



Dear Ms. Bernstein,

I recently read your book, "For Their Triumphs and for Their Tears" and found it extremely helpful and informative for a paper I'm writing about women in the Trade Union Movement in South Africa. I will be in London for a few days in mid-July and would like to meet you.

I would also like very much to meet Mrs du Toit and I understand from Richard Lapchick that you may be able to put me in touch with her.

Please send a reply to

Sarah Benmar

40 Jane Georges

5 Kilstie Place,

Durdee, Angus,

Scotland

I look forward to meeting you,  
yours sincerely,

Sarah Benmar

---

KANO TANYU (1602-1674)

Japanese

Bush-warbler (Japanese nightingale) on a pot  
of Chinese orchids. Watercolors on silk.

Undated.

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We're both well and still here - it's you who have pulled up stakes. Hope you're getting adjusted and are starting to enjoy your new life.

Hope to be in England in May & will call you. If you have a N.Y. trip in mind, let us know. We've been having the flat painted for about 4 months so far. It should be finished by next

Summer .

love

R

May all  
the seasons of your life  
be filled  
with Peace and Love



Ruth & Morris

MORRIS and RUTH LIPTON POTTISH





5 Rothwell Street,  
London, NW1 8YH  
12/1/80

Dear Bruce Page,

This letter is for you, not for your correspondence columns. I was anxiously awaiting to read a massive mailbag on the issues you raised in the Christmas article (Brailsford) about NS policies, but either I've overlooked it or else it has not been forthcoming. I hope you will not think it presumptuous of me, then, to let you know what one part of your readership thinks. 'We' - myself, relatives, close friends - are radical, left-wing, generally people who have been politically involved, although it would be wrong to assume uniformity of views on the world generally.

We always bought NS irregularly in the past, finding many of the political stances too much to stomach weekly. Then, when you first took over, we stopped getting it after a few weeks, as you seemed to have taken a more reactionary turn; we found it unstimulating and irritating.

But for some months now, we have become regular readers, finding each issue contains at least one, often more, articles of real value - something one wants to keep rather than toss aside (like the Thompson article). Of course it is fair to say that we like NS more because it better reflects our own points of view, which is why we want it to continue being so radical, militant, abrasive. Others could as legitimately claim they want a 'middle view, something reflecting the social-democratic, 'there's something to be said for both sides' attitude. I think you need to be pretty one-sided, because:

the British public is fed daily, consistently, through all the media, with a mass of lying or distorted rubbish. There is not one single daily newspaper (the Morning Star is not ~~of sufficient~~ of sufficient power to be considered) that puts 'the other side.' Not one. Anti-socialist, anti-union, anti-Soviet to an excessive degree (let's not now get into an argument over the USSR - I hate their reactionary policies as well, but they don't justify the extent of the hate campaigns and there are many plus features), and often of the most poisonous nature. It spreads over every one of us daily, and to such an extent that even those of us who have always viewed the world from a totally different stance find we are subconsciously influenced by these attitudes. Because of the nature of the work I do, I listen to the radio a great deal. It is a revelation of the enormous grip that establishment and reactionary views have on the British public.

So NS represents something that runs contrary to this great flood, a small stream, perhaps, or even just a little dribble. It must, of necessity, become stronger and more uncompromising in its material. It must put a little bit of gravel into the porridge in peoples' heads, to stir up the mishmash, to make them think, to make them angry. True, its influence is limited in the sense that it can never reach the public who read the Mirror, Sun, Star, Express, Mail or whatever. But it does reach an influential minority, some of whom in turn have access to other media (Parliament, TV) and can therefore reach a wider audience in its views.

