

know what to do with them as it could not give its new members anything but agitation. Instead of organising them on the basis of economic and political demands, they dubbed them Communists, without ^{going any} further. It would be a very difficult and drawn out process to train and develop these masses into real Party members, and the Party would do better if it would try to organise the most active, conscious, and prepared elements, give them an ideological foundation, develop them and give them some work to do. So long as the Party will not be ideologically strong and trained along international lines, it can never become a serious mass organisation.

The Party must pay much more attention to the native intellectuals. There can be no doubt that we could still snatch away from their ranks the uncorrupted elements who feel strongly on national questions, who stand close to the masses. Many of them are already under bourgeois influence as they have been poisoned in the schools with religious bunk, and have adopted many harmful views. But these influences have not gone deep and if ^{proper} work were done on our part, good elements would come to us from that camp. That work has already begun, but it is hard to tell how it will develop further.

Apart from the proposals arising from the given characteristics, I should like to offer a few others. Firstly, it would be advisable to give the Party a comrade for about a year or more (preferably an English-man) for organisational work, a comrade who could freely live and work in the country and who ^{would} be suitable for the job (a man with an independent political orientation), a practical politician, one who would be able to show the comrades how to work, one who understands the trade union movement and who could be an organiser). That would be of great help to the Party. Secondly, more instructions should be given to the comrades and correspondence carried on with them more regularly. They have no addresses, but chiefly they lack the desire to correspond with the ECCI. This perhaps is the result of some misunderstandings and personal impressions received by some of the comrades, but, be it as it may, this must be overcome. The same is true with regard to the British Party. They have paid very little attention to South Africa. Thirdly, the comrades should be better supplied with literature and propaganda matter. In this respect things are in a very ^{sad} state. The young and new comrades have nothing to read. They cannot develop theoretically. They should be provided also with international information. They are torn away from events. They should also be assisted in their agitation and particularly propaganda. The British Party ought to send them pamphlets in the English language for distribution (sale) as a means of popularisation of the Communist movement. Perhaps special pamphlets should be written. In this case they should be supplied with the available material. They should be helped to organise a library for the active Party members. Considering their poverty, they could not do that on their own, and yet it is of utmost importance. They possess a ^{most un} systematic and diverse collection of pamphlets. They have nothing of Lenin.

I make no proposals, 1) because I don't know how the question is going to be settled, 2) because they themselves must make some effort in this respect.

RGASPI, 495/64/81/45-56.

Original in English (Comintern translation of the Russian original text).

Inscription: K/JS/Tr. From Russian

8403/10

25.9.1929

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**Letter from Maphutseng Lefela to Profintern,
9 October 1929**

Lekhotleng la Bafo,¹

Mapoteng, Box 33

Fickburg

O.F.State

South Africa

9/10/29.

Mr. J.W. Ford

Sir

It is with due respect that I explain for your information that in Basutoland we have started an organisation known by the name of Lekhotla la Bafo. The aim and objective of this organisation is to champion the cause of the common people who are politically gagged and ostracised from the legislative bodies of the territory notwithstanding the fact that the late chief Moshesh, the founder and collector of the present Basuto nation, had established an institution known as Pitso through which his people were able to give their chiefs and the Government their opinion in regard to the national affairs under his government.

Since 1903 the Government abolished this Council and gradually but ruthlessly turned, through legal disabilities, the chiefs titulars, puppets, dupes, parasites and agents and tools of oppression to the people so as to sow the seeds of division and dissafocation of the people against their chiefs to prepare the way for him to deprive the nation of its rights. In doing this the Government officers have succeeded until we organised this Association to fight for the poor oppressed people of Basutoland. The Government officers

1. Lekhotla la Bafo.

have antagonised the chiefs against us and use coercive measures against us in our work to stifle our Association.

The only organisation in South Africa that has extended a helping hand to us is the Communist Party. We have already affiliated our organisation with the League Against Imperialism.

