

Dec 11/9/62

6th November, 1962.

Dear John, *John Lang*

Many thanks for your letters of 23rd October and 2nd November: I am sorry that I did not reply to the first immediately, but a number of other matters have been occupying my attention, and it did not seem to raise anything of immediate importance - other than that connected with John C's request and its execution. I am pleased that this came right; it was quite a business organising it, and there was much fussing over here on the part of the author. Also, a bit of awkward publicity in a local rag before any of us knew whether things had gone as planned caused some confusion; particularly as we did not know whether to believe this paper or not, and couldn't disclose our interest.

Painting

Incidentally, I have had to advance odd sums to the chap, and would appreciate it if John could pay him through me so that these can be deducted in due course. Judging by the price he asked - which is almost exactly 1,000 times what I would have offered - he is a fairly mercenary sort of chap, so I don't have much compunction in deducting the advances. On this point, though, I should mention that if John has any difficulty selling the thing he should approach some of the High Commissioners in London: I understand that he was offered the sum he asked by Tanganyika, so John may be able to get it from or one of the W.African lot.

Before I deal with the questions raised in your letters, let me dispose of my personal problems: mainly the flat. I know how difficult this sort of thing can be to deal with, and have been looking at some of the English papers just to get an idea. What we would like to do ideally is to get a 5-roomed house somewhere on the outskirts of London. A friend of mine, Mrs Marks - a friend of Oliver's incidentally - has just bought one in Dulwich; I don't know whether we could afford to do likewise, but I am interested in one allied ~~fact~~ question: I understand from her husband (via her) that payments on a bond are deductible from one's taxable income. This seems incredible, but could it be true? If so, is there a limit? Also, is there some other form of tax - on property, other than rates - which would have to be met. If you could let me know, I should be grateful.

None of this should, however, deter you from whatever you would have done about a flat: here we would like at least 4 rooms (2 bed, study, living-room), but do not want to pay more than £10 per week. Does this seem far-fetched? We are not terribly concerned about the distance from the centre, though would obviously like to cut transportation costs. Also, we would like central heating. And we do not want furniture supplied. What are premiums like?

I hope that gives you enough information: it is very good of you to look into the question for us, and I hope it does not become too burdensome to do so.

Let me now turn to your letters:

1. Albert. He has already left, and will be away for at least a fortnight. He should be sending you his letters soon, so that you can get cracking. I am reluctant to advance money to him from that which I have unless there is some certainty that what I give him will be recovered. Would you like to place a limit on what I may offer - something, e.g. that could definitely be covered by John C.
2. Thomas: still no news. I must say these people depress me. His colleague is still cogitating, and he will only decide sometime this month. I feel rather let down. Thomas himself says he may

be prepared to come in later - i.e. when it has been proved a success. I don't know whether he has said this to Mtshizana, but if he has I can understand the latter's slowness to give up his present job. Thomas is, I fear, too cautious about risking his own position to be very useful in this field - if his reaction to this thing is any indication.

3. The Conference. I gather Peter is now corresponding with you on this, and that Ernie is also involved now. You will, I hope, have been told of the visit of an ICFTU chap to Joburg last month, and of the fact that he met Ernie and Joe Nkato there. They did not discuss the conference only, but dealt with related matters as well. What intrigues me is whether this visit represents a separate initiative on the part of the Shop concerned, or by Mbcya, or whether it was authorised from Brussels.

As to the Conference itself, I really do think that it may be difficult to organise it by January - if it is to work well and efficiently. Whatever awareness of the weaknesses of the existing bodies there is, there must surely also be a desire to see some modicum of success - in the form of a workable continuing structure - come out of the meeting. If this is to be assured, then some thought must go into who is to be there, what the nature of the discussions should be, and what the minimum basis of continued co-operation should be; and who can be expected to accept it. I don't believe this will be done by January unless a fair amount of research and travelling is done by someone - who should not be Peter or Ernie. The trouble is that I cannot think of anyone else to do it for the moment. Do you have any ideas?

4. Liberal International. Much of what you say about neutralism is of course true, but it still exists and I am afraid that until we are a lot stronger than we are now we cannot afford to antagonise those who profess it - however nebulously - let alone attempt to lay down a more realistic set of principles.

I still do not see why affiliation to the LI is necessary; surely our reasons for not wanting to enter into an organic relationship with it can be indicated, along with our earnest desire to co-operate with it on a less formal basis, and with its members on whatever basis is mutually convenient. The same, incidentally applies to the Socialist International; though here there is the additional problem of persuading our members that they and we share a common outlook. ~~By our own representatives.~~ Equally, of course, the individual Social Democratic and Labour Parties will fight shy of association with a party which has so unattractive a name as we do. Indeed, maybe the problem here concerns our title; and the fact that our policy is considerably to the left of the sort of thing it connotes. I think that we shall simply have to work on this question - the name - in the light of the success, or potential success, of approaches made to the two types of parties abroad.

For the moment, though, I favour retaining maximum flexibility by affiliating to neither international.

New African
5. Evans' article: I am not at all sure that I agree with your comments, though I am by no means wedded to the particular line he took. It is possible to argue that such a move on our part would, if anything, increase our membership and support among non-whites, threaten the Reds by showing that one can be militant but non-communist, and pick up some of the float support now ~~partly~~ not available openly to the Congresses & PAC.

6. Bechmansland. What has happened is that we have established contact with van Rensburg in Serowe, and are making use of his work on his project for primary school there. We have not entered into any agreement yet, but are keenly aware of the advantages of using the land (40 acres) he has been granted, as well as certain buildings, water facilities, and initial work that he has done. Adrian has been up there, with an architect, and plans are being drawn. Next week we are bringing an expert in adult educ from Salisbury down for discussions on curricula; and these are being prepared in draft now. Adrian saw Seretse, Rasebolai, and the Asst. Educ. Officer when he was there. All favoured our project. After the consultations on curricula, there will be some work by correspondence, and then in January two people from here, Alan Paton, and the adult educ. expert will go up

to Serove again, and will also see the Resident Commissioner and the Education Officer for final permission to go ahead. At that point a decision will be made on our relationship with van Rensburg.

Perhaps it is better that you hold fire until January, or until I come over, when we can really start the ball rolling moneywise.

7. Freedom Funds: I understand the position now, and agree that we should not expect much from them.

8. Palley, Zapu, Hopple et al: OK. I imagine that you will play the first two by ear, and that Peter will be contacting Leo Lovell if the Conference gets going.

9. I found your memo on the Common Market interesting. I hope the campaign has some effect.

10. Your trip to the Mediterranean - ^{Torrey, all.} is this for pleasure? By sea or Air? I ask because I have had some correspondence with Magnus Gubther about acquiring publishing material from that area. I discussed our enterprise with him after I left you in London in August, and he indicated that he might be able to use some of the contacts he had made in North Africa. He now tells me that this is definitely possible, but wants information and authority from me which I cannot let him have from here with any degree of safety. I imagine that the trip he will make there next week will therefore be useless from our point of view in anything but an exploratory sense. Nevertheless, I think you should contact him and find out some of his sources: he may be reluctant to disclose them to you, which means that we shall have to wait until I can write to him again. But he can unquestionably be useful - if he is to be around much longer.

11. You do not make any reference to David Astor and my suggestion in this regard. Was it too far-fetched for any action. I hope not. Please see what you can do.

I hope that this deals with all the points you raised. I shall be more prompt about replying to letters from now on.

Yours,