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5/9/87

Dear Peter,

Thank you for your letter and the enclosures, which I read with interest. It was remindful of the old arguments in the Liberal Party !! I do not think that you ought to take umbrage at Dave's paper. It was written with the best of intentions by a serious historian who has no personal axe to grind, and whose main aim is to arrive at what seems to him to be the most accurate account. I agree with you that he made too much of the Dscar's supposed fear. At our seminar here at which he presented his paper, he took our criticisms in the spirit in which they were given, and Rodney Davenport praised him for his thoroughness in handling his sources. We stressed the fact that he was exaggerating the significance of Oscar's expression, which he took in good part.

I received a letter from Dave this morning, and he mentions that Stanley Trapido made one pointed comment: "We are not at war with the Liberal Party !" He also mentions that he was still battling with a question which I put to him which was something like: "What difference do you think it would have made to the history of the Liberal Party had they joined the COP and subscribed to the Freedom Charter ?" He says he has not been able to come up with an answer yet but that he is intending to deal with it in his thesis. I will be very surprised if he does not amend his paper to take account of the criticisms, for he says he is revising it. I think that David is a very genuine chap intent upon getting at the truth as far as he is able to, and I don't think you should be unduly worried. His work will be no more than one argument in a debate which is only just beginning.

I showed the correspondence to Rodney, and he agrees with my judgment although he was present at the crucial meeting in the Western Cape from the records of which Dave in part drew his conclusions. He found it uncomfortable to think back upon, but did not hesitate to praise Dave for the quality of his paper.

I think Randolph over-reacted, and were he to be in South Africa today he would have no option but to accept that the Freedom Charter is a key political document among a large section of the radical opposition, COSATU for instance. The point that I would make is that it seems to me to be more than a little unrealistic to have expected the LP to have accepted the Freedom Charter when most of its main leaders were still involved in white politics and regarded universal franchise as too radical to contemplate. How could they have been expected to join the COP and participate in the amendment (?) and endorsement of the Charter ?

It is only once the leadership is firmly in the hands of Peter Brown and Alan Paton that the move towards democratic policies begins !

Unfortunately I have left the correspondence at home, because I had first intended to telephone you tonight. Otherwise I would have quoted at greater length from Dave's letter. But it suddenly occurred to me that your phone number might have changed, because I had heard that you now have a new farm, and I don't know whether you are still at Shinglewood or not. So a letter is safer as Margot and I leave for Kimberly tomorrow at sparrow and will not be back until the weekend.

I think that Dave ought to be given our backing. He is not in a very strong position for an ISER Fellowship because he's working on a doctoral

thesis and not on post-doctoral work which is what the ISER really caters for.

I am up to my eyes in work at the moment - marking until it is coming out of my ears, and struggling with two theses as well. However, it is all part of the game. James is writing his matric in a few weeks time, and I imagine that we are in for a stressful time on that account. Otherwise we are all well.

Yours,

Jerome