

The three nominees, Danchin, Kalk and Kelly were discussed and it was finally agreed unanimously that Comrades Danchin and Kalk be appointed.

Comrade R. Bunting moved that the Lenin Course students be instructed not to leave before October. Carried.

Y.C.I. Congress. It was unanimously agreed that Comrade E.R. Roux be appointed delegate to the Y.C.I. Congress.

Basutoland.

The Secretary reported that Gumede would probably be invited to the Conference of the Lekhotla la Bafo, and that he had no funds to proceed with. It was agreed that the expenses of Gumede and Comrade Thibedi be paid.

Literature report.

Comrade Sachs was instructed to prepare a report for submission to the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 11.30 p.m.

Confirmed this 17th day of May, 1928
Chairman

RGASPI, 495/64/75/24.

Original in English.

Typed.

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Minutes of Meeting, Negro Commission, Sixth Congress, Comintern, 11 August 1928 (Extract)

MINUTES OF NEGRO COMMISSION OF AUGUST 11, 1928
IN ROUND HALL OF DOM SOYOUSOV.¹

Present: Petrovsky, Williams, Nasonoff, Haywood, Roux, Jones, Phillips, Lasorey, Douglass, Whiteman, Adams, Bittelman, Representative from Columbian Party, Wicks, Wilson, Rivers, Bunting, Mrs. Bunting, Jacquemot, Farmer, Pepper, Don.²

1. 'Dom Soyousov' – transliteration of the Russian 'House of the Unions', a building in Moscow that housed Nobility Club before 1917 and was taken over by the Council of Trades Unions after the Bolshevik revolution.
2. Only 11 of those present at the meeting were members of the Commission (S.P. Bunting among them). Neither E. Roux nor R. Bunting were members.

Discussed.

Order of business

1.) Report of Comrade Bunting on South Africa which was submitted in writing. In the reading of this report it developed that there are certain differences of opinion in the Communist Party of South Africa in regard of the carrying out of the Comintern resolution sent to Africa last year.

Decided.

That the order of business be the following:

1) South African report 2) Negroes outside of South Africa and USA
3) Resolution on Negroes in U.S.A.

1.) Motion of Bittelman that Comrade Petrovsky give a brief report of the so-called misunderstanding first, that is, the difference of opinion which has arisen between the ECCI and the South African Communist Party.

Carried unanimously.

Report of Comrade Petrovsky: 1.) When Comrade Laguma was here in 1927 we had meetings with him and discussed the Negro problem in South Africa. Information received from Laguma does not co-incide with that received from Com. Bunting. For instance, Laguma reported that the Party had about 455 members of which 400 were white and the rest black.

2.) The new stand taken by the Industrial and Commercial Union which is composed of black workers. This union, under the leadership of Kadalie, has decided (1) not to allow Communists to occupy responsible positions and (2) to eventually expel them from the union. Comrade Laguma says that they are powerless to resist this which caused us to think something must be wrong as this union was organised and built up practically by our forces. We meant that the approach of the Communists in South Africa must be wrong since this is the union of the most oppressed population in the world and the rules which would apply in the case of the old bureaucracies in the imperialist countries would not apply here. After a careful study of all the material submitted at that time we came to the conclusion that the South African C.P. does not pay enough attention to the Negro problem, does not sufficiently stand as the champion of the Negroes and understand the peculiar relations of forces among the Negroes themselves. It seems that the Party believes it can simply organise the masses of proletarianised Negroes directly into the Party itself.

On the basis of this a resolution was worked out which was accepted by the Political Secretariat and Presidium of the Comintern. (Then Comrade Petrovsky went on to explain some of the points in this resolution for the benefit of those comrades who had not the opportunity of reading it). This resolution stressed

the need for an agrarian programme and the slogan for an independent Native South African Republic.

After Comrade Petrovsky's explanation Comrade Roux of South Africa asked for permission to state his point of view as he said that since the delegation had arrived in Moscow differences of opinion had arisen among the delegation. Permission was granted and Comrade Roux submitted two documents setting forth his point of view.³ Comrade Roux also stated that he believes that the South African C.P. has not paid sufficient attention to the detailed programme and that there has not been a thorough-going discussion of the role of the Communist Party. The Party has sort of decided to live from day to day on the immediate issues that arise and to adhere to the idea that no programme is needed. This shows the extreme youth and look⁴ of understanding of the party.

Decided:

b.)⁵ Motion that a commission of three be appointed to draw up a resolution which will state clearly a repudiation of the arguments put forward by the majority of the CEC of the S.A. C.P. Commission to consist of Comrades Haywood, Bittelman and Williams.

Amendment that Comrades Bunting and Roux be added to the commission.

Amendment that Bittelman be responsible for this commission

MOTION AS AMENDED CARRIED.

[...]

Secretary
Williams
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RGASPI, 495/155/56/111-12. For the full text of the document see: 495/155/56/111-16.

Original in English.

Typed.

3. Roux's documents have not been found in the Archive. His proposals were not accepted by the Commission. For Roux's participation in the Commission and his changing views on the Comintern resolution on South Africa see: S. Johns, *Raising the Red Flag. The International Socialist League and the Communist Party of South Africa, 1914-32*. Cape Town: Mayibuye Books, 1995, 224-5.

4. lack.

5. There is no point 'a' in the original.

**Letter from J. La Guma to D. Petrovsky,  
22 August 1928**

Conf.  
Johannesburg  
August 22nd 1928.

Comrade Petrovsky

Dear Comrade,

I notice that our delegates to the Sixth Congress have exposed their political leanings of which I have been for a considerable time suspicious. We have had quite a bad time in the Party since the arrival of the Thesis, but we – the minority in the Central Executive are fighting on. The crowd led by Bunting are unable to divorce their feelings from the parasitical white worker who are using the black worker now as a cat paw. We have had a number of strikes of workers in this federation recently. On two occasions the blacks came out in sympathy and support of the whites and were shamelessly betrayed on both occasions. The white Communist in the Party pass these instances over without a thought. Theirs is only a sort of pro-native feeling not a Communist one at all. And I am going to make every effort at the next Congress of the C.P.S.A. to change the leadership.

There is a project afoot to send two white members of the Central Executive to the Lenin Institute<sup>1</sup> for a three years course. I tell you frankly I have no confidence in them to return from Moscow and do any party work. Both of them Danchin and Kalk by name are useless to the Party at present. Have good bank balances and in my opinion are merely attracted by the novelty of Moscow and would like to have a three years holiday there at the movement's expense. The one Kalk is a Secretary of the White Furniture Workers Union here at a salary of £35 per month and the other – Danchin a book-keeper at a bigger wage still – naturally obtained at the expense of the cheap black worker. What can these people do for a proletarian revolutionary movement and that a black slave movement. Besides they have never yet given any proof of their sincerity to the Party here – it seems that it is merely a hobby to them. I trust you will be<sup>2</sup> on the look out and not be imposed upon. I am inclined to think that even if the Thesis is adopted by the delegates to the Sixth Congress –

1. International Lenin School.

2. There is a crossed-out word after 'be'.