



INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL WORKERS UNION OF AFRICA.



Established January, 1919
Branches throughout the Union of South Africa and South-West Protectorate
All Correspondence to be addressed to the Secretary

HEAD OFFICE 16 Market St., JOHANNESBURG.
Phone 3567,
P.O. Box 1872,
Capetown,
1st. Sept. 1927.

RGN/ML

BRANCH

Official Organ: "THE WORKERS HERALD."

Mr. A.W.G. Champion,
Acting National Secretary, I.C.U.
16 Market Street,
Johannesburg.

Dear Comrade,

I confirm my telegram of even date addressed to Durban as per copy attached. On my return to Capetown as per our arrangements I immediately went into the accounts of Capetown Branch with the view to balancing same so that the Branch could Bank and come into the line with our constitution. The accounts as presented to me showed a balance of £2:19:8 at the end of July where-as the balance should have been £6:15:11. This is accounted for by the fact that four different contribution slips for monies received and signed for by the Branch Secretary were not entered in the Cash Book. This ~~may~~ may be said to have been a clerical omission but when we come to August and especially during my absence *the position* is worse.

The position in a nut-shell is that on the 23rd. ult. the Branch Secretary was short in his cash as follows:-
General Funds £7:1:2
Workers Herald £1:16:6
Death Levies £2:9:0
Branch reserve funds 16:6.

This is only as far as I have discovered and I think there may be other smaller amounts, of course against this there is his salary for August £6:0:0.

I shall be glad to have your instructions. In the meantime I appointed Comrade Mrs. Pierce the Lady Organizer to act as Secretary. She will be able to carry on until we meet one when I suggest we discuss the whole matter.

Awaiting your reply.

Yours fraternally,

Mr. A.W.G. Champion,

(2) continued.

Yours fraternally,

Mal Norman

Acting Provincial Secretary, I.C.U.
Western Province.

ACJ/MG.

19th February, 1929.

Mr. B. Gwabini,
Administrative Secretary,
I.C.U.,
14 Market Street,
Johannesburg,
SOUTH AFRICA.

Dear Comrade Gwabini,

I thank you for your letter of January 30th regarding the affairs of the I.C.U. The problem of Kadalie is a difficult one, and in all the circumstances I have not the least doubt that the Union has taken the right course. It is a matter of considerable disappointment to the friends of the I.C.U. in England that Kadalie should have behaved as he has done during the past year or so. It is the more tragic in view of the change in events during the past year. I can assure you that your experiment in trade unionism is being carefully watched by friends and enemies in all parts of the world. Your European friends are particularly anxious that the Union shall succeed. I am glad that Mr. Ballinger has proved of such help, and you can trust to his loyalty, caution and foresight to bring matters through. The experiences of the past year have been more than trying, and you have had great courage in keeping things going and facing the difficulties which have confronted you. I hope sincerely that the worst is over, that Kadalie will not make difficulties, that you will get the black workers rallying to the Union, that a sound financial system will be established, and that trade unionism will take firm root amongst your people and become a powerful organisation for their good. Therefore, however black the conditions appear, however difficult the circumstances, do all you can to inspire your fellow officers to play the game and to win through. It is a great piece of work you are undertaking.

I turn to the last part of your letter, in which you say that the one weakness amongst many of the higher officials has been dishonesty. Do not flinch from exposure of those people who play

fast and loose with the members' money. Let the public know that those of you who are guiding the I.C.U. to-day stand for a high standard of financial administration and will not countenance any shady actions in connection with the funds of the Union. I hope your people will realise what Dr. Norman Leys has just put in a letter to Miss Holtby and myself: "All movements towards liberation among Africans fall down flat because of moral failure, and there is no hope for future movements unless rapidly Africans realise that. The first and almost the only desiderata are honest and determined Secretaries and Organisers, who will stand the persecutions that are coming We must have something strong enough, with no rotten places in it. A sound organisation can only be got when the natives know that everything has to be sacrificed for honesty." With these sentiments you will undoubtedly agree. Let your members realise that Africans are on trial in a most important movement through which almost alone their improvement will come.

