

discussions on these questions and to accept the resolution submitted by the CI as the line for their every-day practical work. If the party will create a firm ideological and organisational foundation it will be a big step forward in the struggle for the emancipation of the South African toiling masses from capitalist exploitation and will advance the general fight of the working class and the oppressed people against world imperialism.

COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL
(Gallacher)

RGASPI, 495/64/59/10-11.

Original in English.

Typed. Copy.

Stamped: 1) 1066 - 22.XII.1927.

2) Archives of the Comintern

(in Russian)

3) Material for the Secretariat

(in German)

Inscription: Manuilsk.
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51

**Letter from W. Demar to Secretariat, ECCI,  
24 December 1927**

TO THE SECRETARIAT OF THE ECCI

Confidential  
24 December 1927.

The telegram to the Party congress of South Africa is underwritten by Com. Gallacher, who is now the Executive Secretary. However, I fully share the responsibility and ask to accept the following explanation.

1. On the essence of the matter.

On 9th August the Anglo-American Secretariat forwarded to the South African Party<sup>1</sup> a resolution<sup>2</sup> with the enclosed special letter, which had been worked out by the Anglo-American Secretariat and discussed by the Politsecretariat of the ECCI.

1. Here and elsewhere in the document: the Communist Party of South Africa.  
2. See document 45.

On the 1st of this December Com. La Guma reported to us at a meeting of the Anglo-American Secretariat that this resolution had not been approved by the present Central Committee and that measures should be taken to discuss it at the congress which begins on 1 January. The Central Committee does not agree to one of the main points, i.e. to the question of focusing the work on the native masses. Simultaneously we understood from La Guma's report that the Party has done next to nothing in regard to winning the sympathy of the masses inside the only native trade union<sup>3</sup> in South Africa. The expelled communists remain outside the Union and a tendency towards the organisation of native workers outside this Union appeared.

Since the discussion of the South African resolution by the Comintern a number of events took place. Kadalie, Secretary of the aforementioned native trade union, took part in the Congress of the Amsterdam International and at the Labour Conference at the League of Nations.<sup>4</sup> People from Amsterdam advertise their connection with colonial workers, trying to refute, with the help of Kadalie, our agitation about Amsterdam not being interested in colonial peoples.

On the basis of all this information the Anglo-American Secretariat resolved at its plenary meeting on 1 December:

- a) To instruct Cd. La Guma to do everything possible for the Central Committee of the Party to adopt the resolution of the ECCI;
- b) that the South African Party must pay special attention to the struggle inside among the native trade union attempting to reinstate the expelled and organise the left wing for the struggle against Kadalie;
- c) that the Party must concentrate its attention on the work among the Natives and head for becoming a mass party of Native workers.

Such instructions were given to Cd. La Guma, and it was resolved that the South African question would be considered by the Politsecretariat. Because of the Party Congress this could not be done and La Guma left.

2. About sending the telegram.

The congress will take place on 1 January, and La Guma left Moscow on 5 December to attend the meeting of the League Against Imperialism in Brussels. It was necessary to make the instructions drawn up by the Anglo-American Secretariat known to the congress at any cost. Therefore, 3 points adopted by the Secretariat have been worded as a telegram. In order to avoid sending the telegram from Moscow it was decided to hand it in to Cd. Inkpin for the dispatch from London. Cd. Inkpin stayed in Moscow for 8 days after the

3. Here and elsewhere in the document: Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union.  
4. 1927 Labour Conference in Geneva sponsored by the International Labour Organisation of the League of Nations.



telegram had been worked out, and the text of the telegram was submitted to the Secretariat in time. But there have been no meetings. Inkpin has left and probably he either has sent the telegram already or will send it one of these days.

I realise that every document should be issued by the highest organs of the ECCI and that in this a mistake was made but at the same time I have listed a whole number of circumstances which, no doubt, mitigate the mistake of the Anglo-American Secretariat.

We have sent by telegraph political suggestions which are very important for the congress of the South African Party and which had been discussed and adopted by the ECCI. Although the resolution which was adopted in summer generally contained them as a whole, in present circumstances they need to be specifically stressed and strongly recommended to the Party congress.

Demar.<sup>5</sup>  
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RGASPI, 495/64/61/54-6.

Original in Russian.

Typed.

Stamped: No. 1352 - 9 JAN 1928

Inscription: O.F./3 cop.

24-XII-27

(typed)

52

Report of Activities, Anglo-American Secretariat, ECCI, [late 1927 or early 1928] (Extract)¹

[...]

SOUTH AFRICA

Concerning South Africa we have handed in a very short report. The most important achievement of the Comintern in regard to the small South African Party² is that it has put forward a slogan of independent native republic and directed the attention of the Com. Party more towards the natives. There has

Doc. 51

5. Signature in English.

Doc. 52

1. The date is established on the basis of the contents of the document.
2. The Communist Party of South Africa.

been an appreciable opposition towards this line in the Communist Party of South Africa. This opposition has hardly been overcome completely. At the same time the new tactical line has been implemented, and it brings very good results that have been stressed at the last two pages (5 and 6) of our short report.

It is necessary to add that in the last several years we have been maintaining close and direct contact with the South African Communist Party.

[...]

RGASPI, 495/72/25/242.

Original in Russian.

Typed.

53

Letter from J. La Guma to V. Demar, 10 January 1928

62, Hanover St.,

Cape Town,

10.1.28.

Dear Comrade Victor,

This is to inform you that I arrived back in Cape Town safely after an uneventful voyage. We attended the General Council of the League against Imperialism at Brussels and there I parted with Gumede.

With regard to the Party affairs here I am very much afraid that the recent thesis submitted by the ECCI to the South African Party is going to mean a split on colour lines again or prove very strong purgative.

Since my arrival in Cape Town we have had very hot arguments on the thesis supported by the entire black membership. It seems that at the Congress of the Party there has been more of a colour division than anything else on the question of adoption of the thesis or rejection. The European comrades who spoke against it advanced the same bankrupt arguments as embodied in the letter I read to the Anglo-American Secretariat; but nothing of a constructive nature was put forward. I am given to understand from Comrade Gomas who was one of the delegates from the Cape Town Branch to the Congress, that the thesis has been referred back to the newly elected Central Executive (the personnel of which is practically the same) for discussion with Gumede and myself on our return from Europe. I am therefore waiting in Cape Town for Gumede and will accompany him to Johannesburg to fight for the adoption by the Party of the thesis as submitted, since in the opinion of the non-European comrades it is what is required by us. Good progress has been made amongst the natives this last year according to the report of the CE considering