As only one example: Zimbabwe. Sometimes we feel like screaming with rage and impotency at the outrageous injustice with which all the issues are handled, the total bias of even the 'liberal' press, the Guardian (which seems to have taken a more reactionary line on this question recently.) For years and years the public has been fed on the sufferings of the Rhodesian whites and the excesses of

the blacks - terrorists. We watched, week after week, the news-pictures of those huge white farms massively protected against guerillas, or burned to a shell, we were taken over each one, room by room - the nursery, where we used to sit and have drinks after dinner, the billiard room - but scarcely a word about the sufferings of the majority of the people; occasionally a view of children stuffed into a 'protected' village, of women cooking in the dust. But nothing, year after year, of their lands taken, their crops destroyed, their lives made unbearable. All right, so in the past Smith would not allow the TV teams into the townships and tribal areas. But what of today? Only this week we watched a BBC2 6 pm programme on Africa, finishing yet again with a survey of a massive, and massively fortified, huge and beautiful white-owned farm, ('we are determined to stay') (good strong colonial spirit) and the children being asked about war drill in their boarding schools. NS had some really excellent articles on Zimbabwe, and a particularly good one about the way the media has treated it, but it needs to be returned to again and again, a constant re-analysis, re-examination to counter-act even a tiny portion of this daily campaign. At least in that way a few people will be better-informed, given some facts. (Another word of praise for your good articles on South Africa).

NS should prepare the ground for people to understand better events that otherwise seem mystifying. Example: India. Regardless of Indira's 'mistakes' - we are not discussing her as an individual - in the light of all we have been told, one cannot explain her massive return to power. All we have been shown are the excesses of her State of Emergency, the bull-dozing of the Delhi area, forced sterilisation. Her claims of a great conspiracy against herself seem now to have some justification. How else explain the present events? And Afghanistan - I beg you, don't join the howling crowd, the hypocritical media, the news-makers. If you can get the information, let us have something about the British in Oman, the creation of xxx states in the Middle East far less democratic and more hateful than those of Eastern Europe. Shift the balance just a little.

I would like to see NS tackling the media constantly and regularly, all its branches. I find your radio reviews dull and rather pointless. Couldn't you delegate someone every now and then to do periodic intensive listening and analyse for example the personnel who appear on Any Questions and the Harty and Baker chat-programmes, and the political content of the plays - the ordinary run-of-the-mill listening, not the best productions of Radio 3. Monitor the political attitudes on TV. Do some monitoring on the press. Everyone enjoys knocking articles, like those on the pundits - we love to read our own views of Johnson and Levin; but do avoid just being nasty without really being amusing enough, or informative (much as I have contempt for our royal family, the Charles article came near to this.)

No time to continue in this vein. Just to re-emphasise the importance of your radicalism in today's world. Oh yes, and to ask for more and better material on women and feminism - Anna Coote is great, but NS is still a male-dominated mag, and you must take positive and biased steps in the other direction. And to finish by saying that we think NS is great when you express the ideas with which we agree - but also to remember that 'we' have been proved right on every single issue of history in the past many decades, with the exception of one. Therefore, 'our' views should be explored and aired.

Sorry for the bad typing - its a combination of cold and a new electric typewriter that behaves in a strange fashion.

Sincerely

Hilda Bernstein

5 Rothwell Street  
London, NW1 8YH

10/5/81

Dear John Pilger,

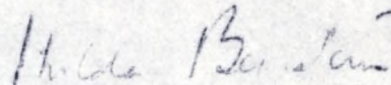
I felt impelled to write to you after thinking about your report on the Vets from the Vietnam war. I think perhaps people like myself do not actually get down to letting reporters, producers, media people, writers, know how we react to their work; we only think up angry or protesting letters in our heads.

This is not one of those. I write to congratulate you on all the work you have been doing in these past years on issues that are the most important of our times. I found the last report from the US profoundly moving; frightening that it is all happening all over again; yet once more demonstrating human aspirations, needs, strivings.

I wonder a bit about the absence of political muscle - those marvellous, wronged Vets with the bitter revelations of their treatment - yet none asked, or tried to answer the fundamental question: why? Why were we swept under the carpet? Why were we wronged, never given what was due? And you speaking of El Salvador: is this just the accident of Resgan being President?

I thought perhaps that you deliberately keep within certain parameters so that your reports may reach the public; a sort of self-imposed censorship of what the media can tolerate.

But no matter. What you are doing is magnificent enough. My only regret is that we do not have a thousand John Pilgers. Thank you.



Hilda Bernstein

Please do not feel you must reply - I know it can be a bind, particularly writing to someone you've never met.

