

DEATH OF MZALA NXUMALO

The South African Communist Party regrets to announce that one of its leading activists, Comrade Jabulani Nobleman 'Mzala' Nxumalo, died in hospital in London on the evening of February 22, 1991 after a long illness.

Comrade Mzala, as he was known to all in the liberation movement, was born on October 27, 1955, in Dundee, Northern Natal. His father Benjamin and mother Elsie were both teachers and paid the closest attention to his education. After attending primary school at Louwsburg, he went to Bethal College in Butterworth and completed his matric at Kwa-Dlangezwa College in Empangeni, in Zululand. His record was outstanding. From standard 6 onwards, he passed his examinations in the first class and went on to study law at the University of Zululand.

Caught up in the countrywide upsurge of 1976, Comrade Mzala had to leave the university and flee into exile, where he joined the African National Congress and later the Communist Party. He served the movement first in Mozambique and later in Tanzania, moving on to the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union for advanced studies in politics and various specialised subjects related to the work of the Movement.

He held a leading position in the ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the liberation movement, serving in Angola, Swaziland and other areas of the underground. But his outstanding contribution to the movement was in the sphere of ideas and ideology.

Comrade Mzala had a voracious intellectual appetite and rapidly absorbed every book he could lay hands on. Wherever he was stationed, he was surrounded by books, and was constantly engaged in argument and debate with his comrades. A constant stream of articles flowed from his pen and he contributed regularly to **The African Communist**, **Sechaba**, **Dawn** and other journals of the liberation movement.

He was endlessly fascinated and intrigued by the national question, and wrote and lectured extensively on the relationship between the national and class struggle in South Africa. Asserting that the aim of the South African revolution was to end inequality between the nations, he believed this could only be achieved under socialism.

"It is impossible to abolish national inequality under capitalism, since this requires the abolition of classes", he wrote on one occasion. As a Marxist, he believed that to achieve this aim, it was necessary "to organise the only class that is capable of achieving this kind of revolution - the working class". Hence his membership of the Communist Party and his lifelong devotion to its cause.

To be a member of the Communist Party did not mean that he was not equally devoted to the national interest of his people. He was intensely proud of Zulu history and culture, as any reader of his book **Gatsha Buthelezi - Chief with a Double Agenda** can testify. He believed that the



bantustan system stifled the national drive and independence of the African peoples.

Comrade Mzala came to Britain in 1987 to further his studies, and read for a Ph.D. degree at the University of Essex and the Open University. After attending a Seminar on socialism in New York last year, he was given time on television and addressed a number of meetings at U.S. universities. He was scheduled to start a fellowship at Yale University in September of this year.

Though ever loyal to the movement, Comrade Mzala was a fierce critic of bureaucracy and had no patience with fudge or compromise. He was a delegate to the ANC conference in Kabwe, Zambia in 1985 and presented a number of sharp challenges to the leadership. He was the chosen representative of the London region to the ANC'S Consultative Conference in Johannesburg in December 1990 but was prevented by ill-health from attending.

The death of Comrade Mzala at the tragically early age of 35 has deprived South Africa of one of its most brilliant talents at the very period when he was destined to reach the peak of his powers. That he should be snatched from us when he had so much still to give is a grievous loss to the liberation movement.

Our heartfelt condolences are extended to his widow Mpho, whom he married in 1986, to his children, to his father and mother and the other members of his family.

BRIAN BUNTING
London February 23, 1991.