

C/- The Shell Company of South Africa,  
Box 4578,  
Johannesburg.  
21st February, 1961.

Dear Professor Matthews,

This letter is to ask you if you would be so kind as to consider contributing to a book of essays which we are compiling and hope to have published in Britain and America later this year.

Each essay will be designed to throw light on some aspect of South Africa's present predicament. As comparative newcomers to the country, we have been impressed by the fact that, both here and in Europe and America, there is very little literature on the subject which tempers prejudice and opinion with the cold water of facts objectively presented - very little, that is, between the academic treatise written for the specialist, and journalism designed for a sensation-fed public.

The subjects of these essays arose, for the most part, as questions which we found still unanswered after reading much of the recently published material on the Union's problems. Here are some of the questions:-

1. Does the black man in South Africa regard the white man with bitterness, hatred, envy? - or with admiration, affection, awe?
2. It is said that the West African was fully prepared for the duties of self government. Can it also be said of the black man of the Union? Has he the necessary qualities and is he getting the necessary training?
3. Why are many young and talented white South Africans, lawyers and architects for instance, some with families, leaving the country where they have spent all their lives?
4. Does the African identify the Church with white supremacy? To what extent has the black man adopted the white man's religion as a veneer over more deep-rooted beliefs and superstitions?



5. What is the definition of an Afrikaner? To what extent are his national characteristics the product of his history over the last 300 years, and to what extent a combination of the virtues and foibles he brought with him from Europe?

6. How important a part, strategically and politically, does South Africa play in the cold war, and might she play in the future?

There will be about twelve essays in all. Mr Alan Paton has already agreed to write one and so has Dr Kenneth Fryer of Witwatersrand University. Others whom we hope will contribute include Professor Sir Keith Hancock and Miss Nadine Gordimer. Mr Herbert Agar, a Director of Rupert Hart-Davis in London, has expressed an interest in publishing the book.

The particular question we should like you to answer for us is the first on the list, that is the one concerning the African's attitude to the European. In addition, do the attitudes mentioned in the Question vary between town and platteland, and between tribes? Does the black man make any distinction between Afrikaner and English-speaking white man, between Government official and layman?

Please would you write between 4,000 and 6,000 words on this subject for us? Your essay should go as far as possible towards answering the questions put but need not be confined to answering them. At the same time it should avoid subjects dealt with by other essays in the book (we shall send you a fuller list in due course).

The book is intended, as we have said, for the general reader, in particular the general reader in other parts of the Commonwealth and the U.S.A.

We are asking Mr Paton to be kind enough to forward this letter to your present address. It was he who suggested we approached you and we hope very much that you will grant us the privilege of a contribution to our book.

Yours sincerely,

*G. E. HITCHINGS*  
(G. E. HITCHINGS)

*C. J. O. MOORHOUSE*  
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