

Pc1/117/25/324

23 Lynton Road,
KLOOF,
Natal.

23rd October, 1959.

Dear Leo,

Thanks for your letter of October 14, and my apologies for not having yet replied to your earlier one. I do not quite know what you mean by your handling negotiations with Scribner's, but I certainly think it would be a good thing to be quite clear about the different territories. Jonathan Cape and Scribner's had a very sharp difference because Cape, not altogether honourably I thought, got me to sign an agreement giving them the rights to sell TOO LATE THE PHALAROPE everywhere except the United States and the Philippines. It is true that Scribner's had exactly these same favourable terms for CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY, but of course the MS was first offered to them. Because of all this I would be only too glad if you and Scribner's could settle the matter between you. I doubt if they would agree to your publishing in the United States.

I agree that it is improbable that you would want to do an Afrikaans version, but I would be glad if you would let me have a definite reply so that I can write to the Nasionale Boekhandel.

I do not know whether I have strong views about production here or in England. I suppose that means I have not got strong views. Do you think I ought to have? In any case you need not wait for a decision from me, because I shall abide by yours.

The Hofmeyr work is going steadily but slowly. We hope to come to Cape Town about the middle of November about Hofmeyr business, and shall certainly try to see you. I think a first biographer has a duty to give a whole host of documented facts about his hero, but I am trying to steer a middle course between dull fact and brilliant evocation. It is not easy, I assure you. Dorrie is reading the MS as it gets finished, and she thinks it is fine, but I am terrified of writing a dull book. Denys Reitz, who was not exactly a friend of HOFFIE'S, was in a group when someone described a certain biography as "a dull book about a dull man", and Denys Reitz said that exactly described the Life of Onze Jan. I do not think

Hoffie was a dull man, but it would be easy I think to write a dull book about him.

Love to you both.

Yours ever,

P.S. Did Nell read my essay on the Afrikaans novel?