July 12, 1988

✓ 21/7/88

My dear Hilda,

Our life seems to be always on the rush, isn't it getting to be tiring? Here I am rushing this letter because I learned that I'm leaving for the Scandinavian countries this 26th of July to attend <sup>to</sup> two workshops during the Nordic Forum. I'll be speaking on the debt issue and how it affects the women. This will be from the 30th of July till the 7th of August. After this, I'd try to stay for a while to look around and then plan to visit you, will ~~it~~ this be alright? The problem is this, if I will see you I would be requesting you if you can possibly put me in for a few days in your house. (The usual problem of limited financial <sup>re-</sup>sources.) This would be some time after the 14th. The conference will end on the 7th but I'm meeting other women till the 12th of August, then perhaps visit galleries and attend to an opera/play, the good parts of life which we're missing in the struggle, then after the 14th I hope to visit London. Please write to me on the following address: Writing back to me here in the Phil. might not reach on time.

K.U.L.U.- Women and Development  
Landgreven 7 3tv.  
DK-1301 Copenhagen Denmark  
Tlf. 01 15 78 70 - 01 32 53 30  
Giro 9005501

Responsible persons: Marianne Willumsen/Ruth <sup>W</sup>jdrup Olsen/Lis Rasmussen/Irene Marcussen

my schedule is: Jul 26 - departs Phil  
Jul 27 or 28 - arrives in Denmark  
Jul 29 - leaves for Oslo (for the Nordic Forum)  
~~Aug~~ 7 - departs for Copenhagen  
Aug 12 - end~~s~~ of official stay

I hope to hear from you soon. There's so much to talk about concerning our line of work. Take care.

love,

*Petite*  
Petite

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November 22nd 1988

Dear *Hilda*

Sarah Clarkson and I met on 21 October to talk about some ideas we both have for a Women, Arts and Health Festival/celebration/workshops for next Spring.

We became very excited about the idea but thought we should give others the opportunity to share their ideas from their perspectives and situations with us.

It would obviously be sensible to share the organisation of such an event, too.

So, if you are interested please come to a meeting at 7.30 on Monday 12th December at St. Owens Centre, Symonds Street, Hereford. There is full disabled access with special car parking spaces at the front of the building and ample parking in various car parks close to the Centre.

Those who have been mailed are as follows:-

Jan Tallboy  
Jenna Kumiega  
Angie Kelly  
Verity Hawkes  
Anne Henshaw  
Mary Blatchford  
Bez Harvey

Leominster Women's Forum  
Lin Briggs  
Julia Peters  
Rolly Bradstock  
Gilly Craddock  
Linda Medwell  
Hilda Bernstein

If you think of any other women who would be interested, let us know so that we can mail them or just bring them along to the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

*Jenni Morgan*

Jenni Morgan

Pentabus Community Arts Worker

25th Nov. 88

Dear Jenni,

Thank you for your invitation to attend the meeting to discuss a festival next Spring.

I am going to be out of the country for 10 days, and I am not sure if I will be back and able to attend by the 12th.

My apologies, therefore (unless I turn up) and please do keep me informed about your plans.

Best wishes

Hilda Bernstein

23 January 1989

Dear Colin Purkey and Les Witz,

I am replying to your letter (undated) which we only received last week, on behalf of myself and of Rusty.

We are perfectly willing to cooperate with your project, and to be interviewed, but we are leaving England in April or May, probably in April, for a year as we shall be living and working at Mazimbu in Tanzania. So if you wish to see us it might be possible if you come to England before April - otherwise you might like to visit Mazimbu?

On your reading list, you should include Helen Joseph's books, and I take it she would be someone you would like to interview. You have Cecil Williams down twice on your list - he died some years ago.

I thought you might want to add Joe Slovo to your list, and Ruth's book 117 Days. Also Cheryl Walker's book Women and Resistance in South Africa. And you do not mention the Guardian among your source newspapers - it would probably provide you with more material than any other.

I do not know whether some of the 'old guard' whites who participated in the old (whites only) labour party are still around, such as Penny Weinbrenn. You might consider Colin Legum. Bob Hepple's father, Alec, if he is still around, would be useful.

