

WORKERS PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA

P.O.Box 1940,
CAPE TOWN.

13th May, 1935.

C.van Gelderen,
c/o Lenin Club,
CAPE TOWN.

Dear Comrade C.van Gelderen,

We have your letter of 9th inst.

As you have been publicly informed, the letter signed D.Petash could not be answered by the Workers Party for the plain reason that the said letter dealt with Lenin Club affairs and was, furthermore, signed by a person who was not a member of the Lenin Club. It ought not to have been necessary for us to repeat this information.

We are fully acquainted with the nature of the contents of the International Secretariat's communication to you inasmuch as we had the privilege of making a translation for you.

The International Secretariat has our address.

We note your expressed desire for unity and readily meet it by informing you that this unity can be achieved by the complete acceptance of the Theses, Constitution, and discipline of the Workers Party. There is no need of a special meeting for the purpose of elaborating this course. It is only necessary to mention further that Forms of Application for Membership are available from the Secretary.

Yours for Communism,

for the Central Committee.

WORKERS PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA

141 Longmarket Street,
CAPE TOWN.

13 *th* May 1955

The Central Committee,
W.P.S.A.,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Comrades,

The Lenin Club is very rapidly approaching a crisis. Ever since the formation of the Party the Lenin Club has been turned into a battleground between ourselves and the minority group which now calls itself the "Communist League of South Africa."

So far as the Lenin Club is concerned it has practically ceased all work except the lectures which go on as usual but in a strained atmosphere. The Lenin Club, for the first time since its foundation, did not issue a May Day leaflet or a Jubilee one. This can be laid directly to the attitude of the minority. (We are also partly to blame for our "softness" to them but of that, more anon.)

Things have reached the point in the Club where it is no longer possible to work together with the minority. Things have reached the point where either we must go, or they must go. There is no middle road.

It would require hours to trace minutely all the little events and clashes that have built up the present impossible state of affairs. But the example of the May Day conflict will give you an idea of the whole conflict.

Early in April the Club's E.C. appointed a Sub-Committee consisting of C.van Gelderen, H.van Gelderen, Goodlatte, and Koston to draw up a May Day Manifesto and a Leaflet on the Jubilee.

At the first meeting of the Sub-Com. at which all were present a plan for the May Day Manifesto was drafted and agreed upon. It was the usual plan, International Significance, Characterisation of International Developments, South Africa, etc. C. van Gelderen and Goodlatte were detailed to work out drafts following the plan.

At the second meeting of the Sub-Com. ~~at~~ C. van Gelderen was absent. Goodlatte's ~~pix~~ draft was discussed and changes were suggested, additions put forward, etc. in the usual way.

At the third meeting of the Sub-Com. at which all were present C. van Gelderen submitted his draft. Immediately the Sub-Com. was stale-mated because in Van Gelderen's draft the workers were urged to work for the establishment of the Workers Party and in Goodlatte's draft the existence of the Workers Party was taken and the workers urged to build it up, to support it. The Sub-Com. decided that it could not prepare a May Day Manifesto because of this difference in opinion. But it was decided to draft a Jubilee Leaflet, ~~as~~ this could be written without bringing in the bone of contention. C. van Gelderen was detailed to draft the Jubilee Leaflet.

luc

The Sub-Com. decided unanimously to report the stalemate to the E.C. This was done at the next E.C. meeting. Now here is where we made a mistake by being too soft to them. We have a majority on the E.C. It would have been the simplest thing for us to decide that Goodlatte's draft be accepted by the E.C. and issued. But we didn't. Rather than ~~that~~ give them this blow, we let the matter slide and did not issue a Manifesto at all. And this is how we were repaid.

Before discussing the May Day Manifesto Sub-Com. report the E.C. had chosen speakers to address the May Day Social. Pick was

asked to speak and agreed to do so. But when the Sub-Com. had made its report and explained why it could not agree, Pick suddenly discovered that he could not speak at the Social because he too would be forced to make an appeal for the formation of the Workers Party. Having made this discovery, Pick refused to speak and became abusive.

2 the meeting via Geldere did not do the jubilee leaflet.

The Social was held and was a success financially. (We made about £8) On Wednesday night (May 1st) the minority calling itself the Communist League held a open air meeting at the usual pitch. Unfortunately, the police asked them for their licence and as they had none with them instructed them to present it at the a Police Station within three days.

On Thursday night, the minority told us of their predicament and we handed them the licence, which belongs to the Lenin Club.

