

PC16/5/4/1/32



38 The Uplands
HARPENDEN
HERTS.AL5 2NZ

10 June 1984

Dear Peter,

I now have the ultimate advantage over you of being able to produce this letter on my word processor, which (in theory at least) makes it possible to get rid of all spelling mistakes before sending the letter on its way and also makes it easy for me to keep a record of the nonsense I have written.

Unfortunately the computer has not yet learnt to compose the sort of nonsense that I specialise in.

I had intended to write to you by 21 May, as you reminded me that I seemed to be writing about that time most months, but inspiration failed me when I read of Botha's visit to London. Inspiration only returned when I read yesterday that someone had resigned from the Broederbond because it had become too liberal. I do not think that I had ever dreamt of hearing that accusation. Even then one must presume that Botha's schemes are going more or less according to plan, with the ANC in some disarray - but there was a very good programme about Mandela on the BBC a few nights ago, even though I felt that my recollection of the way the Freedom Charter had been put together did not quite fit in with the way the programme put it - and Mrs. T. giving him royal treatment here. One begins to wonder whether the future will look different from that picture which we found so convincing for so long.

Celeste and I are planning to be in Johannesburg from about 22 August, possibly for three weeks or so, and I hope that there will be an opportunity to see you on this occasion. Celeste's father will be in Jo'burg at this time so that there will be no need to travel to CT, but I may find myself getting around the country a little talking to some of the people involved with chemical engineering education. That may well take me to Durban (where I have a brother, distinctly anti-liberal) and I should also try to get to George, where my sister lives. Are you going to be in PMBq. in late August/early Sep.? If you are, prepare for an all-night discussion. Of course it would be marvellous to be able to see old man P. as well, perhaps even some of the younger editions.

You recently sent me a reminder that my subscription to REALITY

is due, but I presume that whoever actually sent it was not aware of the draft that I sent you. Or did you not receive it ?

Enough for the moment. I must go to hear a programme on the BBC in which the govt.'s moves to abolish the GLC are to be debated - it is not a programme that I would normally listen to, as they tend to debate trivia, but this is a really big issue and it looks as though the government is in quite a bit of a pickle, though in their by now familiar authoritarian way they will no doubt proceed regardless.

Let us hear about your moves in August - before September !

Sunday: I can now take this report a little further, for what it is worth. No need to report on the western economic summit, which was really little more than a TV commercial for that old fool. It is terrifying how the growth of communications technology has changed our values in so many directions. Sometimes, though, some good comes of it. This morning the BBC had Kaunda on an intercontinental link-up which allowed people from all over the world to question him. Of course a skilled politician has an immense advantage in this sort of game, but I had the feeling that in the bit I heard K. did himself justice. An amusing bit came at the end, when it turned out that the questioner was his son, studying at York. He did not seem enamoured with his father's policies on contact with S.A.

This really is the end now.

Yours,
leaf.