

It was therefore accepted that the Com. Thibedi's accusation fell to the ground. [...]

RGASPI, 495/64/75/39-40. For the full text of the document see: RGASPI, 495/64/75/1-41.

Typed. Copy. Corrections by hand.

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**Resolution of Political Secretariat, ECCI,
19 October 1928 (Extract)¹**

RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICAN QUESTION. 19.X.1928.

[...] While developing and strengthening the fight against all the customs, laws and regulations which discriminate against the native and coloured population in favour of the white population, the Communist Party of South Africa must combine the fight against all anti-native laws with the general political slogan in the fight against British domination, the slogan of AN INDEPENDENT NATIVE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC AS A STAGE TOWARDS A WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' REPUBLIC WITH FULL RIGHTS FOR ALL RACES BLACK, COLOURED AND WHITE. [...]

RGASPI, 495/20/653/43. For the full text of the document see: RGASPI, 495/20/653/39-49.

Typed.

Stamped: 1) Valid. (in German)
2) Pol. S-t 9/14-19.X.-28 (in English)
3) Pol. Secr.. 19.X.28. (in Russian)

1. This brief extract from the 'Resolution on South African Question' is included as it contains the final version of the slogan of an independent native South African republic as adopted authoritatively by the ECCI at the conclusion of discussions during and after the 6th Congress of the Comintern.

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**Report of V. Danchin and W. Kalk to Anglo-American Secretariat, ECCI,
[5 December 1928] (Extract)¹**

REPORT ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Internally, the Party is faced with the problem of its attitude to the policy decided upon by the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International in regard to the slogan of a 'Black republic'.^x

[...]

This slogan, has produced considerable discussion in the Party since it was put forward a year ago. The consensus of opinion, including that of the majority of the native comrades, was definitely against its adoption. Although accepted by the Capetown branch, it was rejected by the Johannesburg branch. At annual conference of the Party in January it was decided to refer the matter back to the Central Executive (consisting of 8 whites and 5 Natives) which, in turn, was divided on the matter, the majority being against it and the minority consisting of three, being in its favour. The principal grounds for opposing the slogan are as follows. It is generally recognised in South Africa, both by the black and white sections of the population, that the position of the white race there is radically different from that of any other 'colony', in so far as it is made up of a nation of 1³/₄ million people, comprising all classes, who regard the country as their permanent home. Further, the white working class, who number close on 200,000 and whose numbers are growing, despite its present attitude of 'leaving matters to the Pact Government', had produced an important labour movement, politically and industrially, which is capable of, and practised in, militant action against the capitalist class. A good deal of progress in their ranks has been made by the Communist Party in recent years in its propaganda that the interests of the white and black workers are identical, and some notable practical achievements have resulted. On the other hand, our native propagandists have popularised this idea amongst the black workers, who, as a consequence, have, on several occasions, shown their readiness to fight side by side with the whites. In sharp contradictions to these

^x The following passage gives the arguments against the slogan adopted by the VI World Congress of the Comintern. The Resolution of the ECCI on the South African Question completely rejects these arguments: but they are instructive for us as showing the ideas which we have to liquidate. Our last letter to South Africa stressed the line of the Comintern on this question. NEAL.

1. This document is undated but minutes of the meeting of the Anglo-American Secretariat of 5 December 1928 indicate that a report on South Africa was delivered on that date by 'Johns' and 'Brown'. See: RGASPI, 495/72/43/22-3.

achievements stands out the fact that the previous agitation of native nationalists for a 'Black Africa' have met with complete failure. Now, in the words of one of our most advanced Native organisers, 'we are asked to preach black racialism although we have hitherto condemned every kind of racialism – black or white'. Another point is that as far as British imperialism, as such, is concerned, there is the curious position that, owing to the Native policy pursued by Britain while administering the Cape, England is regarded as a 'friend' by large masses of the natives. Furthermore, in the present circumstances, it is extremely probable that if the Party propagates the slogan it will be brought 'within the law' of 'setting black against white', and its legal existence made impossible. The Party is too weak as yet to go 'underground' and fight illegally, and if it is outlawed it would be forced into extinction. All these difficulties can, however, be avoided by pursuing the Party's present day policy of concentrating on the building up of mass organisation of native workers, and overcoming the prejudices of the white workers. When the achievements are reached the South African proletariat will form a force to be reckoned with politically and an invincible power industrially. As against these arguments the protagonists of the slogan (who number three on the Central Executive, two of these being whites) contend that, owing to the white working class forming an 'aristocracy of labour', unity between black and white labour is impossible, and that our policy on these lines should be abandoned in favour of an 'all-black' policy.

The matter came to a head when our delegates left for the Sixth World Congress of Communist International, when the Central Executive Committee decided (by the above-mentioned majority) to oppose the thesis of which the slogan forms a part and to submit a counter-thesis to the Congress for its consideration. A statement of the minority views was however, also to be put before the Congress. When the news reached South Africa that the Congress had adopted the original thesis and slogan, with some slight modifications, the general feeling in the Party was to withhold further criticism and discussion until the delegates returned and reported fully, but the opposition to the slogan was undiminished. The delegates were due in South Africa about the middle of November, since when, of course, we are without news as to further development of the matter.

Another urgent need of the Party at the moment is an adequate number of trained and capable native propagandists and organisers for work among the native masses in town and country. More branches could be opened, and existing branch activities extended, if the suitable man power could be obtained. The Party conducts an evening school at its hall in Johannesburg, where about eighty adult pupils, mainly drawn from the industrial workers in the town, receive training in the English language, arithmetic, Communism, etc. Good result have been achieved, ex-students of the school now being in charge of the Party branches at Potchefstroom and Vereeniging, but much more should be done in this direction. The invitation received some time ago

to send ten native comrades to study at the Moscow Oriental University² was therefore welcomed by the Party as an important step towards creating a great expanse in its activities. Owing to passport and other difficulties, however, it has, up to the present, been found impossible to send the students overseas. The attempt has, however, not been abandoned, and it is hoped that in the very near future the first contingent will go forward.

Danchin and Kalk

RGASPI, 495/64/74/2-3. For the full text of the document see: RGASPI, 495/64/74/1-3.³

Original in English.

Typed.

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**Letter from Anglo-American Secretariat, ECCI,
to Central Executive Committee, CPSA,
14 December 1928**

The CEC of the
C.P. South Africa.

December 14, 1928.

Dear Comrades,

The two comrades for the Lenin School¹ duly arrived a few weeks ago. Everything has been fixed up for them and they are quite comfortably installed in the School. We have to acknowledge receipt of your CEC minutes which they brought. On looking through the minutes, a number of questions arise which we would like to raise with you.

First of all, we notice from the minutes that there is a certain amount of unsettledness with regard to the work of Comrade Laguma. We are particularly interested in the overtures made to Comrade Laguma by the ICU, especially in view of the definite anti-Communist policy of Kadalie and the ICU. We should like to have fuller information on the situation and some

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2. KUTV.

3. KUTV. A slightly different version of the same text is found at RGASPI, 495/43/48-51.

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1. Victor Danchin and Willie Kalk.