



PC 1/177/30/2/1

13th August, 1945.

Thank you for your letter of 8th July. It has come out pretty quickly and I have read it with much interest.

I wrote to you last on 6th May on the eve of the German surrender. I am writing to you now on what seems to be the eve of the Japanese surrender. What a joyous thought that the world is at peace again. We have indeed much to be thankful for - perhaps we shall only now be able to realise for how much.

Yet one can't help viewing the future with disquiet. I could wish that Britain and America had taken up a firmer stand at Potsdam vis-a-vis Russia than apparently they have done - and in any case the prospects in Europe fill one with dismay. But I am even more worried by what I have described as the moral challenge of the atomic bomb. It means a widening of the gap between man's intellectual and his moral progress. I doubt very much if the existence of the atomic bomb is going to frighten man into the maintenance of a really enduring peace - and if it does not, it seems as if we must face the prospect of our civilisation going under. I don't think anything can really save us except a change in the character and outlook of the peoples - but one just does not see how that is to be brought about.

The result of your elections surprised us here as much as it doubtless surprised you. The same post as brought your letter brought one also from Babu King, whom you may remember at the B.C.B.C. at St. Elbe's, now an engine-driver on the S.W.R., as well as being ~~staunchly~~ staunchly Labour in his political outlook, and still after 30 years, like yourself a regular correspondent of mine. He summed up the position in these words:- "Of course there will be the usual swing to the Left, but the Churchill appeal will prevent Labour from getting a majority." Well I don't suppose the change of Government will really make so much of a difference in the U.K. itself. Smuts's comment was that it will have more effect outside Britain than inside. What to me is most remarkable and regrettable - is that Churchill should have taken such a bad knock, although I think that in the long run it will be seen to have been better for him to have gone out of office now than after he had taken a knock on post-war problems. In some ways I envy your retiring Ministers - they can get a much needed rest, knowing that in the main their policies will continue to be pursued. Here the consequences of a change of Govt. would be very much more serious. *

I am as you anticipated more than delighted at Smuts's return. He was away for 3½ months and the burden was very heavy especially while Parl: lasted which was until 12th June. Things are a bit easier now but there is still a very great deal of clearing up to do. You talk of a PCship for myself. Well it has not been mooted but I have been offered by Oxfor University a D.C.L. in recognition of my war services and that satisfies my only ambition. It was the one honour which I was still hoping to get. It may mean my being in England in October for the conferment of the degree - that also will be a source of great pleasure to me - not least to have the opportunity of seeing you again.

I saw your cousin's husband, Anold, yesterday & we spoke of you. He has been