With best wishes

Hilda Bernstein (Watts)

26 Carisbrook Street,  
Sydenham,  
Johannesburg.  
2198.  
South Africa.

Dear *Hilda*,

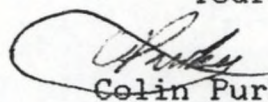
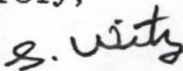
We are sending a history research proposal for you to read. It deals with the political involvement of white progressives in the 1930s and 40s in Johannesburg.

During the 1980s white progressive organisations emerged. Out of this arose a number of heated debates, such as the role of whites in the national democratic struggle, in the trade unions and the question of socialism, etc. These debates stimulated an interest in previous white organisational involvement and how contentious issues were dealt with.

Our project is still in its initial stage, but some work has been done. The proposal is a draft proposal which we have sent to various organisations and individuals for suggestions and comments. We would be very happy if you would also comment on the proposal and forward suggestions as to its aims, research method and proposed presentation. Suggestions for further reading will, in particular, be most welcome.

We are trying to raise money in order to get to the United Kingdom to further our research. In this event we would like to know if you would be prepared to meet with us.

Yours Sincerely,

   
Colin Purkey and Les Witz.



Research Proposal by Colin Purkey and Leslie Witz.

2 October 1988.

Political involvement of white progressives in the 1930's and 1940's.

BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

In South Africa whites occupy a privileged position. This position is based upon racial oppression and economic exploitation. However, there are those who strive for social equality, democracy and non-racialism in this country. This was also true for the 1930s and the 1940s. Groups of whites worked towards achieving this objective by participating in trade unions, popular front politics and the broader African nationalist struggle in South Africa.

Many of the issues that were raised then have a deep resonance with the contemporary political situation in South Africa. Progressive whites are grappling with the relevance of popular front politics, their involvement in the African nationalist struggle and the political role of worker organisations. These similarities make this period particularly relevant today.

But there has been a concerted attempt to either deny and/or suppress this history of the 30s and 40s. The children and grandchildren of these white progressives, who have become pro-capitalist and supporters of the status quo in South Africa, are ashamed of the past. Indeed some of the participants, as well, want to forget about their involvement. But this important part of our history cannot be allowed to disappear. If the lives of the old people are not recorded now they will die and a major part of our past will be lost forever. In the words of the peoples history project in Mozambique, "Our old people are our libraries".

Therefore, the broad aims of this project are to examine why some whites in the 1930s and 40s believed in social equality, non-racialism, and democracy in South Africa and how they went about trying to achieve this goal.

AIMS

1 To research the political involvement of white progressives in the 1930s and 1940s. In order to limit this study it will focus almost exclusively on Johannesburg.

2 To produce a book of a series of biographies based on this research.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### 1 ORAL TESTIMONY.

This will be the main method that will be used to gather material. The reasons for doing this are twofold. Firstly, many of the people that we are dealing with have not been adequately documented. Secondly, oral testimony can help reveal peoples thoughts and feelings, which hardly ever appear in documents.

In these interviews questions will be asked revolving around the central themes of the project: Why people were involved in political movements and how they were involved? For example, information will be solicited about the person's family, where they came from, their work and political development, etc.

Thus far the following people have been interviewed:

Issy Heymann  
Trudy Gelb  
Miriam Hepner  
Esther Levitan  
Matya Ozinski  
Sidney Adler  
Annie Cinman  
Nessie Grund  
Willie Kalk  
John Mathews  
Sheila Weinberg  
Mickey Levy

In addition to this, useful information has been gathered from the tapes which Hymie Barsel recorded before his death.

### 2. DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH.

There are many documents that can be found relating to this topic. Some of those that will be consulted are collections housed in libraries. These include:

Rev Thompson papers  
Springbok Legion Collection  
South African Institute of Race Relations Collection  
Garment Workers Union Collection  
Trade Union Council Of South Africa Collection  
Dulcie Hartwell papers  
National Union of Distributive Workers Collection  
Jewish Board of Deputies archives  
Fanny Klennerman papers

In addition to this there are many personal collections of documents. An attempt will be made to gain access to these documents at the interviews.

