

supreme court.) Now that the Government has learnt by its mistakes of the past, and particularly now that it has a complete majority and is assured of the co-operation of the S.A.P. opposition (see recent speech of Smuts advocating that the Native Administration Act should be 'tightened up') we may expect drastic legislation against Native agitators and particularly against the Communist Party. Pirow, Minister of Justice, has stated that he intends to introduce legislation enabling the Government to deport those who agitate among Natives, 'particularly Europeans not born in the country'.⁵

The organisation of the League of African Rights is thus in one sense a preparation for approaching illegality of the C.P. It is less likely to be proscribed than the C.P. itself, but this is not so important as the fact that, as a result of the formation of the L.A.R., we are broadening our influence and making contacts among natives all over the country, thus improving our chances of resistance should the Government attempt to drive us underground.

We agree with your suggestions regarding slogans for the C.P. and the demand for pay for workers on Dingaan's Day. As for a stoppage on Saturday, 14 December, we do not think we are strong enough to bring this off. The Federation itself is very weak as a result of internal divisions over a long period, and the big industries, even in Johannesburg, are unorganised. However, in co-operation with the Federation, we shall act, if sufficient support is forthcoming.

We shall report more fully later on the progress of the campaign and the results of the Dingaan's Day demonstrations.

Yours fraternally,

E.R. Roux

P.P. Executive Bureau

Communist Party of South Africa

RGASPI, 495/64/85/33-6.

Typed. Copy.

Stamped: 3900 - 27.NOV.1929

5. Roux stresses this point because of the prominence of East-European born Jews in the leadership of the Party.

**Statement of Executive Bureau, CPSA,
to Colonial Committee, CPGB,
5 November 1929**

REPLY TO POLITICAL LETTER OF THE COLONIAL COMMITTEE OF
THE C.P.G.B. BY THE EXECUTIVE BUREAU
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY (S.A.).
5TH NOVEMBER 1929.

Dear Comrades,

We enclose a reply by Comrade S.P. Bunting to your letter of the 4th February 1929. We do not agree with all the statements made by Comrade Bunting, but we think his letter contains a wealth of information regarding conditions in South Africa, and we accordingly forward it for your consideration. It must be stated, however, that many divergent views on the subject are held by members of our Ex. Bu.

Our main criticism of the letter is that it rather belittles the importance and strength of the African Native Nationalist movement. It is no doubt true that this movement is still weak and divided, but the picture painted by Comrade S.P. Bunting gives a wrong idea of its revolutionary potentialities. The recent events at Durban,¹ and at Robertson in the Cape,² prove the militancy, on occasion, of the I.C.U. Yase Natal and the Cape African Congress.³ In view of these facts it cannot be denied that other organisations than the C.P. are capable of putting up a fight against imperialism. As a matter of fact, there are signs of a rising tide of nationalism among the natives. For instance, the Executive of the Cape African Congress recently adopted a resolution that 'the Slogan "Africa for the Africans" should become the settled policy of the Congress throughout the four

1. The so called 'beer riots' in Durban in June 1929 - the boycott of municipal beer halls which were created for Africans by local authorities in an attempt to regulate and restrict alcohol consumption by the urban African population and to curb 'illegal' beer brewing by local women. 'The Durban system' of municipals beer halls that was first introduced in 1909 and then developed throughout the British empire never worked; rather it created a point of discontent and a rallying issue for various political forces. The Durban boycott and demonstrations were harshly suppressed by police. Despite the prominent presence of Durban communists, first of all, of Johannes Nkosi, the boycott was not organised directly by the CPSA; ICU Yase Natal played the most important role on the ground.
2. A demonstration in Robertson on 24 May 1929 organised by the Western Cape branch of the ANC ended in clashes between the participants and white farmers and the police. This was followed by a night of rioting during which lights were broken and cars stoned in the town.
3. African National Congress in the Cape.

provinces;⁴ that the policy of non-cooperation between whites and non-whites should wherever practicable, become that of the Congress; that secession from the white churches to non-european churches become part of the Congress doctrinal propaganda; removal of white pictures from the homes of non-europeans should be encouraged in order to enhance race reliance and efficiency.' – Star 24/10/29.

On the question of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, the agrarian revolution, the absence of a native feudal class, and a native bourgeoisie, we think that Comr. Bunting gives most of the facts but rather distorts the picture as we see it. Though it is no doubt true that the complete racial emancipation of the African will probably not be achieved before the social revolution, it is still possible to distinguish the present democratic phase of the revolution when national-racial demands (and liberal demands such as education) take first place, from a theoretical later stage when the African proletariat will be stronger and more homogeneous and when the demands of the social revolution will predominate.

The fact that large numbers of the native peasants are indentured for work on the mines and farms does not alter the essentially imperialist character of the exploitation of the peasantry in the reserves and the need for an agrarian revolution to set matters right. Even in the detribalised areas native land hunger and conditions are as strong as, may stronger than, in the reserves. We are therefore justified in endorsing the statement of the Sixth Congress that 'the national question in S. Africa, which is based on the agrarian question, lies at the foundation of the revolution in S. Africa. The black peasantry constitutes the basic moving force of the revolution in alliance with, and under the leadership of the working class.' With regard to a native feudal class it is true that such a class is practically non-existent in S. Africa. Nevertheless the role of the chief must be taken into account. The chiefs have certain traditional powers and privileges which imperialism utilises to strengthen its hold over the tribesmen and their country.

On the question of the native bourgeoisie Comr. Bunting underestimates the role of such petty bourgeois elements as exist (teachers, clerics, independent artisans, small traders etc.) though again most of his facts are correct. The native intelligentsia and petty bourgeoisie, though small in numbers, are of great importance in the present stage of the democratic revolution and should not be ignored. The fact that many of them are in the

4. Most probably, the slogan 'Africa for the Africans' was adopted under the influence of James M. Thaele, president of the Western Cape branch of the ANC. Thaele studied and got his degrees in the USA and was strongly influenced by Garveyism. He had a militant race consciousness and often used the slogan 'Africa for the Africans' in his speeches and writing.

pay of the Government is no reason for underestimating their importance as Comrade Bunting tends to do.

With Communist Greetings,
Fraternally Yours,

A. Nzula,
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on behalf of the Executive Bureau  
~~~~~  
of C.P.S.A.
~~~~~

RGASPI, 495/64/85/14.

Original in English.

Typed.

Stamped: 57 – 1.JAN.1930

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**The Daily Mail about the Role of Comintern in Events in  
South Africa, 20 November 1929**

NEWS FROM ABROAD, TASS, 20 NOVEMBER 1929  
MORNING ISSUE, NO. 2, FV.<sup>1</sup>

On Native Disturbances in South Africa

To Com. Piatnitsky

London, 19/XI (TASS<sup>2</sup>). According to the 'Daily Mail', the role of 'Moscow' in the disturbances of South African natives is confirmed by the news that on 26 September the government of the Union of South Africa intercepted telegrams sent to communist leaders in Durban. In these telegrams the uprising of the natives is set for 16 December. In this connection last week the authorities sent troops to Native settlements situated on the coastal strip and in the Durban area. It is reported that the authorities expect the arrival of a ship to Kapstadt<sup>3</sup> in order to capture some documents and luggage.

RGASPI, 495/19/189/22.

Original in Russian.

Typed.

1. The meaning of this abbreviation is not clear.  
2. Soviet news press agency, 'Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union'.  
3. Cape Town.