demand

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3. 'Pick-up' – police round-ups in public places resulting in arrests and fines of dozens of visitors for minor offences. The arrested were then imprisoned or, more often, fined. In effect, a form of harassment of the black population and a way to swell police coffers.



or other, the cell organizes Peasant Committees of Action, ensuring its leading role in them.

3. The Party cell on the European farms organizes and leads the struggles of the hired laborers against the farmers and the colonial government. A league of hired laborers should be organized as a practical organ for this revolutionary struggle.

The Party cells in the villages must remind the peasants and explain to them on as widespread a scale as possible that our Party gives the most energetic support to all the revolutionary demands of the peasantry, directed against Anglo-Boer rule and that are able to improve their situation, including the confiscation of the land which has been seized by the imperialists.

4. The Party cell conducts a systematic struggle against the influence of the tribal chiefs, the National Congress and national reformism, exposing their treacherous role on the basis of concrete facts, counter-posing its Communist line of struggle and correct militant Bolshevik leadership to them, with this can win the confidence of the main masses of the peasantry in our Party on the basis of participation in the daily struggles of the peasantry.

5. The Party cell must organize and lead the struggle of the agricultural workers. On the European farms and plantations the cell through its membership, must organize and direct the trade unions of the agricultural workers which must include the regular and the seasonal workers, as well as those sections of the hired laborers for whom their wages are the main means of life. In the native reservations where there is not yet a basis for the organization of an Agricultural Workers Union, the Party cells should nevertheless carry on special work among the native poor, calling them to separate meetings, welding them around the cells and converting them into a support for the cells.

#### THE PARTY AND THE MASS ORGANIZATIONS OF THE WORKING CLASS

1. The Congress makes it the duty of all the Party organizations to achieve a decisive change within the shortest possible time, in the mutual relations of the Party and the trade unions. Members of the Party who are able to be trade union members should join the unions belonging to the AFTU, and become members of the corresponding reformist and national reformist unions. In those places where the native workers are not accepted into the reformist trade unions, the members of the Party are obliged to strive to have them admitted in these unions and in extreme cases to organize their independent parallel union of native workers, but this should always be done with the permission of the AFTU. The Party committees have the duty of seeing that all the Party members who can belong to some trade union organization, must enter such organizations.

2. The members of the Party who belong to a reformist trade union should be organized into Communist fractions inside these unions. The tasks of the Communist fractions in the trade unions are laid down in the decisions of the Comintern on the work of the Communists in the trade unions. The Congress proposes that the Party organizations should be guided by these decisions, which were published in Labor Monthly, in their day to day practical work in the trade unions.

3. In the country there are a number of mass organizations of the native population, such as the Teachers' Association, Sport Clubs, Youth organizations, etc., which at the present time are entirely under the influence of national reformism and imperialism of the form of the united councils. The Congress proposes that the Communists should join these organizations, organize Communist fractions in them and carry on work to gain influence and to organizationally consolidate our influence in these organizations, directing the activity of these organizations into the channels of the anti-imperialist struggle.

#### PARTY LEADERSHIP

1. The Congress considers it necessary to re-examine the structure of the Party in accordance with the statutes of the Party.

2. The Party can be the leader of the revolutionary struggle of the masses only when the decisions of its organs will be obligatory for the Party members and will be carried out by them. The Congress notes that up to the present, individual members of the Party show a lack of any initiative and the lack of sufficient activity in carrying out the line of the Party and the various decisions of its organs, and the feeling of responsibility for the Party as a whole is lacking. The Congress calls upon all Party members to see to it that the necessary proletarian discipline for the Party is established in its ranks and that they should resolutely fight against any violations of Party discipline.

3. In carrying out the general leadership of all the activity of the Party, the CC should in every way encourage and support the initiative of the Party organizations within the framework of Party decisions. This is particularly important in the conditions of illegal work when the success of all the Party work will depend upon the degree of initiative in the lower Party organizations.

The Party will be militant and capable of fighting and the leadership of the committees will be operative only if the Party committees will independently adopt decisions and carry them out without waiting for directives from the center on each concrete question.

4. A very important task of the Party is the selection and training of Party cadres from among the foremost class-conscious workers, especially natives who have shown their loyalty to the Party and the revolution, their ability to



organize and lead the masses. The practical application of the political line of the Party depends to a considerable degree upon the existence of an adequate number of Party workers, their correct allotment, their contacts with the masses and depends upon the degree to which they are prepared for such or other work. The main conditions for the bringing up of new Party cadres is the activization of the factory cells and the drawing of all the Party members into their practical work. Only direct practical work in the cells makes experienced and staunch Communists from among whom activists, and the leadership of the Party will be selected. On the basis of a systematic study of the personal composition of the cells, in their daily work, the most talented and devoted comrades are picked out. These comrades should be boldly promoted to leading Party work, they should be rendered all possible assistance, especially with regard to raising their revolutionary theoretical training, etc.

5. The Hertzog-Smuts imperialist colonial government is carrying on an intensified offensive against the workers organizations and the Party. The Congress therefore places before the Party, as an absolutely urgent and important task, to make preparations for going underground and to have a more flexible combination of legal and illegal methods of work.

While insisting upon and protecting the legal possibilities in every way, the Party organizations should immediately develop intensive mass work in preparation for illegality, explaining to the members of the Party the necessity of illegal work, point out the forms of the Party structure in underground work, the forms and methods of Party work under such conditions, the duties of the members of an illegal party, etc., strengthening the Communist fractions in the mass organizations, collecting cadres for leading illegal work, creating an illegal apparatus, etc. The CC should instruct all the leading Party comrades on the methods of illegal Party work and point out that going over into an illegal condition should not be regarded as a technical, organizational task of reconstructing the apparatus and introducing conspiratorial methods, but as a change in the system of Party work.

If the Party will be compelled to go underground, it must safeguard the cadres and the contacts between the Party organizations, must preserve the mass character of the Party and the main thing is broad contact with the masses. At the same time the Party should to a greater extent utilize all the legal possibilities of contacts with the masses along the line of utilizing the mass national reformist and reformist organizations, along the line of forming its mass legal organizations under the guise of various entirely legal organizations (Co-operatives, Sport Clubs, Mutual Aid Societies, etc.).

6. If the experience of the mass struggle shows that the tactics and the methods of work applied by the CC do not conform with the tasks set up by the Party, the CC should carefully analyse the mistakes committed and the

shortcomings and weaknesses and mobilize the Party members for rectifying these mistakes.

RGASPI, 495/20/654/268-73.

Original in English (Comintern translation of the Russian original text. See: RGASPI, 495/20/654/196-204).

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2) Russian original (in German).

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June 27, 1934<sup>5</sup>

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#### Letter from Comintern to CPSA, 27 June 1934

Confidential

#### LETTER ON THE QUESTION OF THE UNITED FRONT TO THE C.P. OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Dear Comrades!

The imperialist attack upon the working class has called forth a broad mass strike movement in South Africa embracing almost all branches of industry. The main masses of the working class, the white as well as the native workers, were drawn into the struggle.

The strike struggles during the years of the crisis have raised the labour movement in South Africa to a new and a higher level and this was expressed in the fact that the Party succeeded in organising a number of joint actions of the white and native workers which increased the influence of the Party in the economic struggle of the working class.

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4. The text is unclear. It is either '5' corrected to '6' or vice versa.

5. Probably the date when this copy of the English text was typed.