Finally, newspapers, journals and magazines of the period will be consulted. This will include papers with a mass circulation, like the Rand Daily Mail, as well as those with a limited readership, like Common Sense, a publication of the Society of Jews and Christians.

### 3. SONGS, POEMS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND PICTURES

Through oral and documentary research an attempt will be made to find cultural artifacts relating to this period. These artifacts can help reveal the relationship between political struggles and culture.

### 4. SECONDARY LITERATURE.

A list of secondary reading material to be consulted is attached at the end of this proposal.

### 5. CONSULTATION.

Extensive discussions have been held with various individuals about this project. They have provided and tested ideas which have shaped the project. Further development will rely very heavily on continuing and extending this process of consultation.

### METHOD OF PRESENTATION.

Though the initial aim will be the collection of material the ultimate objective is to compile a book using some of this information. It is envisaged that this will take the shape of a collection of biographies gathered together in one book.

The biographical method is used to make it lively, interesting and popular and to allow some of the participants to give voice to their stories. But this does not mean that the book will be merely anecdotal. Through the biographies the events and issues of the time will be highlighted. As one of the people whom we have already interviewed told us:

"I came to the conclusion that one should give his story when it can benefit the people that follow after him. Every grandfather and every old man has a multitude of anecdotes. But for a person who has participated in a movement which is striving for an idea it's important to tell his story so his followers can learn from what he has to say."

In order to appeal to as wide an audience as possible accessible language will be used, and it will be illustrated with many photographs. It is hoped that anyone interested in the history of political struggles in South Africa will be interested in such a work.

While the main aim is the publication of a book, certain by-products could emerge from this material. Slide/tape shows, theatre productions and exhibitions are some of the possibilities.

The material that is collected will be stored in a safe place, for instance at a university library. It will be available for others to use on conditions that are still to be determined.

#### PROJECT TIMETABLE

September 1988 - March 1989: Conduct further research in South Africa as outlined above. This will include interviewing the following people:

Zwarenstein  
Rose Schlagter  
Bill Hepner  
Anne Heymann  
Yetta Barenblatt  
Jack Curtis  
Rose Simpson  
Anna Scheepers  
Dulcie Hartwell  
Ruth Eastwood  
Ilse Wilson  
Yusuf Cachalia  
Amin Kajee  
Morris Zimmerman  
Martin Ramogale  
Shabangu  
David Bopape  
Esther Barsel  
Kotkes  
Heidi Le Roux  
Wolf Zwi

April 1989 - May 1989: Carry out oral and documentary research in Britain. This will include attempts to interview the following:

Ray Adler  
Minnie Goldsmith  
Shirley Hepple  
Bob Hepple  
Wolfie Kodesh  
Brian Bunting  
Harold Wolpe

Hilda Watts  
 Rusty Bernstein  
 Baruch Hirson  
 Douglas Wolton  
 Freda Katz  
 Jessie Macpherson ?  
 Cecil Williams  
 Ben Turok  
 Norman Levy  
 Jean Strachan  
 Bettie du Toit  
 Cecil Williams  
 Rita Hodgson

June 1989 - August 1989

Compile first draft of book and present it for discussion.

August 1989 - December 1989

Rewrite and submit to publishers.

RESEARCH BUDGET

Cassette tapes	1000-00
Computer disks	100-00
Printing and stationery	2000-00
Transcription	5000-00
Travel	15000-00
Photography	3000-00
Telephone and postage	1000-00
General	1000-00
	<hr/>
	28300-00

READING LIST

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CHANGE · OF · ADDRESS

LEE SHEPHERD  
(5 Madingley Road, Cambridge)

*and*

PATRICK BROWNE  
(32 DeFreville Avenue, Cambridge)

*have moved to:*

THE BURY,  
51 HIGH ST,  
FOXTON,  
CAMBRIDGE.  
CB2 6RP

☎ Cambridge (0223) 871862

CHANGE · OF · ADDRESS

P.T.O.

