The 'International' resumed publication on May 26th, but owing to financial stringency the Central Executive had to curtail the issue to once a fortnight from the beginning of August 1922 to the end of December 1922 when, as a result of retrenchment in other directions, it was found possible to resume the weekly issue of the paper.

Young communist movement. (I S.S.S.)

The Young Communist League has come into existence since the Party was formed and has carried on a certain amount of open-air propaganda, one of its members being arrested in connection with the demonstration held to protest against the execution of Long, Hull and Lewis. Its chief work, however, has been the carrying on of a weekly study class and the printing and distribution among the youth of the town of leaflets, etc. The amount of attention and hostile criticism that the press has given to its activities is an indication that they have been doing useful and effective work, which we hope will continue and increase in the coming year.

Organisation.

At the beginning of March this year, Comrade C.F. Glass, who has put in a great deal of voluntary work for the Party, was appointed Business Agent and Organiser on a commission basis. Since his period of office the Springs and Jeppe Branches have been opened.

Steps are being taken to reopen the Durban and Pretoria Branches and it is hoped that during the year branches will be running in every considerable centre in the Union.

Wishing the delegates and the Party every success in the ensuing year.

Fraternally yours,

For the Central Executive Committee,

W.H. Andrews

General Secretary.

RGASPI, 495/64/16/4-8.
Original in English.
Typed. Copy.

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1. The meaning of this abbreviation could not be ascertained.
2. Carbon copy of a handwritten signature.
The Congress appointed a special Commission on the Negro Question, of which I was a member, together with delegates from North America, Egypt, Tunis, Java, England, Holland, Belgium, Russia and Japan. The personnel was however somewhat weak, and in the end the chief members attending were reduced to two Americans (of whom Billing was one), myself (with Com. Campbell at the last sitting) and occasionally the Hollander and the Russian and a Yugoslav who sometimes ‘blew in’ and we had no common language and thus what was done in one language was often not translated into the languages understood by the others on the Commission. The Commission produced a ‘Thesis’ on the question which I think, as the result of some inexplicably keen manoeuvring in a purely American direction by one of the delegates, does not in its ‘operative clauses’ sufficiently cover the ground.  

I was begged not to waste the time of the Congress by speaking on the matter, but I wrote about it to the E.C.C.I. a letter to which has never replied, and having sent a copy to the General Secretary I need not cover the ground again.

The clauses are:

(1.) The Fourth Congress recognises the necessity of supporting every form of Negro movement which tends to undermine or weaken capitalism or imperialism or to impede its further penetration.

(2.) The Communist International will fight for race equality of the Negro with the white people, for equal wages and political and social rights.

(3.) The Communist International will use every instrument within its control to compel the trade unions to admit negro workers to membership or, where the nominal right to join exists, to agitate for a special campaign to draw them into the unions; failing in this, it will organise the negroes into unions of their own and specially apply the United Front tactic to compel admission.

(4.) The Communist International will take immediate steps to hold a general Negro Conference or Congress at Moscow.

[...]  
I understand the ECCI are expecting Com. W.H. Andrews this year, and there was some talk of asking him to transfer himself permanently from S. Africa to some wider sphere of activity.

Yours fraternally

RGASPI, 495/64/16/19, 26-7, 34.  
Original in English.  
Typed Copy.

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2. Most probably, the ‘inexplicably keen manoeuvring’ was done by Billing – Otto Huiswoud who was to come to South Africa as an emissary of the Prointern in 1932.


2. Sidney Percival Bunting, a founder member and leader of both the International Socialist League and the Communist Party of South Africa. Bunting was a delegate to the 4th and 6th congresses of the Comintern.
3. Bill Andrews, a founder member and leader of both the International Socialist League and the Communist Party of South Africa. Andrews was also a member of the Comintern Executive.

4. Rebecca Bunting, a founder member of the International Socialist League and a prominent communist. Rebecca Bunting was a delegate to the 6th Congress of the Comintern.

5. David Iron Jones, a founder member, leader and theoretician of the International Socialist League and of the CPSA. Jones was also a member of the Comintern Executive and South Africa’s representative on the ECCI. He died in Moscow where he is buried.