Now this should give you an idea of the atmosphere. The real differences, the political differences, you are acquainted with.

The Lenin Club has run off the theses of the minority, their Native thesis, and their Party thesis (their War thesis was run off together with our theses) and they will circulate them among Club members. All their activity has been concentrated in canvassing Club members and trying to win them over one by one to their point of view. *The theses are enclosed*

The E.C. Meetings are unbearable. No work is done. Every one is tensed. At the meeting before last the van Gelderens became hysterical.

But they are maneuvering, maneuvering, manruvring. A few days ago C. v. Geldern handed Koston a letter addressed to the W.P. This letter was signed by D. Potash and asked that in view of the position within the Lenin Club, the W.P. should send representatives to meet Representatives of the minority to discuss ways of bringing about peace within the Club. They had the insolence to have this letter signed by Potash who was not a member of the Club. ~~and~~ This besides the fact that the peace of the Club can be brought about only by the Lenin Club and not through bureaucratic maneuvers behind the scenes. Koston presented this letter to the E.C. of the Club at its next meeting and there the matter was dropped.

We have decided to call for a special general meeting of the Club and to have it out there. Either they leave, or we leave. There is no third alternative.

And Now about the International Secretariat. Enclosed are

1. Extract of Minutes of S.I. 26th March.
2. Letter sent by Martin to Lenin Club.
3. Dubois' remarks concerning our Native Thesis.

A word of explanation. Martin's letter was addressed to the Club in error. It is obvious that this letter was really intended for the Party as it mentions the Theses. The Theses were sent by the Party and not by the Club. At the same time, Martin not being very clear about the distinction deals with some purely Club matters, the finance.

The third document, Dubois' remarks, were not sent to us but were sent to Pick. (We have copies because Goodlatte made the translation for them). WE HAVE NOT YET HAD A LETTER FROM DUBOIS, although Dubois according to his instructions is supposed to write to us. Pick received a letter from Dubois and this document. At present we have no copy of Dubois' letter to Pick.

It emerges from the S.I. minutes that the minority wrote to the S.I. about the French turn evidently accusing us of not agreeing with it, also, our minority has accused us of ~~par~~ antiparlamentarism!, the slogan of Africa for the Negroes, etc. This looks very bad and makes it a herculean task to explain to the S.I. what it is all about. On the one hand the S.I. asks for information to relieve its ignorance concerning S.A. and on the other hand Dubois produces a paper which is sent, not to us, but to the minority.

As to Dubois' remarks, this must be gone into more fully later. One point stands out. Whereas we are concerned in our thesis

with the perspectives of the Revolution in S.A., Dubois is concerned with our programme, immediate slogans, etc.

(Com. Purdy's thesis coming at this moment gives us more to worry about.)

It also emerges from the communications of the I.S. that they are more concerned with our position on the French turn than anything else. (In ~~the~~ Dubois' letter to Pick is a hint that the formation of a party is premature and that a propaganda group would fill the bill nicely. The minority taking the hint have already written to the I.S. saying that they are a propaganda group, "The Communist League".) Evidently they are hunting around for support for themselves because the French turn seems to have wrecked the international. If they will judge our theses on the basis of whether or not we approve of the French turn and if they give or withhold affiliation on this same basis, we will all be greybeards before we know where we really stand.

In any case, here are the documents. We hope that we have made the position as regards the Lenin Club clear. Write immediately if you want more details. We are going to bring up the question of the special general meeting at tonight's meeting of the E.C.

Yours fraternally,

WORKERS PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA

141 Longmarket Street,
CAPE TOWN.

14th May, 1935.

To the International Secretariat,
I.C.L. (B.-L.)

Dear Comrades,

It is first of all necessary to check up on our correspondence. I will list below the letters we have sent to you and the replies we have received from you and hope that you will confirm this list.

1. Our first letter to you was dated 14th February, 1935, was signed "Paul Kosten", and was written in RUSSIAN.
2. We next sent you two copies each of the following:-
Majority's Native Thesis
" Thesis on the Party
" War Thesis
Minority's War Thesis
Joint Trade Union Thesis
Report on Proceedings that Led to Formation of Party.
These documents were sent by Air Mail.
3. We next received from you a letter dated 9th March, signed Swartz, and acknowledging our letter of 14th February.
4. We then sent you a letter dated 15th April, signed "Paul Kosten", written in RUSSIAN, dealing with the questions raised by Com. Swartz in his letter of 9th March.

Since then we have received no communications from you addressed to the Party.

