

**Letter from R. Naumann to G. Dimitrov,  
3 December 1937<sup>1</sup>**

Confidential

ON THE MEETING WITH COMRADE BILL ANDREWS  
(SOUTH AFRICA)

3.XII.37

The meeting took place on November 29th from half-past four till half-past six o'clock, in the room of Comrade Arnot in the Lux.<sup>2</sup> It was organised in the Lux because Comrade Andrews had no private room in the Grand Hotel, where the necessary questions could be discussed. The meeting was arranged by Comrade Shields, who knows Bill Andrews personally. The following comrades were present at this meeting: Comrades Arnot, his wife, Horner, Shields and myself. The task was to get the opinion of Com. Andrews about the C.P. of S.A. and, if possible, to influence him to join the Party. The discussion was led mainly by Comrades Arnot and Horner who are well known in the movement and their opinion is very valuable to Com. Andrews.

Many questions have been raised in the discussion about the past, about the split in 1914,<sup>3</sup> the foundation of the International Socialist League, about the traditions in S.A., about the parliamentary elections, about the poor whites, the Natives, etc. Com. Andrews showed no bad attitude to the Party, and expressed his opinion that now the Party in S.A. has ~~deep~~ <sup>good</sup> roots among the Natives. In this discussion Com. Arnot and Horner told Bill Andrews that

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1. The German original is signed by Naumann and bears a handwritten letter 'D' indicating that G. Dimitrov had read it.

W.H. Andrews was invited to attend the 20th anniversary celebrations of the Bolshevik revolution. While in Moscow he met with British communists and functionaries of the Comintern. Efforts to encourage W.H. Andrews to return to the CPSA began more than a year earlier. On 8 July 1936, Julia Kruger, an official of the FSU, met with W.H. Andrews in London on her return trip from Moscow and reported to R. Naumann: 'Today I attended the opening of the IFTU Conference as a visitor. I also met Andrews there, who is attending as a fraternal delegate from the S.A. Trades and Labour Council. We lunched together and I broached the subject we discussed together but he put various reasons forward why he cannot participate: firstly, for personal (I think he meant domestic) reasons; secondly, because he considers that he can do far more good by his contacts with right-wing elements if he is not officially connected with the movement; and thirdly he thinks that he is too old.'

Needless to state, I tried to persuade him to think otherwise, and he has promised to consider the matter very seriously. I suggested seeing someone here in London who would be able to communicate to Andrews the position more clearly and he has agreed to this.' (RGASPI, 495/14/346/46-7).

2. See footnote 2 to document 5, vol. I.

3. The split in the Labour Party on the question of the attitude to World War I which resulted in the emergence of the International Socialist League. See document 2, vol. I.

according to their personal opinion Andrews should be a member of the Party. The movement in S.A. would <sup>gain</sup> very much by his membership, especially the European population. In so far as I can remember Com. Andrews did not express his opinion on the question, but he declared that he was expelled from the Party. He got this information about his expulsion only from a newsitem written in 'The Star', the main paper of British finance capital in S.A. On the question would he stand as a Parliamentary candidate in the next election, he had a negative attitude. In discussing this question he mentioned that in the Cape there is the possibility for Comrade Snitcher, member of the C.P. to run as a candidate, as Comrade Snitcher is well known in the Cape.

After returning to the Grand Hotel, Comrade Shields was forced to leave Andrews. I took Comrade Andrews to see a motion picture 'We are from Kronstadt'<sup>4</sup> where the role of the C.P. is strongly portrayed. I think the picture made a deep impression on him. Later he invited me to have some tea with him, and I used this opportunity to discuss some S.A. questions with him, i.e. the poor whites, the Malan movement,<sup>5</sup> the Natives, etc. My impression is that Com. Andrews is a very modest comrade, devoted to the working-class movement. His strong point is, that he is a good trade unionist, well known among the S.A. workers and natives. He does not know Africans.<sup>6</sup>

While he did not commit himself to any statement that he would join the Party, it is clear that the opinions expressed to him, that he should be inside the ranks of the Party have given him serious food for thought and made an impression on him. I introduced myself to him as a scientific worker of the Institute of World Economy.

RGASPI, 495/14/352/87-8.

Original in English.

Comintern translation of the German original text (For the German original see: RGASPI, 495/74/612/44-5).

Typed.

Stamped: 1) 02954 - 4.DEC.1937

(in German)

2) Incom. 759 - 4.XII.1937

(in Russian)

3) RETURN

(in Russian)

20 days

Inscriptions: 1) 3/XII/37

(typed)

GL/1

2) Translation of the statement of Com. Naumann

(in English)

3) S.c.M.<sup>7</sup>

(in Russian)

4. A 1936 Soviet film about the Russian civil war, produced by E.L. Dzigan.

5. The Purified National Party.

6. Obviously, 'Afrikaners'.

7. Secretariat of com. Marty.