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P.O. Groutville Mission,  
via Durban, Natal.  
November 9, 1954.

The South African Peace Council,  
Johannesburg.

Dear Friends,

8/69/12

I have given much deep thought to your kind invitation to have me attend the Peace Congress meeting in Europe soon. I have consulted my Natal colleagues on the matter. The decision I have come to is a personal one.

I am afraid I must regretfully decline your kind invitation. It is true that my presence at the Peace Congress would strengthen the bonds of friendship we have with certain people and groups in the world and probably create fresh contacts. I might also be of some value in helping the Congress to get clearer insight into some of our problems in the Union of South Africa. But my overriding concern at the present moment is to organise and strengthen our Home front, especially among my people.

In this regard I am convinced beyond doubt that in the sphere of influence of the African National Congress the visit would not be in the interest of our cause.

It could be used to disastrous effect among our less politically educated Africans by our reactionary enemies, especially the Government.

In my humble opinion it would be unwise to secure the support and approbation of the world but ~~and~~ lukewarm and suspicious acceptance by the masses of our people. These people, you must agree, are much susceptible to propaganda.

I hold this view not only regarding myself but generally regarding our leading men in the African National Congress.

I might point out also that I am not yet a member of the South African Peace Council although I am in sympathy with the work of the Peace Council.

Yours sincerely,

*Albert John Lutuli*

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