5. The Lenin Club has received a letter dated 28th March, signed Martin, from you and, as this letter dealt with the Party and should have been sent to the Party, the Lenin Club handed it to us. We have replied to this letter in
6. Our letter dated 8th May, signed Paul Kosten, and written in ENGLISH.

The Minority (Communist League) has allowed us to see your letter dated 24/4/35, signed Adolphe, and addressed to "Comrades Averbuch, etc., of the Lenin Club". We note that in this letter you comment upon the fact that you have received only the "official theses" from us. Quite so. You received our theses, plus the Minority's War Thesis, as these were the only theses discussed by the comrades here and in Johannesburg. If you will refer to the Report of the Proceedings which led to the Formation of the Party you will see how the discussions took place. The Minority prepared their Native Thesis and Party Thesis after the formation of the Workers Party. (At the time of its formation, the Party was called the "Communist League". After discussions with the Johannesburg comrades who pointed out that the word "Communist" would lead to confusion in the minds of the Native workers, we changed our name to "Workers Party". Just recently, a few days ago, the Minority picked up the name "Communist League" and now call themselves that.) It is obvious that the last mentioned two documents of the Minority are not really "Theses" but are criticisms of our Theses. This would be alright if the views and position of the Minority emerged clearly from their criticism of us,----- but does it?

We notice also that you point out to the Minority that they would commit a "great error" by refusing to enter the Party. This

error has already been committed. The Minority, after failing to completely sabotage the work of the Lenin Club, now has declared itself the "Communist League" and tries to carry on independently.

But this is not so very important. Most important is the last paragraph of your letter. Here you finally state clearly the question which we are solving in our Native Thesis. The two opposite opinions you speak of, "either the black peoples liberation in a nationalistic and racialist form" OR "our line will be of pure class character", you, by having posed the question in this way now, are precisely where we were more than a year ago when we first started to work out, to study, to analyse this question.

The first alternative, "black nationalism", is the line of the Stalinists, is the line established at the sixth Congress of the C.I., is the line that is summed up in the Stalinist slogan of "Independent Native Republics as a step towards a Workers and Peasants Republic".

Our Native Thesis presents a criticism of this line and puts forward the second alternative. THIS IS WHAT OUR THESIS DEALS WITH. It does NOT deal with the TACTICS of our revolution. It deals with the STRATEGY of our revolution. (Comrade Dubois' remarks concerning our Native Thesis, which the Minority has permitted us to see, are really out of order inasmuch as we are concerned with strategy and he worries about tactics. The whole question of tactics, of the immediate slogans, fight for democratic rights, for the abolition of colour legislation, for equality of black and white, etc., this whole question has to be fully worked out. We are well aware of this.)

We shall watch with great interest the discussions on this question in the internal bulletin.

But now we must come to the question of our differences with the Minority (Communist League). This difference first emerged during the preparation of the War Thesis (that is why you received the Two War Theses simultaneously) and only later did the Minority prepare a separate Native Thesis and Party Thesis.

On the War Question the Minority have taken up a position that is wholly opportunistic. They advance the slogan of "neutrality" and collaboration with the Malanites whom they call the "national bourgeoisie". (The Leninist slogan of "turn the imperialist war into a civil war" is, according to the Minority, "unmarxian for South Africa" and "impracticable" because here, according to them, we have very special specific differences. True we have very special differences, we say, but they are not so special that Leninism seems to have no validity when it reaches the Cape of Good Hope.)

The Malanites must under no circumstances be confused with the African National Congress which is the organisation of the Natives. The Malanites are the party of the Dutch farmers who are engaged in a family quarrel with the Imperialists over the spoils of the exploitation of the masses. The Malanites have raised a demagogic campaign in Parliament over "neutrality", "independence of South Africa", and so on. The left wing of the Malanites have put forward the slogan of a "Republic", a "Republic" under the protection of the British Navy!! For our characterisation of the Malanites, see our Theses. For confirmation of our characterisation see the clippings which we are sending, particularly the Malanite Programme of Action.

The Minority, in trying to prove that the Malanites are still a progressive force capable of putting up a real struggle against Imperialism and war, had to be consistent. If the Malanites are a progressive force in the struggle against Imperialism then, naturally, they must be our allies. (In this connection the "prejudices" of any ignorant Native worker or peasant who hates the Malanites as the old oppressors is worth ten times as much as the opinions of the "Marxist" of our Minority.) In order to be consistent, that is, to iron out what might be contradictions within their opportunism, the Minority was forced to produce their Native "Thesis". And because they are opportunists of a certain variety, right-wingers, they had to attack our conception of the Party and try to establish in its place a conception that would lead in practice to a "Party" consisting of anybody and everybody without real discipline.

