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THE LONG VIEW.

I have had a letter from a "sympathetic opponent" of the Liberal cause. He asks if after the experience of these elections, Liberals still think that white South Africa will accept peaceful change. What he is asking is this - is it worth while to fight elections?

This questioner puts his finger on one of the Liberal dilemmas. Every party has them. The Nationalists have one such dilemma in regard to immigration. The United Party has such a dilemma in regard to liberalism, which it must reject on the plateau and flirt with in the cities. The African National Congress is caught between broad and narrow nationalism. The dilemma seems to be a fundamental characteristic of human activity and organisation.

This particular Liberal dilemma arises from the fact that the Liberal Party is a non-racial organisation in a society racially organised; it is a bridge organisation in a country that is gulf-ridden. It feels that it has a duty to convert white people as well as a duty to uphold the claims and aspirations of non-white people.

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These difficult choices present themselves, not only to organisations, but also to persons. I propose therefore to give my own views, I being the person that is best-known (or so I suppose) to myself.

Do I think that White South Africa will accept peaceful

change? I have never thought that White South Africa by itself will initiate change. But I am a peaceful person, and what is more, I don't want - for several reasons - to emigrate to some other country. Therefore I am committed to work for change as peaceful as it may be.

Do I think that peaceful change and bloody revolution are the sole alternatives? Do I think the only alternative to peaceful change is a single cataclysmic act? Frankly I do not. I believe there may be a period of change in which there <sup>will be</sup> both evolutionary and revolutionary events. In such a situation we will need non-racial thinking, devotion to liberty, a championship of individual rights. It will be the duty of Liberals - as much as anyone else - to champion these things.

Any such contribution is bound to be one of the creative factors in this evolutionary sequence. Any work honestly done now will affect the end result. There is of course the <sup>extreme</sup> possibility that all supporters of a non-racial society will be exterminated in a cataclysmic act, and a black Verwoerd will take his revenge. All the Liberals I know are aware of such a possibility, but it does not deter them from action. |

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Therefore after these elections, after having wooed white voters and having been engaged in the activities of an all-white world, members of the Liberal Party will return to other equally great obligations. One of these is clearly the obligation to the Multi-racial Conference. Another is our obligation to non-white organisations. I myself have been encouraged by friends in such

organisations, who have expressed appreciation of our work in the elections.

The Liberal Party has never been in any doubt that the only way to defeat the dangerous policies of Nationalism is by rallying the support of all true believers in liberty, whoever they may be. We, and all non-party liberals, will continue to help in this, in both partisan and non-partisan ways (if there are such categories). We shall still do what we can inside Parliament and outside Parliament. We declare again our allegiance to the cause of a common society of freedom and opportunity for all, and our kinship with all those who stand for the same cause.

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But I do not think we shall relinquish our duty to try to open the eyes of the blind, and to bring out of darkness those who sit in the prison house. After all, lots of us have relatives in there!