

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,
CAPETOWN.P. G. Rivaria
TransvaalJune 8th '38

My dear Mr. Matthews,

I am sending you under separate cover a copy of *Unlindi* with my first article in it and a copy of the Liberal Programme I told you about when I saw you. You will probably be interested to hear that we have decided (the group here who drew up the Programme as a number of other people) to launch ^{to begin with} a Democratic Union the function of which will be to put out intelligent factual propaganda of the Fabian type on S. African problems with a view to educating the public towards an intelligent liberal policy. This Union has been instructed to call a national conference of people of all shades of liberal opinion with a view to trying to see on strength & the possibilities of a party.

I am extremely interested in this line of action because I feel that it is absolutely imperative that we should get ^{progressive} Native policy out of the hands of philantropists

were it now largely in ^{the} field of practical political
endeavour. The situation remains hopeless insecure so
long as the present anomaly lasts that we have no
political party representing the liberal view on this
matter. I think you will agree that this is the only
sound thing to wish for.

That was the first thing I wanted to tell you about.
The second is that I believe the second line of
advance is the one in which you are apparently
ahead launched, namely self help along the line of
education - practical enlightenment. There is not any doubt in
my mind that the Bantia people must begin to speak
for themselves if we are to be able to carry the
struggle for a recognition of their rights much further.
I say advised much further because I'm satisfied
that while the school work fits worse in many directions
than things do get a little better here & there. The best is
in the broadening support for Native education, ~~is~~ in
supporting statements from surprising quarters for
agricultural development, prison reform etc - but above
all I see it in the industrial field. You will be
interested to know that the Trade Union Conference in
East London in April agreed to support non-European

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Railway workers in their efforts to get better wages & employment conditions. I subsequently drew up a memo for the Trades & Labour Council setting out the facts as I know they would not be able to get them themselves & they have written back in acknowledgement to say that they are willing to support me in all my efforts and will participate with us in a deputation to the Minister. That is my indication of a quite rapid changing situation. But I am certain that the next long step forward depends on the people themselves. They must become vocal & that on a narrow intelligent basis, and I am satisfied that ^{the} preparation ^{of the people for} that is the essential ^{at this moment} job of those who call themselves the leaders of the people. That, you may remember, was what I said at that jump at Boompfein & it is what I believe more firmly every day. In all I do, I see how, I can and can on issue a certain length of I would then get the people to make a statement of their own we would win but without that we are often threatened with failure. It was for this reason I urged the women to organize. If the South women begin to talk of the problems of their homes & their children's

Julius, the committee will ~~be~~ ^{it} begin to listen.

So education at the moment is the thing and I hope your study circle effort will be a great success. It will entail considerable work and worry, but it is worth it. I shall be glad to help where I can do so without seeming to interfere - although I think me of the few claims I can justify make it that we do respect the personalities of Swiss people and do not interfere to bothers as so many Europeans almost instinctively do. Isaac Lilakazi the Swiss day foundation very interested in your scheme but I gather he is not in a position to form a new organization as he is already running a very successful debating society which is the basis you visualize. ~~and~~ I think he will suggest to you that his society should affiliate with yours which carrying on its own identity & I think myself that is quite sound.

Incidentally my young successor, Dr. Koppel Fries, ^{at the moment} who is largely responsible for the ^{former} initial efforts towards a new political party, is building up ^a ~~an~~ ^{new} ~~new~~ ^{new} society (Co-operative) he calls the African name of the Seaman's. It deals specifically with Native questions vis a vis

effort to educate the sort of European opinion that is
 decently inspired but knows nothing. It is also
 organized on a study circle basis & is rapidly
 drawing in all sorts of people of the ordinary citizen
 type as distinct from people like us of the student
 academic type. Vilakazi's ~~own~~ school had already
 approached M. K. J. for some sort of assistance &
 idea, a K. J. has addressed been & was interested -
 We just forgotten. Oh yes I remember, Vilakazi was
 worried about the E. United Front of Colours & consulted
 K. J. about this, feeling that a United front of whites &
 coloured with the same ideas was really the thing -
 a very good idea to my mind - and K. J. agreed to
 co-operate to this end through the Jaamwerk. My husband
 has ~~carried~~ ^{carried} the affair a step further ~~but~~ by putting them
 into lunch with the Transvaal ^{Educational} Workers Association
 which, after being long and - ~~chaired~~, recently took a
 decision ^{to extend their work to Natives} at a meeting at which I was supposed to
 speak (it was held while I was at Fort Hare) but my
~~husband~~ ^{husband} spoke for me. All this effort I think looks
 up (in essence) at least with you, and I believe you

will find it useful to know about. You will see that the essential idea of the co-operation of all groups is clear of any implication of European patronage and interference. You need find people like Kappeler Jones & an liberals free of all such mental slurring. We shall not make the mistake of trying to dictate your personal or your group connections.

I would be glad to know if you think I might speak in the sort of way I have written to you here when I go to the Teachers Conference in E. L.? Will you be there?

I have asked Mr. Sachs, editor of The Guardian in Cape Town to send you some copies of her paper which I think is pretty good. It stands for unbiased causes without any specific brand being given preference, and it is essentially non-Communist.

I thought you might like to see it.

I was so very glad to see you when you were here & to talk to you ~~repeated to controversies~~ ^{lie discouraging} ~~circumstances~~ ^{the} ~~against~~ ^{influence} of ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~things~~ ^{things}.

with very best regards from us both.

Yours very sincerely
Margaret Ballinger