It is interesting that those who now constitute the Minority pressed for the formation of a Party long before any theses were developed or discussions held. They wanted to turn the whole Lenin Club, wives and all, into a Party. It was we who restrained this eagerness until theses were prepared. Now we understand that the Minority, taking a hint from you, declare themselves to be a propaganda group and nothing more.

We are sending you under separate cover a number of newspaper clippings from the "Cape Argus" and "Cape Times". These two papers are the organs of the ruling group and are published by syndicates that control most of the newspapers in this country. The "Umsebenzi" is the organ of the Communist Party of South Africa (Stalinists) and the others are papers published by groups of Natives. We send also copies of the first and second issues of our paper, "The Spark".

If there is any information you require we are always ready to do our best to help you. We realise how difficult it must be for you from afar to create a picture of this country, a country that is in many respects more involved and complicated than any other.

Yours fraternally,

Secretary.

15th May, 1935

Dear Comrades,

We have just received your letter dated 4th May, signed Adolphe, and containing your Minutes of 23rd April and Comrade Trotsky's answer. We have not had time to translate these documents ~~these~~ but assure you that copies of the translation will be sent to U.S.A., London, and yourself as you request.

We have already sent copies of our theses to the two South African comrades who are now in London.

We note that you have received our letter of April 15th.

Yours fraternally,

WORKERS PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA

141 Longmarket Street,
CAPE TOWN.

16th May, 1935

The Central Committee,
W.P.S.A.,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Comrades,

First of all we must tell you that at the E.C. Meeting of the Lenin Club held on Monday, 13th May, it was decided to call a special general meeting of the Lenin Club for the 8th June to consider the position within the Club. So that's that.

Second, at this E.C. meeting C.v Gelderen presented to the E.C. of the Club copies of two documents that the Communist League had received from the I.S.

We enclose ~~xxxxxx~~ a copy made from the copy handed in by Van Gelderen.

We enclose also a copy of our letter to the I.S. As you can see our letter is dated 14th May. Yesterday morning, 15th May, we received by Airmail our first letter from the I.S. together with the minutes of their meeting of the 23rd April and Trotsky's article. We enclose a copy of this letter and the Minutes. Trotsky's article is being translated and of course copies will be sent up as soon as ready. Its a wonderful article! (Burlak translated most of it verbally last night to us) It is a document of the greatest importance. At the end of our letter of the 14th we acknowledge receipt of their letter and the article. This letter to the I.S. was sent off last night by Air Mail

Trotsky's article completely demolishes our opposition. It is like a drink of cool water after Dubois' mud.

Yours fraternally,

Att. Com. Lee,

Enclosed Burlak's editorial, Goodlatte on Tuberculosis, Schrire on Federation's Conference. There will be no "Sparklets" as Bedmer has not come through. Rush back Burlak's editorial first. Mine on May Day (if I write it) will follow.

Yrs.

20th May, 1935
P.K.

Box 3301,
Johannesburg.
17/5/35.

Dear Koston,

In spite of the accumulation of work after my fortnight in Durban, I have not been well enough to tackle anything. Hence also the delay in writing to you.

At the general meeting of the L.W.U. last Sunday week Gordon was elected Secretary. Since then the union has taken two nasty knocks. One - the appeal of the boss of Reliance against the judgement of the magistrate awarding one of the strikers wages in lieu of notice plus costs, has been upheld in the Supreme Court: this means that the forty men locked out last year will not collect the money which we were sure they would get; and knock number two: the union treasurer (one of the most promising militants) seems to have embezzled funds in his possession.

The inaugural meeting of the Club will be held next week.

We seem to have missed the bus for a May Day article in the Spark. The last number was quite warmly spoken of here by all whose opinions we have asked. Your E.B. has mutilated the "History" article in condensing it. About changing the March of Events from an article to paragraphs, as you suggest, I am quite in agreement, and I suggest further that the paragraphs be written by Cape Town.

I think that my discussion on the "Native Question" would make a suitable article for the next Spark, if the first paragraph is cut away. A suitable title would be "The Permanent Revolution in South Africa."