I listened critically to this (which I don't  
often do) & felt that Bragg & others were a bit  
'woolly' & I don't remember him actually  
mentioning the title of your book which is  
rather crucial. I thought you were by far  
the sharpest & maybe were not enjoying  
yourself partly because of feeling some impatience  
with these 'snare' characters.

It was such a pleasure to see you - you  
really are very good for me.

Lots of love  
Patrick.

18/6/89

August 28 89

SOMAFCO

P/Bag Mazambou  
Morogoro  
Tanzania

Dear Patsy & Vella

Harold Wolpe is here for some seminar or other, so I thought I would take the opportunity to get a letter to you - posted in England

As you can see, I am still without my typewriter, and that means without ALL our books, medicines, toiletries, kitchen equipment, crockery, etc etc, and materials - paints, brushes, paper, boards, pens, pencils ... books ... You name it I haven't got it. Why? Ask Wolpe or Toine or God. I have my own theory, but will leave that until we are face to face.

So this, Patsy my dear is an explanation of why I cannot fulfil my duty on Christmas cards this year, and feel quite done about it, as I would have liked to keep up - and try & improve - my annual output. Explain, please, to Tom & AA.

I have, however, started on preliminary recordings of interviews for the book - I signed a contract before leaving London & now I'm duty bound to get on with it.

Vella, any chance that the meeting of your project will take place in ... November, was it? - in London? I am trying to find out what journeys I can fit in, mainly with the book in mind. I need to get around to a lot of people.

Rusty & I are both well - physically, that is. Rusty is slowly sinking under frustration & boredom. His project makes no headway whatsoever, he has no premises at Dakawa ready for pupils, but no transport to Dakawa in any case.

We've had a week of 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations preceded by a month of frantic, muddled preparations. Soon be back to normal lethargy. For further information, if needed, ask Harold.

My love to you both - I miss all  
my good friends! Hilda

Paul Scott .... [Ceramics & Print.]

Hilda Bernstein,  
Old House Farm,  
Dorstone,  
Herefordshire,  
HR3 6BL.

29 9 90.

Dear Hilda,

Thank you for replying to my enquiry. I wrote because it was a some of your writing which sparked off some recent pieces of work. I thought you would like to know about this, especially as I've used a particular quote from a piece you wrote for the Guardian.

I am an artist whose medium happens to be clay and ceramic decorative materials. Initially, I trained to be a teacher, and at college in Lancaster, in the early 70's, became politically active. It was here that my eyes were opened to the unjust and brutalising system of Apartheid in South Africa. I also became aware that Britain was in its own way helping to maintain this racist system.

I taught ceramics for eight years, but five years ago, left full time teaching to become a full time artist.

Living in one of the western worlds so called 'advanced' economies, I am accutely aware that we have an enhanced quality of life compared to many people in the world. Sometimes I feel that making unnecessary 'luxury goods' - which is what artists do, is extremely self indulgent. It is, however what I do for a living, and I have come to terms with the fact that one needs to make a living in the world! I also feel that "We can all do something" (Archbishop Oscar Romero, El Salvador, 1980), and so several years ago I extended my political interests to my work. I produced a series of pieces called "Free Mandela", using images and words from Anti Apartheid, ANC catalogues, adverts and publications. The intention was to bring to peoples attention the issue of apartheid, in a place where they would not expect to see political statements. In addition I hoped that through the sales of these pieces I could send financial support to the anti-apartheid movement.

I exhibited these pieces alongside my other work in galleries and exhibitions. The advent of the 'Freedom at 70' campaign and the first 'Mandela concert' helped to make the work more acceptable to galleries, (at first some were rather nervous of the politics).

Over the years several bowls have been bought for public collections, some bought by exiles from South Africa, and supporters of the Anti Apartheid Movement. Where possible I sent the procedes of sales to the ANC or Anti Apartheid Movement.

In February, when Nelson Mandela was released, I like millions watched the television pictures. They bought tears to my eyes. One felt a great sense of release, expectation and joy. The following days and weeks bought more mixed emotions. His speeches, his diplomacy, his great statesmanship, made me

→ 06973 61706

Nº2, Holly Cottage, Blencogo, Wigton, Cumbria, CA7 0BZ.

feel so frustrated that this man had been incarcerated for so long. The media hype, the general euphoria began to make me feel angry again, because little had really changed.

