

Lincoln College
Oxford OX1 3DR.

August 1st.

Dear Mr. Brown,

I hope you are well, and that you had a successful trip overseas. I tried to contact you a number of times in my last couple of months, but it was impossible as either I was on the move or you were out of the country. I had hoped to be able to have a chat about the paper (The L.P. and the C.D.P.) that I left at your house some months back now, as I'm sure you've got some comments to make on it, and I would still very much value hearing anything you'd care to say about the paper. I shall be doing quite an extensive re-write in the next couple of months before the Conference I'm to give the paper to, in September.

It is very strange - and not terribly pleasant - being back in Oxford, and I have all sorts of contingency plans under way to get me back home as soon as I can wangle the Oxford regulations. One of these plans is an application I have made to the Institute for Social and Economic Research at Rhodes, headed by Peter Vale, for a Fellowship from August to December next year. I had hoped to be able to put your name down as a referee, but couldn't contact you; as such, and I hope you don't mind, I did put your name down as someone 'involved' who knew me and knew my work (ie. separate from my academic referees). In all honesty I thought that, with Rhodes being full of ex-Liberals, your name would help, although it is set alongside those of Harry Oppenheimer and Helen Joseph (a vain attempt to appease everybody!). I apologise now if this was out of order, but I had to get the application in while I was at Rhodes and you were, of course, uncontactable.

I don't know if I told you, but I presented the paper at Rhodes, and expected quite a lot of opposition from Rodney Davenport, not least because he'd just put out the third edition of his 'Modern History' which argued the opposite to what I said about the L.P. in my paper. He was, however, extremely complimentary about the paper, and it was Terence Beard, one of my referees, who was far more difficult, asking such questions as: what did I think would have happened had the L.P. actually taken part in the COP? Most unfair of him, I thought. Be that as it may, the paper seemed to go down quite well, and it was Rodney Davenport who suggested I apply for the Rhodes Fellowship. Jack Unterhalter also seemed to quite like the paper; needless to say, however, I have not sent a copy to Oscar Wollheim (or Jimmy Gibson).

I hope all is going well with the LDA; if I may say so, it does me good to see your name, as Natal Chair, back in the papers. My thesis has definitely begun to feel a little more 'alive' than it used to. I have just finished indexing the pre-L.P. minutes from the various

liberal groups, and have concluded that - despite your loss of memory on the matter - you were a good candidate to have been one of those who switched votes from 'no' to 'yes' at the meeting which launched the L.P. since the Pmb. group wanted a political party but 'not just yet'. I shall keep this to myself, along with the story that Colin Eglin had the deciding vote re whether a Party should be formed or not, cast it in favour, and then refused to join. The question everybody keeps asking me, of course, is whether the whole thing is going to happen all over again. All I can say in reply is that if it does, I'm sure that this time it will be without the qualified franchise. No-one seems to think this is an acceptable answer.

I am sorry not to have seen you before leaving South Africa, and I would like again to thank you and Mrs. Brown for your warm hospitality, and for all the kindness (and patience) you have shown me. I only hope that my thesis can repay some of the debt.

Yours,

Dave Crossitt