We have received the material regarding the I.S. and the Lenin Club. It was discussed at our meeting last night. Dubois' remarks are uninspiring - our I.S. is evidently not composed of supermen. Only a fool would criticise so boldly and so slashingly in a field in which he is consciously quite ignorant. The stuff about oversimplification is quite as astounding as Purdy's "syndicalism gone mad" wisecrack. This carping and uncomradely snatching at phrases and twisting them to mean things which were obviously never remotely dreamed of by the writer, points to a widening split. I feel quite despondent at this moment about the immediate prospects of the International and W.P.S.A. Only the American Party seems to be striking root among the masses.

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Our immediate pressing task is to discover links with the masses of the workers.

If I can amass the fare to Cape Town I will come down. There is nothing to keep me from coming except the necessity to get some partly completed work off my hands.

Fraternally,

R. Lee.

WORKERS PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA

141 Longmarket Street,
CAPE TOWN.

18th May, 1935

The Central Committee,
W.P.S.A.
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed is a copy of a letter from the I.S. This letter arrived by the Italian liner "Guilio Cesare" yesterday. As you can see it is dated 27th April. The last letter that we received was dated 4th May. (A copy was sent to you on 16th May). In other words, this letter enclosed tells us nothing new but helps to ~~xxxx~~ untangle the correspondence. Things ought to run more smoothly now.

As you see, they ask for your address in order to send you copies of their Minutes, bulletins, etc. They enclosed a packet of their Minutes for you. This packet contains all the Minutes that we have received in the past few days. We have already translated those parts of the Minutes which deal with South Africa and have sent you copies of the translation.

The point is this. If you have someone capable of translating from French, we will send you the Minutes. Otherwise, we (Goodlatte) will have to do all the translating. Under no circumstances could the Minutes of the I.S. be given to an outsider for translation. Occasionally a bulletin is sent in German.

The Russian letters referred to are our first two letters.

The addresses are confidential. It would be best to memorise them.

About the S.I. Minutes. These are usually two sheets of closely typed French. Sometimes there are as many as four sheets. Sometimes a document is enclosed and then it runs to eight or nine sheets. The I.S. meets about once a week. Sometimes they send ~~xxxx~~ their Minutes every week and sometimes they let them collect and send down a batch. Sometimes there is very important and interesting material in them and sometimes little but a financial statement.

We suggest that for a start we translate all material dealing with the English-speaking countries and extract a precis of the other material. Otherwise, Com. Goodlatte would have to spend practically all her time translating and nothing else.

The question of reports of our activities will have to be gone into later. At present our activities here are limited to the "Spark" and battling with the Minority in the Lenin Club. This is not very satisfactory. It goes without saying that in our next letter to the I.S. we shall send your address.

Yours fraternally,
Secretary.

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COPY

L.C.I. (B.-L.), S.I.

Geneva, 20th of May 1935

To the WORKERS PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dear comrades,

Today we got your letter from May 8th. Joint to this letter you will find our political answer as to this letter as to the whole of the South African problems, raised by your thesis and those of the minority (now Communist League).

In the meanwhile you surely received other minutes, letters, as well as the remarks of comrade Trotsky. By this way most of the misunderstandings will be liquidated.

The distance between us is too great and misunderstandings are inevitable. Therefore patience is needed by the both sides. Unhappily our financial means don't allow us to send air mail letters all the way.

When we sent comrade Dubois' remarks to Comrade Pick we did not yet know that there was a separation between you and his address was known to us as an official one. Joint you find another copy of these remarks. If there is other materials in the hands of the minority comrades they should not make difficulties to show it to you, at least; as it has been addressed to you as one organization.- The letter addressed by Adolphe to the Communist League is not to be regarded to as addressed to the now called Communist League but to the old organization, when the name of the Party was still discussed. The same for comrade T.s remarks.

Since we have your official addresses, we shall not make use of others. The letter of Martin you relate to was sent to the Lenin Club because we lacked these official addresses at that moment.

It is ~~xxxx~~ possible that under these circumstances you have not received our confirmation of the 75 francs sent to Vereecken as well as the new money address (~~xxxxxx~~ Cxxxxxxx, etc.) Send about 50 centimes French every member and every month, regularly if possible and in the form of commercial checks if possible.

We got the first number of SPARK by air mail. The postage was not sufficient, but fortunately the post officemen did not remark it.

In the meanwhile you surely got the minutes where the error concerning the slogan Africa for the Negroes has been rectified.

Have you noted our printed matter address? (M. A,xxxx) Don't send anything to Boirard, nor to Vereecken.

With communist greetings,

(sgd) Adolphe
adm. secr.

P.S. We invited the minority comrades to join the Party. You should meet them in order to exchange materials.

L.C.I. (B.-L.), S.I.