I only dimly appreciate the enormity of the problem before you, but I am sure you will do all in your power to direct this movement and build up a Union on sound lines so that it may bring good and lasting help to the African people.

With all good wishes,

Yours fraternally,

National Secretary.

(12)

July 26th. 1929.

Dear Mr Wyndham,

At the suggestion of Mrs Ethelreda Lewis

I am sending you a copy of a letter which I recieved today from Creech Jones of the Transport Workers Union, concerning the rather serious state of affairs which has arisen in South Africa.

We have recently been receiving very hopeful letters and reports from Ballinger. So far as the actual work of the I.C.U. is concerned, things have been going well. The Annual Conference was held at Kroonstad, and for the first time opened by the Mayor, an Afrikander. In the Free State negotiations with the Wages Board have been successful. But the financial report for the year showed that the branches have still much to learn in their business methods. Money comes in slowly. Several times the officials have had to accept half pay, or less. They have worked most loyally since the collapse twelve months ago, and the trade union movement itself has gone ahead, as you know. The prospect, however, of regular salaries paid by a rival organisation which promises to perform the same function as the I.C.U., and which also promises to alleviate the financial difficulty, must prove very tempting. We were aware that Mr Roux, a South African who has been over studying in Cambridge, had sailed for South Africa as Communist Organiser of native trade unions. He has recently spent a considerable time in Moscow, and is quite openly out to use native trade unions for Communist propaganda. I have talked to him, and he is quite sincerely convinced that we are mistaken to put our faith in constitutional methods. He also points out that Moscow is willing to give the requisite financial assistance to build up a prosperous trade union movement, and apparantly no help, or very little help, is forthcoming from anywhere else. The situation seems to have arisen when it is essential for us to do something for the I.C.U., or to let its organisation fall into Communist hands. I do not know whether you personally feel inclined to take any action; but I feel that you should at least know what is happening, as your knowledge of South African affairs makes it possible for you to estimate the gravity of the situation.

(B)

6A NeVERN Place,
S.W.5.

October 10th.

To the Editor of the Times,
Sir,

I read with the greatest interest this morning the report from your Correspondent in Zululnad upon the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (Native Trade Union) of South Africa. As an independent journalist and lecturer for the League of Nations Union I happened to see something of the organisation in Natal and the Transvaal when I was in South Africa last year, and have since then been in close touch with the National Secretary, Clements Kadalie.

Your correspondent explains that "someone whispered the word Moscow in connection with the movement, and immediately it became identified in the public mind with Bolshevism and revolution." I should be grateful if you would permit me to explain the actual position of the I.C.U. here. During last year one or two of its organisers were members of the Communist Party, since this was the only party in South Africa which at that time held out any encouragement to the native trade unionists. But Kadalie and his immediate advisers saw that a policy of strikes and direct action would lead nowhere, and studied the constitutional position. Last winter, they decided to dismiss the Communist secretaries; at a general conference of the organisation last May it was decided that no Communists should be admitted to any office, and that Clements Kadalie should come to Europe to study trade union methods, to see the working of the I"LO" at Geneva, to affiliate his union to the Second International at Amsterdam, and to obtain the sympathy and support of trade unionists in England.

I have seen Kadalie continually during his stay in Europe. I have had the opportunity of learning his councils of moderation to his subordinates. But his task has been made peculiarly difficult by the passage of the Native Administration Act which came into force last month. This would seem to be directly aimed against the organisation of native trade unions. It puts his fellow-workers into a position of extraordinary difficulty and uncertainty. It has embittered native feeling, and created an impression that patience and moderation will meet with no reciprocal attempt at understanding on the part of the white man. Foolish statements are quite possibly made by native organisers. After the action by the farmers in Natal of dismissing natives supposed to members of a trade union, it is impossible that native trade unionists should remain always punctilious in their language. But the fact remains that it is the intention of the leaders of the movement to seek constitutional means of protecting native interests, and that the onus of keeping this movement from racial hatred and political extremism lies upon the white people in South Africa and the government of the country.

