



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

Graduate School of Arts and Science

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422 (ii)

Handwritten signature/initials in blue ink.

April 29, 1969

Via Air Mail

Mr. Alan Paton
c/o Miss Theodora Poulos
Charles Scribner's Sons
597 Fifth Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10017

Dear Mr. Paton:

I am writing you concerning the political imprisonment on Robben Island, Cape Town, of Dr. Neville Alexander, a Black germanist who earned his Dr. Phil. degree with distinction at the University of Tübingen. Although I have been in contact with his attorneys (Messrs. Ress, Richman and Co., Guardian Building, 31-35 Adderley St., Cape Town) and with various other organizations such as the international branches of the Alexander Defence Committee, I have as yet been unable to form a clear picture of the circumstances surrounding his offense, arrest, trial, sentencing and imprisonment.

I assume that you, as a recognized authority on penal reform in South Africa, are acquainted with Dr. Alexander's situation. We here in the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at New York University have become extremely interested in his case and would like to attempt to effect his release from prison by offering him an academic position here. There are several men in the Administration of the University here who have connections to South Africa and who might be able to exert some influence on the government there. As far as we have been able to ascertain, the South African government is more willing to grant amnesty if there is some guarantee that the prisoner will leave the country upon release.

Perhaps my appeal to you is premature in that, as I say, we have no precise picture of the situation, but we should be most obliged to you for any information, advice or opinions you may be able to give us in this matter. And if, when the time comes that we are able to take some specific action, we might again prevail upon your generosity, we would be extremely grateful.

My most sincere thanks in advance.

Sincerely yours,

Handwritten signature of Kenneth Hughes in black ink.

Prof. Dr. Kenneth Hughes

KH:sr

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