5th June, 1935

Geneva; 20th of May 1935

To the WORKERS PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dear comrades,

Today we got your letter from May 8th. Joint to this letter you will find our political answer as to this letter as to the whole of the South African problems, raised by your thesis and those of the minority (now Communist League).

In the meanwhile you surely received other minutes, letters, as well as the remarks of comrade Trotsky. By this way most of the misunderstandings will be liquidated.

The distance between us is too great and misunderstandings are inevitable. Therefore patience is needed by the both sides. Unhappily our financial means dont allow to send air mail letters all the way.

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Since we have your official adresses, we shall not make use of others. The letter of Martin you relate to was sent to the Lenin Club because we lacked these official adresses at that moment.

In the future we will send to the Lenin Club our external Bulletins only; the internal bulletins, minutes, press services and so on will be adressed to the party adresses.

It is possible that under these circumstances you have not received our confirmation of the 75 francs sent to Vereecken as well as the new money adress (Pierre Camiade, 193 avenue du Belvédère, Paris XIX^e, France). Send about 50 centimes French every member and every month, regularly if possible and in form of commercial checks if possible.

We got the first number of SPARK by air mail. The postage was not sufficient, but fortunately the post officemen did not remark it.

In the meanwhile you surely got the minutes where the error concerning the slogan Africa for the Negroes has been rectified.

Have you noted our printed matter adress: (Monsieur André, Librairie Travail, 17 rue Sambre-&-Meuse, Paris X^e, France). Don't send anything Boirard, nor to Vereecken.

P.S. We invited the minority comrades to join the Party. You should meet them in order to exchange materials.

With communist greetings,

Adolphe
adm. sec

L.C.I. (B.-L.), S.I.

By air mail

Geneva, 21st May, 1935

To the South African comrades (Workers Party of S.A., Communist League)

Dear Comrades,

We presume that meanwhile you have received the article of comrade L.D. which fully deals with all the questions raised in your theses including the questions concerning organisation. We shall therefore confine ourselves to a few words.

We recommend you to study thoroughly the article of comrade L.D. and believe that a great part of the questions in dispute can be solved on the basis of the direction indicated therein. The best thing to do would be to entrust a committee with the working out of a program of action; the centre of the demands would naturally be the slogans of the Bantu workers' and peasants' struggle; it is thereby not a question of demanding equality between Black and White in a political vacuum; the question is to direct these demands against British Imperialism and its rule in South Africa; to emphasise the right of the Natives to the enjoyment of national self-determination up to complete separation from England. Thereupon the demands for equal pay, for the possession of the land will obtain political sense and background. We want to stress particularly what comrade L.D. has to say about the Bantu peasants. Their confining themselves to "agrarian" or "economic" demands is a sign of their backwardness. Your task is to help them to raise their struggle to a higher level, and to make clear to them that agrarian freedom is only obtainable if the struggle of the peasants is linked up with the struggle of the workers for the expulsion of British Imperialism and its South African Government.

It is clear that the danger of unprincipled blocs with bourgeois-nationalist parties and groups is less in South Africa than in other countries, for the simple reason that such bourgeois-nationalist movements of the negroes cannot have reached yet a highly organised level (the Dutch-Nationalist movement is probably to be interpreted quite differently, namely as a cog in the machinery of British Imperialism). We recommend you to study carefully the Native movement in the whole of Africa, even in so far as it is under bourgeois influence, and we would be very grateful to you if you could let us have material on the matter. We are very badly informed, in fact we are not informed at all.

You already know that according to our opinion the foundation of a party in South Africa is premature considering the fact that your forces in that great country are very weak. Our advice, however, must have arrived too late. We can therefore only repeat: it would be quite wrong to split and to weaken the few existing forces. Your differences are not of such a kind as to warrant a split. Especially in questions of organisation a middle course between your two policies is possible which, instead of being a "foul compromise", would be correct. Naturally there exists now great possibilities for legal activity and they must be used to the full, particularly the work in the mass-organisations. But legality may easily be curtailed if the situation in Europe should become more acute in which case England would be involved, certainly in the case of war. At the same time the gates of the general organisation must be kept wide open; for reliable comrades can only be found by political experience. You may have to consider illegal work much sooner than it may appear now, if you concentrate your activity upon the organisation of the most advanced Bantu workers and peasants and carry on your agitation mainly among the Native masses. To support particularly this type of work we are submitting to you a few organisational proposals and beg you to let us have your opinion on the matter:

To include in the executive body a number of Bantus even if, with regard to "education", they should be still backward, as long as their general ideas coincide with yours and as long as they represent advanced elements. We assume that such elements are to be found among the Bantu workers, perhaps also among the peasants and agricultural labourers. Secondly, to admit to all bodies of the organisation Bantus and to demonstrate this fact publicly. To publish a small Bantu paper (which, as many as possible among you should

Language

Dear

read) even if it should be cyclostyled only; to insert therein numerous correspondences from Bantus; and if the Bantu comrades cannot write, to commission one among you to take down their communications and to publish them.

