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**Letter from W.H. Andrews to G. Zinoviev,
17 May 1921**

Johannesburg,
May 17th 1921

Mr. Zinoviev,
President,
Communist International,
Moscow.

Dear Comrade,

A movement was initiated at a meeting in Johannesburg on January 2nd this year, with the object of linking all Communist and revolutionary Socialist sections in S. Africa in one Communist Party. Negotiations have proceeded from that date and a meeting was held on Easter Sunday to discuss Socialist unity, at which were represented the International Socialist League, South Africa, the Social Democratic Party, Durban and the United Communist Party, Capetown (which latter is an amalgamation of the Social Democratic Federation of Capetown and the Communist Party of Capetown), and the Jewish Socialist Society (Poalei Zion) Johannesburg. All these sections have agreed to unite on the basis of the twenty-one Points (conditions of admission) to the third International)¹ with the exception of the Social Democratic Party, Durban which remains faithful to the social patriotism and reformism of Hyndman and Co. in England and distributes his organ 'Justice'.

It is intended to call a general Congress of delegates from the various sections on or about August 1st this year in Cape Town, when there is no doubt the new Party will be definitely launched. We therefore desire to have the ruling of your Executive as to the eligibility for membership of the United Communist Party of the Johannesburg Branch (of Poalei Zion). We have attached a memorandum herewith which was handed in to the meeting on Easter Sunday which will explain the position taken up by local representatives of Poalei Zion. We have provisionally decided to accept them as a branch of the United Communist Party pending a decision from your Executive.

I believe the general question will be discussed at the meeting of the International in June and probably the decision there arrived at will be sufficient guide for us in South Africa.

I hope by the time this reaches you that you will have made the acquaintance of Comrade D. Ivon Jones, who with Comrades S. Barlin and J. Den Bakker officially represent the International Socialist League of South Africa in Russia.

1. See footnote 4 to document 5, vol. I.

Trusting that the Congress will be a great success and that the International Proletariat will be immensely strengthened by the deliberations which will take place in Moscow.

We are Yours for the Social Revolution,
W.H. Andrews.
Secretary, Socialist Unity Committee.

RGASPI, 495/64/5/42-4.

Original in English.

Typed on the letterhead of the International Socialist League. Copy.

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(in Russian)

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**Letter from D.I. Jones to L. Trotsky,
2 June 1921¹ (Extract)**

REPLY OF THE DELEGATE OF SOUTH AFRICA, COM. TOM JONES²
(TO C. TROTSKY'S QUESTIONNAIRE, 29.IV.21)

[...]

Dear Comrade Trotsky.

I have answered some of your questions from the point of view of the general British situation. Now I shall discuss the situation in South Africa.

Your questions mainly deal, of course, with America and Europe. As far as South Africa is concerned I feel that they are not quite applicable to the conditions there and that you would have formulated them differently.

True enough, we in South Africa have a vast gold mining industry, concentrated in Johannesburg, based on completely new modern foundations and strongly centralised, with capitalised value of 500 million.³ Nevertheless all

1. This letter was enclosed with Jones' response to L.D. Trotsky's questionnaire about the economic crisis in Europe and the USA, circulated to the delegates of the 3rd Congress of the Comintern.
2. Jones could have used the name 'Tom' instead of his own (David Ivon) for conspiratorial reasons.
3. Most probably, pounds: British currency was used in South Africa at that time.

crises hit London and Paris first and only after that roll to South Africa. At the same time a national capital is coming into existence. But generally South Africa, as well as India, is only a fractional factor of the British capitalist hegemony, the field of cheap labour for England. Our proletariat fully depends on the fluctuations of the London stock exchange and it feeds the White Guards of West End,⁴ rather than the South African bourgeoisie.

We have in Africa a relatively small well paid white proletariat and a relatively big poorly paid native proletariat. They co-exist side by side in the same way as it can be seen on the world scale: a united European industrial proletariat and huge masses of African and Asian producers of raw materials.

Economic crises that you mention in your questionnaire do not exist in South Africa as an independent phenomenon of its capitalist economy because there is neither the capital nor the slaves subordinate to it.

In Britain the awakening up of the proletariat is the result of the economic crisis.

In South Africa economic and political crisis will be the result of the awakening of the black proletariat.

In Britain workers will be awakened by the bankruptcy of capitalism.

In South Africa capitalism will go bankrupt because of the awakening of the proletariat.

South African natives are cheap labour. All the gold mining industry rests on this cheap labour. Their ludicrously small salaries of 2 shillings a day cannot be in any way substantially raised without a panic on the London gold shares market.

This mass of cheap workers owns no property whatsoever and has no desire to own any. The emancipation of white workers of South Africa depends upon the awakening of the native proletariat which will also be a significant factor in advancing the collapse of the world capitalism. These native workers are a perfect material for the Socialist revolution. But they are all illiterate and for this reason they are out of reach of the Communist propaganda. Their mental awakening demands educational institutions of either Capitalism, or Communism – whoever will be the first.

The white proletariat of South Africa is for the most part impenetrable for the revolutionary propaganda, while the native masses are still sleeping. The Chamber of Mines facilitates political, economic and mental development of the natives to increase their chances to compete with white qualified workers. But it is afraid of any radical reforms in this direction. It is afraid to balance living conditions of white and black proletariat the result of which could be the creation of a homogeneous toiling mass and giving white leaders to the dispossessed native masses.

4. This phrase refers to the British bourgeoisie.

But the Comintern should not have any doubts. Native workers are beginning to understand and master the idea of a Workers Organisation (see the report to the Congress⁵) abandoning their hunting and military valour and their spears and javelins as weapons of emancipation. But a workers organisation in the midst of the dispossessed can only be revolutionary. All they need is Communist education and then their awakening will become a powerful factor in the World Revolution.

With greetings from South Africa
Yours D. Tom Jones.
2/6.21

RGASPI, 495/64/2/4-6.

Original in Russian (Comintern translation of an English original text that has not been found in the Archive).

Typed. Copy.

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**Letter from S. Barlin and D.I. Jones to M.V. Kobetsky,
11 June 1921**

Hotel Lux, No. 284,
Moscow.
11th June 1921.

The Secretary,
Communist International.

Dear Comrade Kabetsky,

In accordance with resolutions passed at yesterday's meeting of the Executive of the Comintern we wish to state that Comrade Ivon Jones will serve on the Executive Committee for South Africa with decisive or consultative vote according to the decision of the Bureau, (the strict meaning of the resolution provides a decisive vote for South Africa, but we do not press the point if the Comrades consider it disproportionate).

5. Jones's report to the 3rd Congress of the Comintern.