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From John Lamb

11th January, 1963

Dear Peter,

I write to advise you that the ICFTU have decided to get Ernie over to Brussels to discuss the various aspects of the Conference with them and I understand that he is likely to come in the fourth week of January being the week commencing 21st. All the arrangements which you suggest have been approved, but it is important now that you should let us have a list of the people that you think ought to be invited. As you know, this has always been on the agenda. Secondly, I am pressing the ICFTU to make a payment on account of expenses and I hope that this will be remitted to you shortly.

When you next write can you please tell me what the position now is in Swaziland in regard to Jordan and his efforts on behalf of the Democrats. I still keep in touch with Zwane and in his last letter he indicated to me that he thought the Liberal Party was now supporting Nxumalo. I would like to know what the position is in regard to this.

I enclose for your interest a communiqué issued at the close of the Israel meeting of the Liberal International which I attended. The communiqué does not do what was a relatively unfruitful gathering justice. The only Africans present apart from myself were Masilo of Basutoland and M. Fondioux of the French Congo, who spoke no English. As you know, French Congo was the area of cannibalism, and M. Fondioux had all the amiability which has been associated with pre-prandial preparations of these peoples. I had dinner with him and through an interpreter ascertained that while technically there were two parties in the French Congo the government had no intention of holding any further elections for, as he pointed out, he could not see the purpose of elections once you were in power. When I asked him whether this did not mean that the only way of effecting a change of government was to assassinate the President he said that he did not think this was possible and that in any event, to use his own words, it was the policy to break the wings of a political opponent by a well-paid position in the government or as an ambassador and, if he failed to accept this, to imprison him on some pretext or other. Nevertheless under this system 92 per cent of the youth of the country are in primary schools. This would seem to me to ultimately spell an end to politics à la Congo.

There were some interesting people at the meeting. A Mr. Mesani of the Swatantara Party in India, a most able man, threw quite a lot of light on recent manoeuvres in India. His thesis, very simply, is that is that Nehru is no better than Krishna Monon and that both these gentlemen have wanted to take India into the communist ~~line~~ camp unobtrusively and without too much protest from India. He says that the Chinese Communists had misjudged the situation on information given to them by the

Communists and Menon and thought that their advance into India would break the Indian spirit and allow a communist coup d'état. At the Executive of the Congress Party the day before Menon resigned apparently Nehru tried to save Menon's skin by suggesting that he was equally to blame for the policies which had brought India to this position. The Executive gave Nehru the shock of his life by saying that they weren't at this stage asking him to resign but, if he thought he should resign with Menon, they would not object. Nehru decided to save his skin and get rid of Menon. Thereafter it became clear that the effect of the Chinese invasion had been to remove a fifth column general from the army, destroy Menon politically, with communism far from becoming a possible salvation of the situation, or becoming hated. It was this kind of pressure which Russia brought upon China to secure China's withdrawal, it being forcibly suggested to China that her continued invasion of India would force India into the arms of the West.

There was also an interesting person from the Philippines, a doctor of laws, and a Singhalese from Ceylon. Israel is a fascinating place and if the Liberal Party of South Africa is thinking in terms of land policies they ought to make a study of the various types of Israeli communal farming. When I arrived the place was still in something of an uproar over the Israeli vote in favour of sanctions. Apparently the South African Government has stopped all Jewish donations of money to Israel from leaving South Africa. You might be able to use this information, which was given to us by the Foreign Office in Israel, judiciously to embarrass the government.

Many of the things that are said in the enclosed statement we would agree with, but I felt, and said to various people, that I thought that the document showed a tremendous lack of knowledge of what was happening in Africa. I asked Israeli Liberals whether they would like to form some sort of close association with ourselves and they were enthusiastic about this. May I suggest that it would be tactful to write to them. Their Secretary General is

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Israeli Liberal Party,
48 King George Street,
Tel Aviv

I understand that you are to consider the question of joining the Liberal International at the February meeting of the National Committee. May I say that once again at this meeting of the Liberal International the treasurer announced their intention to raise a fund of between £70,000 and £100,000 to help liberal parties in the underdeveloped areas and particularly in Africa.

With best wishes for the New Year,

P.S. I am going to Rome tomorrow at the invitation of the Italian Liberal Party to address a meeting in a theatre in Rome on Sunday morning.