We are convinced that these few suggestions will be ~~farther~~ further developed by you as you are much better acquainted with the conditions than we are. Anyhow, be assured that we take the most lively interest in your activity and expect all your communications with the greatest interest.

With comradely greetings
for the International Secretariat
Dubois
for Dubois (Sgd) Adolphe

P.S. We have just received your letter of the 8th May and regret the misunderstandings that have arisen. First of all, we are not in a position here to solve all your differences in detail. We can only state our attitude to the general political principles. We hope that you will be able to find, on the basis of the communication, a general line. We can now recognise none of your groups as a section, and consider both parts as sympathising groups and hope that you will collaborate.

Concerning the national movement we repeat that we have only spoken of the national movement of the Natives and did of course not mean the Malanites.
Dubois

In the Spark you announce the Red Flag. This paper has not existed for a long time, nor has the organisation which published it (the former "majority" of our English section). The former "minority" forms now a bolshevik-leninist fraction in the I.L.P. (Marxist Group) without a public organ. Concerning its activity vide our Bulletin.

Ad.

To the South African comrades (WORKERS PARTY OF S.A., COMMUNIST LEAGUE)

Liebe Genossen,

Ihr werdet inzwischen den Artikel des Genossen I.D erhalten haben, der ausführlich zu allen in Euren Thesen aufgeworfenen Fragen Stellung nimmt, auch zu den Organisationsfragen. Wir fügen deshalb nur noch einige wenige Worte hinzu.

Wir empfehlen Euch das gründliche Studium des Artikels des Gen.I.D und glauben, dass ein grosser Teil Eurer Streitfragen auf Grund der dort angegebenen Linie gelöst werden kann. Am besten wäre es, eine Kommission mit dem Auftrag der Ausarbeitung eines Tagesprogramms zu betrauen; im Mittelpunkt dieser Forderungen müssen selbstverständlich die Losungen des Kampfes der Bantu-Arbeiter und -Bauern stehen; es handelt sich dabei nicht um die Forderung der Gleichberechtigung der Weissen und Schwarzen im bürgerlichen politischen Raum, sondern um die Zuspitzung dieser Forderungen gegen den britischen Imperialismus und seine Herrschaft in Südafrika, um die Betonung des Rechts der Neger auf nationale Selbstbestimmung bis zur völligen Abtrennung von England. Dann bekommen die Tagesforderungen nach gleichem Lohn, Grund und Boden, einen politischen Sinn und Rang. Besonders unterstreichen möchten wir dabei die Ausführungen des Gen.I.D über die Bantu-Bauern; ihre derzeitige Beschränkung auf rein "agrarisches" oder "wirtschaftliche" Forderung ist ein Zeichen ihrer Rückständigkeit; Eure Aufgabe ist es, ihnen zu helfen, eine höhere Form des Kampfes zu erreichen, und ihnen klar zu machen, dass die Agrarbefreiung nur erreichbar ist, wenn der Kampf der Bauern verbunden wird mit dem Kampf der Arbeiter für die Vertreibung des britischen Imperialismus und seiner südafrikanischen Regierung.

Es ist klar, dass die Gefahr prinzipiellerer Blocks mit bürgerlich-nationalistischen Parteien und Gruppen in Südafrika geringer ist als in einem anderen Lande, aus dem einfachen Grunde, weil solche bürgerlich-nationalistischen Bewegungen der Neger noch keine hochorganisierte Stufe erreicht haben können (die holländisch-nationalistische Bewegung ist wahrscheinlich ganz anders zu bewerten, ein Teil in der Maschinerie des englischen Imperialismus). Wir empfehlen Euch das aufmerksame Studium der Negerbewegungen in ganz Afrika, auch der unter bürgerlichem Einfluss stehenden, und wären Euch sehr dankbar, wenn Ihr uns Material darübermitteln würdet. Wir sind sehr schlecht, eigentlich garnicht darüber orientiert.