From the Communist Party we had the chance to get and read the *Negro Worker* edited by you and as I do not get it regularly I applied for its subscription to the Communist Party and I was given to know that it is not for sale; and as this journal is most needful and instructive I beg to lodge my application before you to send me few copies of the above mentioned journal to keep our organisation in close connection with the world movement of Negro Workers.

Within a short space of time we shall organize the agricultural Association with which to protect our people from further falling prey and victims to the local capitalist agents, which we shall affiliate to your organisation.

I am,
Sir
Your humble servant
Maphutseng Lefela

RGASPI, 534/7/77/49-50.

Original in English.

Handwritten.

Stamped: Profintern Secretariat No. 16/23/2 - 22.XI.1929 (in Russian).

Inscription: 'See minutes no. 63 of the Secretariat about the affiliation to Profintern of the Federation of Natives of Basutoland'² (in Russian).

2. From minutes no. 63 of the meeting of the Secretariat of the Profintern, 15 November 1929: 'Question: Organisation of Natives of Basutoland joining the Profintern (c. Lozovsky). Decided: To note the information about the joining. To charge the ITUCNW together with the Eastern Department of the Profintern to draft a reply from the Executive Bureau on establishing contacts and the request to explain what kind of information this is. (RGASPI, 534/3/408/1).

The reply of 24 November 1929 signed by the secretary of the Profintern, A. Lozovsky, and addressed to the Acting President of the Lekhotla la Bafo, J. Tsuene, read: 'Dear Comrade, it gives me a great pleasure to confirm the receipt of your application for joining the Profintern. It is a great support of our work when organisations of the oppressed and exploited peoples appeal to us for assistance and advice [...] I ask you to pass on fraternal greetings of the Profintern to the oppressed people of Basutoland and to assure it of the moral support of its struggle against capitalism and imperialism on the part of the world revolutionary trade union movement headed by the Profintern'. (RGASPI, 534/6/24/69).

In May 1930 the Secretariat of the Profintern received M. Lefela's letter of 24 April 1930 addressed to George Padmore, at that time member of the Executive Bureau of the Profintern. The letter contained confirmation of the receipt of *The Negro Worker* and the request to publish M. Lefela's article and Lekhotla la Bafo's open letter to heads of 12 states and to the British Colonial secretary (both enclosed). (RGASPI, 534/7/77/55-74).

**Draft Telegram, Political Secretariat, ECCI to CPSA,
15 October 1929¹**

Confidential

MATERIAL FOR THE SESSION OF THE POLIT-SECRETARIAT,
OCTOBER 16, 1929.

Draft Telegram to South Africa

The struggle against the Native Bill must be waged not through petitions, but in a revolutionary manner. The Party must take the initiative and the leadership in this struggle without fusing with and without giving over the leadership to the reformists, as has been the case with Gumede. The auxiliary organisations can be utilised only if they are based on a mass movement and on local organisations – committees of action, etc. Proclaim December 16² as a day of national disgrace and struggle, conduct broad militant demonstrations under the slogans:

1. Down with the Native Bill, the pass law, and all restrictions of the rights of the natives.
2. Down with the entire system of oppression and plunder of the natives' land.
3. Long live the native republic.
4. United front of the native toilers and the white workers under the leadership of the Communist Party.

Factory meetings should be held on the eve, by all means penetrating the mines. With the aid of the trade unions and other organisations, short strikes with political slogans and demands that December 16th be paid for, should be declared.

1. The Russian original (RGASPI, 495/64/84/14) contains the following postscript: 'Com. Manuilsky! The Eastern secretariat (including myself) supports sending this telegram immediately, a letter would take two months. G. Safarov.' (in Russian). Nasonov crossed this text out and wrote below it: 'The present directive is offered by the Negro Section and has been approved of by the Eastsecretariat. It is necessary to send it as a telegram because the letter may take until the end of November – the beginning of December. Nasonov' (in Russian).

2. Dingane Day. See footnote 1 to document 73, vol. I.