

May 27, 1959

Dear Mr. Paton,

I am writing to you in the hope of persuading you to come to the United States for a month beginning April 10, 1960. The occasion would be to deliver a series of sermons in the Chapel of Smith College on Sundays, April 10 (Palm Sunday), April 17 (Easter), April 24, and May 1; and to be in residence at the College for informal meetings with students and faculty during a fair portion of the intervening weeks. I know that groups in the other three colleges situated very near us - Amherst, Mount Holyoke and the University of Massachusetts - would be most anxious to have you on their campuses at some time during your stay. I am sure, too, that others will be extending invitations to you, once it would be known that you were to be in the country. The Chaplains of both Princeton and Yale have said that they would be very eager to have you visit those universities, were you to come to the States.

Before going into particulars, let me explain a little of the background of this request. Last year I wrote to Bishop Stephen C. Neill and asked if he would be able and willing to cooperate in a rather different venture in the ministry to the college community. As you well know, most American college Chapels are supplied by a series of visiting preachers. While this certainly has its virtues, there is no overlooking the fact that it has distinct disadvantages if one considers that one of the purposes of preaching is to create a growing sense of the Christian community among the worshipers in one place. Being sensitive to this problem, I have undertaken to do a share of the preaching in our Chapel which is somewhat more than the average. My invitation to Bishop Neill was that he come for a series of four Sundays and spend as much time as seemed possible in residence on the campus, thus giving the students a good deal longer exposure to the visitor's preaching than they would ordinarily get and giving them, in addition, the benefit of other contacts with him. I suppose one could consider this in the nature of a Mission with the difference that this was not concentrated into a short space of days, nor was it given the attendant publicity that often accompanies preaching Missions. It was announced merely as a series of Lenten sermons.

Bishop Neill's visit was of undoubted value in the community. The response of both students and faculty was enthusiastic and appreciative, leaving us all with the feeling that the values we had hoped for from this more protracted visitation on the part of one man had been more than fulfilled.

Directly as a consequence of this year's experience we were given an anonymous gift to enable us to extend an invitation to a distinguished individual for a similar series next year. The gift we have received would enable us to underwrite your entire travel expense to this country and return. It would also allow for providing your quarters and meals here at the College, plus an honorarium of \$500.00 for the four Sundays.

If you could consider this invitation and found the four Sundays possible, we would like you to spend at least two full weeks in residence on this campus. We would be glad if you could spend the entire time here, but we would also recognize that you might want to accept some of the other invitations that would doubtless come. I sincerely hope that you would find it possible to accept this invitation. There has been a great deal of interest in affairs in Africa on our campus and your coming would indeed be timely. Last year the World University Service appealed to colleges in this country for contributions to the African Medical Students Trust Fund to make possible the registration of African medical students before the apartheid laws prevented them from beginning a medical course. In a short space of time the students here had raised the equivalent of four scholarships (\$3,600.) and this year have undertaken to repeat their gift, as they intend to do for the next two years. In the process of raising these funds a good deal of interest has been aroused in the situation in South Africa. It would be to our great benefit if we could have someone among us who would give as perceptive and balanced a view of affairs there as yours and who would help us to set their thinking about these matters in the context of the Christian Gospel.

I earnestly hope that you will be able to accept this invitation. It would mean a great deal to us. I shall look forward most hopefully to your reply.

Yours very sincerely,

Richard P. Unsworth
Richard P. Unsworth

Mr. Alan Paton
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24th June, 1959.

Dear Mr. Unsworth,

I am very honoured to receive your invitation for April 1960, but regret that I am not able to accept it. I regret this all the more in view of the fact that your students have contributed so handsomely to the African Medical Students' Trust Fund.

Yours sincerely,

DR

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