Ihr kennt bereits unsere Meinung, dass wir die Gründung einer Partei in Südafrika für verfrüht halten mit Rücksicht auf Eure tatsächlich sehr schwachen Kräfte in dem grossen Lande. Dieser Rat dürfte aber zu spät gekommen sein. Wir können daher nur wiederholen: es wäre ganz falsch, sich zu spalten und die wenigen vorhandenen Kräfte noch zu schwächen. Eure Differenzen sind nicht derart, dass sie eine Spaltung rechtfertigen. Gerade in der Organisationsfrage lässt sich eine mittlere Linie zwischen Euren beiden Auffassungen finden, die kein "faules Kompromiss", sondern richtig ist. Selbstverständlich gibt es jetzt grosse Möglichkeiten für legale Arbeit und man muss sie voll ausnutzen, vor allem in den Massenorganisationen arbeiten. Aber die Legalität kann sehr leicht Einschränkungen erleiden, im Falle weiterer Zuspitzungen in Europa, in die Engländer hineingezogen würde, ganz sicher im Falle eines Krieges. Daher muss die Organisation auch ein gewissen illegalen Apparat besitzen, der nur aus erprobten und zuverlässigen Genossen bestehen darf. Gleichzeitig müssen die Tore der allgemeinen Organisation weit offen stehen, denn zuverlässige Genossen kann man nur durch politische Erfahrung finden. Illusionen kann man nicht schnell, als es heute aussieht, für Euch aktuell werden, wenn Ihr die Aktivität der Organisation der fortgeschrittenen Bantu-Arbeiter und -Bauern konzentriert und Eure Agitation haupt-

sächlich unter den Negermassen betreibt. Zur Verstärkung gerade dieser Arbeit unterbreiten wir Euch einige kleine organisatorische Vorschläge und bitten um Eure Meinung darüber:

In die leitende Körperschaft eine Anzahl von Bantus aufzunehmen, auch wenn sie in Bezug auf "Bildung" noch rückständig sind, falls sie nur in den allgemeinen Ideen mit Euch übereinstimmen und fortgeschrittene Elemente darstellen. Wir nehmen an, dass sich unter den Bantu-Arbeitern solche Elemente finden müssen, vielleicht auch unter den Landarbeitern und -bauern.

Ferner: in alle Körperschaften der Organisation Bantus aufnehmen und die Tatsache öffentlich demonstrieren.

Ein kleines Blatt in Bantu-sprache (die möglichst viele von Euch lernen sollen), und sei es auch nur hektographiert herauszugeben; darin zahlreiche Korrespondenzen von Bantus aufzunehmen, und wenn die Bantu-Genossen nicht schreiben können, jemanden von Euch beauftragen, ihre Mitteilungen niederzuschreiben, und veröffentlichen.

Wir sind überzeugt, dass diese wenigen Anregungen von Euch, die Ihr die Verhältnisse ganz anders kennt als wir, noch in verschiedenster Art entwickelt werden können. Jedenfalls sollt Ihr sicher sein, dass wir den lebhaftesten Anteil an Eurer Tätigkeit nehmen und mit dem grössten Interesse alle Eure Mitteilungen erwarten.

Mit brüderlichen Grüßen
für das Internationale Sekretariat
für Dubois *Adolphe* Dubois
Adolphe.

P.S.: Soeben erhalten wir Euren Brief vom 8. Mai und bedauern die entstandenen Missverständnisse. Vor allem ist es uns nicht möglich, alle Eure Streitfragen im Detail hier zu lösen, wir können nur zu den allgemeinen politischen Grundfragen Stellung nehmen. Wir hoffen, dass Ihr auf Grund der Ausführungen eine gemeinsame Linie finden werdet. Wir können jetzt keine von Euren Gruppen als Sektion "anerkennen", und betrachten beide Teile vorläufig als sympathisierende Gruppen, und hoffen auf Eure gemeinsame Arbeit.

Was die nationale Bewegung betrifft, so wiederholen wir, dass wir nur von den nationalen Bewegungen der Neger gesprochen haben und natürlich nicht die Malaniten gemeint haben.

Dubois.

In THE SPARK kündigt Ihr RED FLAG an. Diese Zeitung existiert schon lange nicht mehr, ebenowenig wie die Organisation, die sie herausgab (ehemalige "majority" unserer englischen Sektion). Die ehemalige "minority" bildet eine bolschewistisch-leninistische Fraktion in der Ind. Labour Party (Marxist Group) ohne öffentliches Organ. Ueber ihre Tätigkeit, siehe unsere Bulletins.

Ad.

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