

Letter to Prof. J. Dunning.

PCU/1/2/16/29



COPY.

House of Assembly.
Cape Town.

28.3.39.

Dear Koos,

Thank you for your letter of 25th March, which I have read with very much interest. The points which you raise lend themselves better to verbal discussion than to correspondence - and I look forward to having a good talk with you on the subject some time. In the meantime let me put down a few hasty comments.

First as to the question you put about the new "beleids-
rigting" of the University. I came into the matter chiefly as mediator with a view to healing the breach between the University and the Municipality so as to secure a continuance of financial support. It was then stated very clearly that while Afrikaans was to be the primary medium of the University, it was desired to continue to welcome English students and that the atmosphere would be such that they could be at home. This the University seems to be departing from to an ever increasing extent.

On the broader question of "kultuur" I have always sympathised strongly with the development of Afrikaans "kultuur" on the understanding that it should be an equal contribution of the Afrikaner to the larger whole of a broader South Africanism. In the old days, while the Afrikaner was in a position of inferiority, no true South Africanism was possible. It is right that all traces of inequality should be wiped away. But the trouble about your 100% Afrikaner is that he is out to create new inequalities. He can't conceive of a broadly national culture based on equal contributions. His idea of a South African nation is an Afrikaner bloc which may perhaps graciously absorb a few English-speaking South Africans leaving the rest as an unassimilable minority group. On the basis of that conception there can of course never be peace and real progress in South Africa.

What is one to do about it? Of course one must go on fighting against this narrowness. But will it persist and be intensified, or is it just a passing phase? I would like to think the latter, but I can't convince myself that it is so. That being so, I am not too happy about the future. Still, I suppose, in these and other matters, one must be content sometimes to carry on the fight in faith, following the light as one sees it.

All good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
Jan H. Hofmeyr.