

9  
Lynton Road,  
KLOOF.

17th February, 1955.

Dear Edgar,

You will see from the enclosed papers that the fund sponsored by the Africa Bureau would like very much to have you as an adviser. I have already agreed to be one, and you will see from Mary Benson's letter that they hope to get Professor Harris, Judge Lucas, and Mr. Marquard. I hope you will be able to join us.

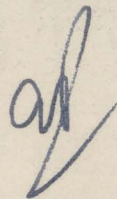
I have not yet made up my mind whether to do the Hofmeyr book or to try and write another story this year. At the moment I have just finished a book for American boys and girls called THE LAND AND PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA, and am overwhelmed with demands for articles, etc., each one of which seems to be impossible to refuse. For example, the OBSERVER want something on Olive Schreiner; the NEW YORK TIMES on Sophiatown; the STAR on America. It seems to me important to do all these things because I have acquired a reputation of not telling untruths deliberately. This I am sure is largely due to associations with persons like yourself.

I spent last Sunday evening with Ronald Currey. He thought your last book was magnificent and sent his warmest greetings to you.

Do you happen to know of any History man who would like to work on the Hofmeyr biography this year, if I decide to finish it (or even otherwise)? I am sure that the great bulk of the material is already there, but I think that certain of Hoffie's administrative actions as Administrator and Minister should not be entirely overlooked. Further, if the young man were a genius, there are even one or two delicate things which he might try to do. (These, however, do not include a visit to Mrs. H.) It might even be that a student who is doing his Master's thesis might need financial support. I would pay anything that you thought to be reasonable.

In the meantime, best wishes to you both from us both.

Yours ever,





FROM  
DR. EDGAR H. BROOKES  
TELEPHONE 2-2714

9.  
12 Chamberlain Road

~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

PIETERMARITZBURG

21st February, 1955.

Alan Paton, Esq.,  
Lynton Road,  
Kloof, Natal.

My dear Alan,

I am very sorry not to have felt able to accept the post of adviser to the Africa Bureau, but I feel that the only honest course is for me to refuse. It is a very unpleasant course to have to take, but I see no alternative. I am enclosing a copy of the letter which I have sent to Miss Benson.

I hardly know what to advise you about the Hofmeyr book; especially I am beset with doubts whether you would take my advice if I gave it! I should naturally like to see it finished, but I imagine that no one but yourself can decide as to the order of priority in your writing. We have unfortunately no student taking M.A. History this year and none among the History honours students of last year who seems to me to be just the person for this job. There is, however, a very promising young historian in Johannesburg who might be approached. He is Dr. F.A. van Jaarsveld. Dr. van Jaarsveld, who has had a good historical training and holds a doctor's degree from the University of Utrecht in Holland, is one of those Afrikaners who are in a difficult position, being rejected by their own people and not yet quite accepted by the English-speaking group. By a series of articles attacking Afrikaans histories as being apologetics and not history, Dr. van Jaarsveld has blotted his copy-book with all the Afrikaans-speaking universities and he has not yet got a post in an English-speaking one. At present he is a teacher at the Highlands North School, Johannesburg. Had we had the new post at this University for which we applied, we should probably have appointed him. Prof. Keppel-Jones made enquiries about him which were all to his credit. I have met him myself and like him. Being in Johannesburg on the spot, and of course completely bilingual, he might be a very suitable person to handle the papers and the individuals concerned. If you think that his name is a suitable one,

would /



would you like to write to him direct, or, if you would prefer it, I should be prepared to write to him. I think that in the circumstances it would be a good thing to offer him a fee: perhaps you could give me some idea as to the amount which you have in mind, that is, if you wish me to write.

I am looking forward to seeing Jonathan again this term and hope he enjoyed his holiday.

My wife joins me in best wishes to you both.

Yours sincerely,

Edward Brookes Edgar.

*Sorry! I signed my formal signature automatically!*

21st February, 1955.

Miss Mary Benson,  
C/o The Africa Bureau,

Dear Miss Benson,

I have before me your letter of the 12th February, which I find it very difficult to answer. I should be ungrateful indeed not to appreciate the spirit and objects of the Africa Bureau and the work that it is doing. I have, however, found myself often sharply (though not publicly) questioning the line taken by some of your outstanding members, such as Canon Collins and the Rev. Michael Scott. It is not for me to say that they are wrong, but it is just that I could not support their line of approach, and I feel that the differences in approach, though fortunately not in ultimate object, are so deep-seated as to make it difficult for me to be of much use as an adviser to the Bureau; nor do I think that it would be fair to myself to associate myself publicly with that approach.

In the circumstances, difficult though it is to refuse, I feel that I cannot accept your offer, much as I appreciate your approaching me.

Yours sincerely,



9  
Lynton Road,  
KLOOF,  
Natal.

28th February, 1955.

My dear Edgar,

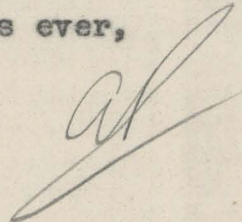
Thank you for your letter of February 21 and for the copy of your letter to Miss Benson containing your decision, which I am sure she will be sorry to receive.

In regard to Dr. F.A. van Jaarsveld, I would appreciate it very much if you would write to him and tell him that I expect to be in Johannesburg on March 23 and would be very glad to meet him and discuss the whole proposition with him. It is rather difficult at this stage to say what fee I would offer. I would like to find out first just what time he can give to the task.

In regard to the Hofmeyr book, do not hesitate to give me your advice; even if I do not take it, it is bound to weigh with me. I myself am still in favour of doing a book this year which would be either the Hofmeyr book or a story. I am quite sure, however, that I would have to go away to do this. I know my own circumstances very well and think it very improbable that I would be able to do a task like this at home. Meantime, send all your advice.

We both send our best wishes to you and Haidee, and special wishes for your good health.

Yours ever,



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