

ICS 67

EDWARD R. ROUX PAPERS

Botanist, leader in the early Communist Party of South Africa, and author of *Time Longer than Rope*, the first major history of African nationalism in South Africa.

Roux was born in the northern Transvaal in 1903, the son of an English mother and an Afrikaner father. He grew up in Johannesburg, where his father opened a pharmacy in 1907. Roux's father was a free thinker and a convert to socialism, and Roux, while still a student, helped found the Young Communist League in 1921. In 1923 he joined the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA). After completing his honour's degree at the University of the Witwatersrand, Roux was awarded a fellowship to Cambridge University, where he spent the years 1926-1929 completing a Ph.D. degree and doing research on plant physiology.

In 1928 he went to Moscow as a South African delegate to the sixth congress of the Communist International. He returned to South Africa in 1929 and by 1930 was engaged on full-time political work as editor of *Umsebenzi*, the Communist weekly. He remained active until 1931, when he was removed from the party's political bureau for alleged right-wing sympathies. He left the CPSA in 1936 and for the next 20 years took no direct part in politics.

He returned to his scientific career, and in 1945 joined the faculty of the University of the Witwatersrand, where he became the professor of botany in 1962.

In 1957 he became an active member of the multiracial Liberal Party of South Africa. Although "named" as a former member of the CPSA in 1950, he was not singled out for persecution by the nationalist government until the early 1960s. In 1963 he was forced to resign from the Liberal Party under new rules restricting "named" persons, and in 1964 he was issued a full array of banning orders, prohibiting him from teaching, publishing, attending gatherings, being quoted, or leaving Johannesburg. He died in 1966.

Publications:

S.P. Bunting – A Political Biography, published in 1944, *Time Longer Than Rope*, first published in 1948 (and later updated and republished in 1966), a numerous articles and pamphlets. His autobiography, *Rebel Pity: The Life of Eddie Roux*, written with his wife Winifred appeared in 1970.

Researchers should order documents using the reference number and then the individual document number, eg. ICS67/11

1. Subject races within the Empire: report of study group set up by Cambridge University Labour Club, Oct 1927.
2. Notes by Norman Leys on above.
3. 27 Jan 1927. Mss letter to Roux from T. Thibedi, S.A. Communist Party, re split in TCU between "revolutionary" and "law and order" camps. [and typed copy].
4. 24 Aug 1927. Letter to Roux from C. Kadalie asking to meet him.
5. 26 Aug 1927. Telegram to Roux from Kadalie "leaving for continent".
6. I.D.P. leaflet for weekend lecture school on socialism, imperialism and "subject" races. 9-10 Jul 1927.
7. 23 May 1928. Letter to Roux from Wolton, Gen. Sec S.A. Communist Party, appointing him co-delegate to 6th World Congress of Communist International.

8. 10 Oct 1928. Letter to Roux from C. Kadalie accusing him of libel and denigrating the Communist Party.
9. 6 Jan 1929. Mss letter to Roux from Olivier re “manifesto” and his desire to see a strong ICU without its communist members. [and typed copy].
10. 28 Feb 1929. Mss letter to Roux from W. Ballinger re his article on Kadalie. States Ballinger’s view on ICU.
11. 19 Mar 1929. Letter to Ballinger from Roux in reply to above and stating C.P. opinion on trade unions.
12. 27 Apr 1929. Mss letter to Roux from Ben Weinbren, S.A. Federation of Non-European Trade Unions, re ICU collapse and his plans for future trade union organisation. [and typed copy].
13. 10 May 1929. Letter to Roux from Olivier re situation in South Africa and the Communist Party’s answer.
14. 7 Jun 1929. Mss letter to Roux from Ben Weinbren re attendance at “Leagues” conference in Paris, impossibility of obtaining passports for natives. [and typed copy].
15. 12 Jun 1929. Mss letter to Roux from W. Ballinger in reply to 11 and commenting on condition in British politics.
16. 23 Aug 1962. Letter to J. van Velsen from Roux re the story of Kadalie’s biography and his part in its preparation.
17. 14 May 1964. Mss letter to Roux from Pamela O’Neill re her hopes to write a thesis on Kadalie.
18. 21 May 1964. Letter to P. O’Neill from Roux suggesting sources.
19. 31 Aug 1964. Mss letter to Roux from P. O’Neill abandoning her attempt due to insufficient material on Kadalie in U.S.A.
20. Notes on Kadalie’s autobiography criticising his style and making suggestions for a critical foreword. n.d.
21. March 1954. Roux’s preface to Kadalie’s autobiography.
22. 5 Apr 1950. Letter to Roux from Tshekedi Khama re his relations with Seretse Khama and re native opinion of Seretse Khama’s marriage.