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Kadalie was a gifted orator and leader of immense ability and audacity, who, in the 1920's as a pioneer African Trade Unionist built the ICU into the first modern mass movement of blacks in South Africa.

1. Kadalie was born in Nyasaland in, or shortly before 1896. He completed his secondary schooling at Livingstonia Missionary Institute qualifying as a teacher and taught for one year before setting out to see the world. (1)
2. He arrived in Cape Town in 1918 where a chance meeting and friendship with a socialist candidate for parliament A F Batty led Kadalie into of launching a trade union and in 1919 the ICU was founded in Cape Town. In 1921 he was elected the union's national secretary. (2)
3. After 2 years of consolidation of the ICU in the Cape, Kadalie and his lieutenants expanded the union in Natal, the Transvaal and the Free State until in 1928 the organization claimed a membership of more than 100,000. Kadalie also edited a union newspaper "The Worker's Herald". Kadalie consistently tried to win recognition for the ICU as a legitimate union and voice for African workers. (3)
4. When efforts to win acceptance for the ICU by white unions in SA FAILED, Kadalie went abroad in a quest for recognition where through contacts in the British Labour movement Kadalie secured the promise of an advisor for the ICU. When the advisor, Ballinger arrived in 1928, his relations with Kadalie soon soured, and personal rivalries and financial misdealings started destroying the ICU from within and Natal split away under A W G Champion. (4)
5. In 1929 Kadalie resigned as ICU secretary under heavy criticism and formed an independent ICU but established a following limited to East London where he organized a strike of significant proportion in 1930. He was banned from attending or addressing meetings on the Rand. (5)
6. Subsequent attempts to revive the ICU nationally failed, but Kadalie continued to participate in national affairs as a member of the ANC and an opponent of the Hertzog Bills in 1935-1936. (6)
7. The importance of Kadalie's ICU was that it represented a broader following of rural and urban workers, including Coloureds and Indians as well as Africans, than any organization before or since. (7)
8. Kadalie died in East London in 1951. His autobiography "My Life and the ICU" was published in 1970. (8)

See Msimang
1920 ICU had taken part in PE- they struck for higher wages & their leader Masabuntala was arrested. Many black gathered outside the gaol & unauthorised white visitors, later joined by the police, opened fire, killing 24. No one was punished. (WALKER p.587)
1924 Hertzog sent a book & good wishes to Kadalie & the ICU - (It. not yet in power.)

AFBatty Early in 1918.
In 1920 he failed to win the leadership, being beaten by Msimang.
secured the leadership after challenging Msimang.
In 1926 Kadalie expelled Communists from the ICU = the ICU began to decline.
Kadalie's son was setting, but he

Hertzog gave him a book: 1920-30 a very turbulent labour period: Is there a life of Kadalie? Why did everything go wrong for him?