

PC16/5/2/1/121



7th August, 1961.

Mr. H. Hollins,
74, Kingston,
Park St.,
DURBAN.

Dear Mr. Hollins,

I must apologise for the delay in replying to your letter of July 7th and also in case I should have addressed you wrongly in this letter.

I will try to deal with the questions you raise as best I can. You argue that the first step for any intelligent South African is to get the Nationalist extremists out of power and that the only way in which to do that is through unity. You imply that this unity must be one between political parties, in other words, I assume, a largely "white" unity, and that such unity could in fact defeat the Nationalists.

I agree with you that unity is essential if the Nationalists are to be defeated but I think it has to be a unity which embraces all the people in this country. Nor do I think that the Nationalists will allow themselves to be defeated in the orthodox fashion in an ordinary election. I am quite certain that Dr. Verwoerd would not dream of having an election now unless he was quite certain that he was going to win it and I am quite certain that, if every white voter who opposes the Nationalist Party threw his vote behind the United Party as a "first step" it would not make the slightest difference to the election result.

I am afraid this is rather depressing talk but I think the facts support it. At the referendum the Nationalists for the first time had a majority of votes cast. At the last election, when they still only had a minority of votes, they won twice as many seats as their opponents. Since the referendum and the Commonwealth walk-out they have increased their majority in, I think, every by-election they have contested. These are unpleasant facts but they are facts and they point to

the Nationalists winning this next election, perhaps even with an increased majority.

It seems to me that in the face of these facts the intelligent South African must start changing his ideas and start looking round for some new way to defeat the Nationalists. My own view is that this can, in the long run, only be done by the peaceful use of the pressures available to white and non-white South Africans and our primary task to-day is to build up a force of opinion on both sides of the colour line which is strong enough to challenge apartheid. As long as a large number of Dr. Verwoerd's opponents support his views on race questions his position is relatively secure and there is, I think, an obligation on any political organisation which has a new way out of South Africa's dilemma to take the advantages offered by an election to put its point of view. It may not win seats but it is at least getting white voters accustomed to the idea of change and, in our case anyway, ~~of~~ to the idea of working with his fellow-citizens of other races.

I am afraid this is not the answer you were wanting from me but I can only tell you, very briefly, how I see the position.

Yours sincerely,