

PC 16/5/4/239



P.O.Box 71,
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11th August, 1985.

Dear Audrey,

These thanks are a bit late but then so was your contribution to my researches, if you don't mind my saying so. Anyway, I do thank you.

The trouble with your stuff, Mrs. Cobden, was that it arrived after I had finished doing the bloody thing. Worse than that, it showed that I had been wrong about some things, so I had to have an errata page for people to look at before they even started. The two things I was wrong about was that I had always thought that Thelma Philip was a member of Jock's group, and now you tell me that she was in yours. The other thing I had not known was that Ma Ballinger was quite enthusiastic about the Party immediately after it was formed. I had always felt that she didn't much like it, right from the beginning. And what can you tell me about Guy Routh. Marion remembered him as producing the instant list of Committee members in the Darragh Hall from which came COD. So was he a member of the CP— and, if he was, what was he doing with all you 'respectables'?

I am waiting to receive copies of what I gave at Grahamstown and will send one off to you when they arrive. Don't you dare find any mistakes in it! The Workshop, rather to my surprise, was a great success. Somebody will be doing an article on it in the September REALITY but it really was a warm occasion, unmarred by any rows, which I had expected there might be. The idea is to have follow-up meetings in the various outres, first only of those who attended, or who would have liked to but couldn't, and later broadening out to include ex-members who didn't come because they thought it was going to be a waste of time, and non-members who might be interested. One thing which strikes one about our old membership is that it has its fingers in so many pies. We had people there who now belong to affiliates of the UDF, Inkatha and the PFP, as well as many with involvement in all sorts of other organisations. Could that widely-scattered membership now act as some sort of unifying factor amongst all the bitterly-contesting factions we find ourselves faced with today? I don't know. There certainly was no strong move at Grahamstown to revive the Party. The predominant view, I think, which is certainly my view, is that there is not enough room on the political spectrum for another organisation, but that there may be room for one competing in the realm of ideas, arguing the case with the various contestants, for basic Liberal concepts to be incorporated in the new society. At the moment all the main contestants are at each other's throats and, because of the Emergency nobody here really knows what is happening. You almost certainly know more than we do. I am sure the police and parts of the army are doing terrible things in the townships. So have the supporters of the various liberation organisations been for the whole of this year. Now Durban has blown up and everyone is blaming everyone else for what is happening there, set off by the murder of Mrs. MKxenge — by whom? Seeing we've never found out who murdered her husband, are we any more likely to ever find out about her? As usually happens when violence erupts in Durban, the Indians have been the main sufferers. Although most of the loss of life seems to have been African most of the loss of property has been Indian. The whole thing is one great big ghastly mess. This week PW is coming to Natal to open the Nat Congress and this morning's papers are full of speculation that he will make important announcements about a new deal. The trouble with PW is that he doesn't yet understand, and perhaps never will, that the only 'new deal' that is going to really cool things is one which shows clearly that he is abandoning apartheid.

This afternoon
news, part No.
of. Mainly would
to contribute
His conscience
replaced yet

there's no sign that he's got anything like that in mind yet.

In spite of all the alarms which surround us we are still well. This afternoon I must go on a final round of visits about the next REALITY -- Tony Mathews, Pat McKenzie and Marie Dyer. It should have been with the printers ten days ago. Maimie would never have tolerated such slackness, but it's the kind of people we ask to contribute who can't meet deadlines that kills us.

I hope Harry is better than he was when you last wrote. His conscience is probably worrying him about those pants with the broken zip he hasn't replaced yet.

Love to you both.