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D. Ivon Jones.

On Monday morning a cable was received from Moscow announcing the death of our late secretary and editor, David Ivon Jones.

The news was not unexpected, as our comrade has long been seriously ill, and for the last two years, with a brief interval in Moscow, has been in the tuberculosis institute in Yalta, on the shores of the Black Sea.

His career in the Labour and Socialist movement was a brief but brilliant one.

Born in Aberystwith, Wales, in 1883, Comrade Jones had few pleasant recollections of his childhood and youth, and his early hardships sowed the seeds of the disease which carried him off in what should have been the prime of his manhood.

For health reasons he emigrated to New Zealand, of which country he always spoke with affection.

His health improved as a result of his open-air life in that fine climate, but having a desire to travel he left for South Africa about fourteen years ago, and first came in touch with the Labour movement in Germiston, where he was employed as a clerk in the V.F.P. office during the Georgetown by-election. There he met the writer, and notwithstanding strong temperamental differences, a strong personal friendship sprang up.

When the 1913 strike spread to Vereeniging, our comrade came out on strike from the V.F.P. station there, being the only office worker to range himself alongside the men. This decided his future activities, for of course he was victimised by his late employers. He was then engaged in the office of the Mine Workers' Union for a few months to assist the secretary, Tom Matthews, in reorganising the office, and throwing himself with ardour into a study of and active participation in the Labour movement, he was soon after appointed general secretary to the South African Labour Party. This position he filled with conspicuous ability until the division on the War reached its climax at the special conference of the Party held in Johannesburg in August, 1915, when he with a majority of the Executive and many members were expelled for refusing to sign the infamous pledge to assist the Botha-Smuts Government in its War policy.

The anti-war section immediately formed the International Socialist League, with Comrade Jones as secretary and editor of its paper, "The International." His clear vision and rapid grasp of new

situations, his facile pen and ardent and poetic temperament had full play in the new revolutionary movement. Speaking, writing, studying and engaging in the unceasing debates and discussions which were a feature of those stirring times when old ideas had to be discarded and new points of view acquired, relentless in his revolutionary enthusiasm, yet genial and lovable to all his comrades and even to his political opponents, Comrade Jones was the incarnation of all that was best in the new movement.

The pace, however, was too hot for his enfeebled frame, and he was forced to retire, but being under the necessity, like all proletarians, of earning his living, he accepted a position in Comrade Pettersen's office in Durban, and later spent some months in the Mozambique coastal belt. Returning to Johannesburg, he resumed the editorship of "The International" for a few months, but had to desist, and at the invitation of a friend proceeded in 1920 to Nice in the vain quest of health. Keenly interested in the Russian Revolution, he made his way through Italy, Germany and Sweden to Moscow, where he represented the International Socialist League at the 3rd Congress of the Communist International.

Comrade Jones had a gift for languages; besides his native Welsh and English, he read and spoke Dutch, German and Russian, and would read Spanish, Italian and Portuguese papers when they came to hand.

He continued to contribute valuable articles on tactics to "The International" and to the English and Russian Communist Press and periodicals. His brochure, "Communism in South Africa," is well known, and he was the author of a number of pamphlets, one of which, "The Bolsheviks are Coming," was the cause of his arrest, imprisonment and trial for sedition in Maritzburg, in company with Comrade Laurie Greene. He was convicted, but on appeal to the Supreme Court the conviction was quashed.

Comrade Jones was recognised by the Russian comrades as a sound propagandist of proletarian revolutionary tactics, and were it not for the tragedy of his health would undoubtedly have become a considerable international figure.

His courage, both moral and physical, were undoubted. In the 1913 siege of the Trades Hall, again when the mob broke up the May Day demonstration in 1917, and on many other occasions, this was put to the severest test, and he never flinched. In his small body he carried a lion's heart, is a frequent comment by those who knew him. But that which gives him a prominent place in the roll of proletarian fighters is his whole-hearted devotion to the cause of the workers. From the time that he saw his path clearly he never wavered and never looked back. Whatever doubts and backslidings others may have expressed or shown, Comrade Ivon remained firm in his faith in the certainty of the ultimate triumph of the revolutionary working-class.

Many will mourn his loss in Russia and Britain as well as in South Africa, but the best tribute we can pay to his memory, and the one he would wish, is to carry on the work which, splendidly equipped as he was for it, he so reluctantly and tragically had to lay down.