

91, The Links,  
Whitley Bay,  
NORTHUMBERLAND.

6th March. 1965

Dear Randolph,

I don't quite know how to react to your "Lessons of Disaster". You seem to me to be advocating revolution in South Africa and saying that all who disagree with you - including the LP - belong to the "white establishment". In fact you are rather turning The New African into the organ of the ARM. You are saying that the wrong sabotage tactics have been used and strongly imply that "violence to property" is not enough.

I find it very difficult on purely moral grounds to accept violence of any sort, least of all violence against persons. I do know, however, that liberalism in South Africa has no political programme adequate to the moral ideals it professes. But I don't know where this leads. It is all very well to say with Nkomo that we must pursue the sort of violence that will bring the quickest results with the least possible loss of life - but is this Paarl, Queenstown, Bashee Bridge? Surely it is criminal to advocate violence while there is so little chance of violence succeeding? Surely while the regime is as powerful as it is and the resistance as uncoordinated as it is, the achievement is going to go on being small, and the price high? If politics is the art of the possible surely it is unpolitical to advocate revolution, at this stage anyway?

Wouldn't it be better for The New African to break its links with the ARM? By all means invite discussion of violence in your columns but is it necessary for you to declare yourself in favour of it? Or having provided the alternative to Umkonto are you now determined to do the same for "Revolution"?

It seems almost inevitable that liberalism's political programme should be inadequate in any country where there aren't free elections - and as that is our object liberalism isn't much use. I am sure that any significant violence in South Africa must lead to a permanently totalitarian regime. I have mentioned this before but you didn't answer me. How do you control violence once it has acquired the necessary significance? As liberals I really don't see that it is our

function to say how the change must be brought about - simply because we are not in a position to do so. difficult though that may be to accept. Our function is rather to talk to the West because as liberals, and being opposed to Communism, we have their ear.

As things stand at present I am not sure what to do. I am not at the moment prepared to associate myself with a magazine that advocates the use of violence - ~~not~~ for purely moral reasons. In the meanwhile I would very much like to know your thinking on the politics of violence along the lines of the questions I have asked. ~~Would you~~ <sup>Would you</sup> be prepared to publish a letter from me along with an ~~editorial~~ editorial footnote to the effect that you are not as a magazine specifically advocating the use of violence in South Africa? If not I am afraid that I shall have to return your very kind cheque for £2 and Sheila will want someone to buy her shares. I do hope you understand but I cannot possibly write for you under these conditions.

Wouldn't James agree to a teeny bit more are the bottom?

Hans really went to town on you. If you would like to write a letter to the Herald, I would sign it. (As long as you didn't advocate violence...)

Yours,  
John.