6. Albert Nzula, the first black secretary of the CPSA, who studied at the Lenin School. He died in Moscow where he is buried. Nzula’s photograph is pasted to a piece of paper with the following note by Potekhin: ‘Albert Nzula. I. Potekhin, 5 April 53. This is the only photograph of Nzula in the USSR. For this reason to be looked after with greatest care and in any circumstances to be returned shortly. 5 April 53. I. Potekhin.’

7. Johannes Nkosi, the hero of the CPSA, killed during its pass-burning campaign of 1930.

8. Josiah Gumede, a founder member of the Natal Natives Congress and of the South African Native National Congress (the ANC), and later the president-general of the ANC.

10. S.P. Bunting’s Election Address.

Mr. S. P. BUNTING’S Election Address.

ELECTIONS.

I am standing for Parliament under the banner of the Communist Party of South Africa, which has its head office at 41 A, Fox Street, Johannesburg.

It is admitted on all hands that the issue is being fought on the “native question.” But as between the two parties (including the so-called S.A. Labour Party) even the Chamber of Mines organ, Copperbelt Echo, confesses (28.1.20) that

“The answer for Parliament only will not resolve the straight issue of native freedom or native repression, but each party will try to solve the question of native program so as to ensure the continuance of white supremacy and superiority in State and Industry.”

Apart from a vapid scramble for office, the chief basis of contention between the two major parties is a policy which shall smite the working classes of the native labour movement, as the strikes of the past show up. This is the ever present danger of native unrest, from which the white man cannot escape. The more acute the economic conditions of the world-wide importation women of property, the more the native can be made a victim of economic conditions.

While the Communist Party stand for the common economic background of the world-wide importation women of property, the trend of the world’s economic conditions, related to an ever widening of the mass falling poverty and unemployment, hunger and starvation, unemployment and terror, necessitated the formation of the Communist Party.

The answer for Parliament only will not resolve the straight issue of native freedom or native repression, but each party will try to solve the question of native program so as to ensure the continuance of white supremacy and superiority in State and Industry.”

Election of the South African Communist Party.

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11. Lazar Bach, a prominent South African communist who studied at KUTV, was accused of Trotskyism and died in the GULAG. (The editors are grateful to Professor R. Edgar for giving them a copy of this picture.)

12. Josie Mpama (Palmer), a prominent South African communist who studied at KUTV. (The editors are grateful to Professor R. Edgar for giving them a copy of this picture.)

13. Participants of the 5th Congress of the CPSA (Bill Andrews: front row, first from the left, S.P. Bunting front row, second from the right).

15. Boris Idelson, the first Comintern emissary in South Africa (1929).


17. The CPSA's weekly newspaper, The International.

18. S.P. Bunting's pamphlet.
31

Letter from Provisional Secretary for Calling the Negro Conference to Executive Committee, CPSA, 23 July 1923

Moscow, July 23 1923.

To the Executive Committee of the CP of South Africa.

Dear Comrades:—

The Fourth Congress of the Comintern decided to hold a Negro Congress. The Enlarged Executive decided to call a Negro Conference at the time of the Fifth Congress.

After consulting with your representatives here, we have concluded that it will be impossible to arrange the conference as originally planned. We have decided as follows therefore:

1. There shall be a conference as planned in Moscow, of Negro Communists, this conference to take place at the time of the Fifth Congress. It will be the duty of your Party, therefore, to add a Negro delegate to your delegation to the Fifth Congress.

2. The International Negro Conference (open conference) will take place either in London, Paris or New York. We consulted your representatives here, who seemed to prefer London to New York. Since that time, Paris has been proposed, owing to its being favourably disposed toward the Negro. We ask your final word in the matter.

This conference will be attended by all the delegates who have been to Moscow and about 30 or 40 others who are required for the work. We expect a number of delegates from Africa, but realize the difficulty they will have in leaving the country. This has been the chief reason for our changing our plans. There will also be a number of liberal and petty-bourgeois Negro representatives from the US, West Indies and Central America. We believe that the centre of propaganda for the Conference will be New York.

However, it will be chiefly the task of the South African Party to reach the Negroes of southern Africa. We include Mozambique, German East and British West Africa, and Rhodesia. Your delegates informed us that you would be able to penetrate these parts and possibly obtain representatives of the natives to attend the conference.

3. As it is our intention to hold a Negro trade union conference simultaneously with the general conference, we request you to have this in view when selecting your delegates.

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1. This document is an unsigned copy of the original letter.
2. 'Your representatives here' would seem to refer to D.I. Jones and W.H. Andrews.