Yours faithfully,

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To
"The Times",
Printing House Square,
E.C.4.

Sir,

In your correspondent's account of the native riots in Durban you mention that the 'I.C.U.' was involved in the disturbance, and I understand that some of your readers have been inadvertently misled by this reference into confusion of the Durban I.C.U., which your correspondent suggests is under Communist influence, with the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of South Africa, which has its head-quarters at 16, Market Street, Johannesburg, and the largest native Trade Union in South Africa, a constitutional organisation affiliated to the International Federation of Trades Unions at Amsterdam, which has formed many friendly contacts with the British Trade Union Movement. The Industrial and Commercial Workers Union was originally organised under the leadership of Mr. Clements Kadalie in 1920; in 1927 it had reached a membership of nearly 80,000, when Mr. Kadalie came to Europe, achieved affiliation with the I.F.T.U. and appealed for help in reorganisation to the British Labour and Trade Union movement. He eventually secured the services of Councillor Ballinger of Motherwell, who has been in South Africa now for nearly a year, acting as Adviser in the organisation of the Union on constitutional lines. The Industrial and Commercial Workers Union

has now succeeded in securing friendly relations with the Trade Union Congress of South Africa; it has received the sanction of the Joint European and Native Councils, and has recently organised an important wages conference in the Transvaal. Meanwhile two opposition organisations have been established by malcontents who dislike the new policy of the I.C.U., one of them being the body in Durban to which your correspondent refers. The I.C.U. is probably at this time the greatest safeguard which the Industrialised native has, against exploitation on the one hand and wild incitement to racial antagonism on the other. It would be most unfortunate if by confusion with a small body of rescinded malcontents it became discredited among those who have recently come to regard it as one of the most hopeful influences for the education and protection of the industrialised native and one of the instruments by which the black and white races can learn the possibilities of co-operation. I hope therefore, that you will see your way to publishing this explanation.

Africa are so horrible, both for black and white, that friends of the country have been watching with interest the efforts of Mr. Ballinger to reorganise a constitutional union. Appeals for financial support have been issued, and it would be disastrous to a piece of fine and difficult work, if by a mistaken identification of the whole of the I.C.U. with communist agitation, this sympathy were to be withdrawn.

Yours etc.

Industrial and Commercial WORKERS' UNION OF AFRICA

(I. C. U.)

Branches throughout the Union
of South Africa and Rhodesia.

8, Hope Street,
EAST LONDON,
South Africa.

All correspondence to be addressed
to The General Secretary.

13th February 1945.

Mr A. W. Gee. Champion,
General Secretary,
I.C.U. Yase Natal,
D U R B A N.

Dear Comrade:-

How are you in the New Year?
I had hoped that from Cape Town in Decemb-
er you would visit East London.

What about our proposed
Conference in Easter next? I have received
many letters from interested parties
about ~~the~~ Conference. The Blomfontein
Branch has also written as they desire to
~~Branch?~~ make arrangements for Hall etc.
Please, let me ^{know} immediately of your plans
so that we can [^]coordinate these.

By the way, I have just
returned from Cape Town with my family
where we spent one month's holiday. An
urgent reply will be appreciated.

Kindest regards,

Yours fraternally,
Clemente Madalio
General Secretary, I.C.U.

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of South Africa and Rhodesia.

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South Africa.

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to The General Secretary.

20th August, 1947.

A. W. Geo. Champion Esq.,
19, Old Dutch Road,
Durban.

My dear Comrade:-

Thanks for your telegram acknowledg-
ing our photo sent by us.

It is our intention to take a short
visit to Durban of say, a week's duration. One
of my sons from Cape Town is here with us and
he would like to see Durban. Our visit is
intended for early part in October. Could you
arrange for accommodation for us? Let me hear
from you very soon.

With our warm regards.

Yours very sincerely,

Clarence Madala

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