

18 Sept 1985

Dear Mzala

Your letter (undated) reached me about a week ago. I decided that any contribution I might make would perhaps be most useful if I put down on paper my ideas about the relations between ANC & CP at various stages. They start with contrasting origins, cultures, interests and aims, developing a similar outlook only slowly. The basis of cooperation is recognition of a common adversary, but they conceive the enemy in different terms, the ANC as an oppressive white minority, the CP as imperialist capital. The conceptual differences have persisted to the present time, but gradually the two organisations arrived at an understanding about strategies that constitutes the binding force between them.

In defining the stages I have relied mainly on historical happenings and find that they can conveniently be divided into distinct periods of between six to ten years. Starting with 1910, we have seven or eight spans leading to 1962, your immediate cut-off point.

## 1. 1910-18

+ Act of Union: a catalyst, precipitating the formation of country-wide parties, among them the ANC and NP. ANC protests against the all-white parliament and its franchise.

+ World War I. ANC is pro-war. So is Labour Party which splits. An anti-war faction hives off & forms the ISL, forerunner of CP. It shows sympathy with the anti-war section of the NP, but fails to make headway. Begins a turn to African workers on Rand. Considers that ANC has middle class tendencies, combining working class with national tendencies. ANC & ISL leaders stand trial together on charge of inciting Africans to strike. Generally, however, the two bodies move along parallel lines & seldom connect in organisations.

+ Russian Revolution - hailed by ISL as beginning of world revolution. A handful of radical whites respond positively.

## 2. 1919-24

African strike 1920. ANC (FvI) threatens strike. ISL hesitates between support for white workers class struggle or African nationalism.

- CP formed - all white composition. Commitment to class struggles of whites. C.I. Thesis on National & Colonial Question

+ 1922 Rand Revolt. CP participation. Evaluation of the revolt

+ National/Labour Pact Government.

+ Formation of ICU.

+ I.C. Act, 1924

### 3. 1925-31

+ ICU rejects CP

+ Gumedes: light from the East

+ CP in trouble: factions & expulsions

+ C.I. initiative: Black Republic

+ Hertzog segregation bills

+ World crisis of capitalism

+ White terror in SA

+ Anti-pass campaign: NP & ICU aloof

### 4. 1931-39

+ Formation of UF government . attack on African franchise

+ ANC in decline. Emergence of All Africa Convention

+ Hertzog to segregate Coloured. Anti-OAD formed

+ Nazi tendencies: "shirt" movements. CP concentrates on

struggle against war & fascism

### 5. 1939-45

+ World War II. No action of Smuts government. NP opposition against war. CP changes sides. ANC is pro-war

+ NUSF emerges. Takes over revived AAC. Seeks alliance with ANC but fails. Boycott tactic urged

+ War ends. CP predicts swing to the right & suppression of left

+ African miners strike. Petition case against CP central committee

+ Passive resistance by Indians. Declaration of Unity by ANC & Indian Congress 1947

6. ~~1947-55~~ 1947-55

- + ANC revives. ANC & CP urge boycott.
- + Sedition case fails. CP outlawed 1950
- + Congress of Democrats: non-racial or white ?
- + African Youth League: Programme of Action
- + NP takes office, 1948. Total apartheid programme
- + Defiance Campaign launched
- + Freedom Charter & the great Treason Trial
- + Congress Alliance takes shape

7. 1955-62

- + Formation of SACTU
- + Women March to Pretoria.
- + Treason Trial
- + Sharpeville Massacre. ANC & PAC banned
- + Armed struggle launched

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PS I hope you find the catalogue of events useful. You may want more information. If so, perhaps you'll list your questions on paper to give me an idea of what you are looking for

Amandla

Jack Simons