I had resolved to do some pieces celebrating Mandela's release - my work is about events, places, people. Somehow though, in spite of having so many collected images now, I was reluctant to do the work. I was, I think, afraid of being seen as 'cashing in' on the event (I felt that many people were). In addition, many others were still incarcerated, and the celebration of the release of a man who should never have been locked up in the first place, who still does not have the vote, seemed a bit 'hollow'. Then one Saturday, I read your piece in the Guardian. The last two paragraphs put words to my feelings.

As a result I began work almost immediately. I have since made a series of pieces called 'Free at Last'. The words are from a poster held by a lady in Soweto on the day of his release. The images from newspaper, magazine photos. In addition, on the larger pieces I used your quote to qualify the celebratory mood.

The other week I gave a demonstration and lecture at a Potters conference, at Bretton Hall College in Yorkshire. After the lecture, which culminated in a showing of my 'political' pieces, and my reading your quote, several people came up to me and said how much they had been moved by my talk. I believe your words contributed greatly to their feelings, and in these days where the euphoria has subsided, and the killing continues in your country, they have proved, sadly, to be so right.

I enclose some photos of work, and should you wish to see any of the 'Free at Last' pieces, three are on display at the Williamson Gallery Birkenhead (until Oct 28th), then the City Art Gallery York (10th Nov. to 9th Dec.). The Ceramics collection at Aberystwyth Arts Centre recently bought one. If you are ever in Cumbria, you are most welcome to visit, and see a piece (I always try to keep one piece of a series I have made).

My interest in your country was initially fuelled by its undemocratic, racist government. Over the years I have become aware of the rich cultural diversity, the great human potential of the place. Although I have no South African relations, or individual friends; friends from Britain through living and teaching in front line states have brought back first hand experiences, and enthused about the people and cultures of Southern Africa. In recent years I have discovered the wealth of the music and art of its people, through Hugh Masekela, Mahlathini, Johnny Clegg and others. Maybe one day I shall have the opportunity to visit a free and democratic South Africa.

I am glad to have had the opportunity to write to you. I hope that you don't mind my using your words. Wherever I have, I have been sure to credit you as the writer. I believe I have used them in the spirit they were intended. I have also recommended your book 'The World That Was Ours' to several people, I found it enlightening, and compulsive reading. I have been moved by your courage, and the courage of your <sup>family</sup> friends and colleagues in taking a principled stand which has affected your lives profoundly.

With Best Wishes,

Yours Sincerely, 

**B**UT despite the excitement, the reunions, the joy, I am left with a lasting feeling of anger. So the ANC is unbanned. Nelson Mandela is released, and we are back more or less where we were 30 years ago, except that he was then a youthful 41, except there was no state of emergency, no Terrorism Act, except that Victoria Mxenge, Ruth First, Joe Qabi, Steve Biko and hundreds of other anti-apartheid militants inside and outside South Africa were not murdered, except that tens of thousands had not fled into exile, except that four million had not been uprooted from their homes and dispersed in desert lands to fit in with apartheid policy, except that all the wisdom; the abilities, the energies, the constructive idealism of thousands of Nelson Mandelas had not yet been thrown away, confined to Robben Island, or killed and lost forever.

But if you are black, you can now swim in the Atlantic. **G**

Hilda Bernstein is the author of *The World That Was Ours: the story of the Rivonia trial*, published by SA Writers at £5.95.

3/12/90

Dear Paul,

I have taken so long to answer your interesting letter, because not long after receiving it, I left for a visit to Canada in connection with a book that I am writing. Now I have also received the ceramic brooch, and hope that you will forgive this long interval in thanking you for the material and the letter that you sent.

I feel honoured that I have been able to contribute to the unblocking of your creativity, and that you have been able to use anything that I have written. You raise interesting issues in your letter concerning the relationship between what people like to term 'art' and 'politics.' The question of the role of culture in the struggle for liberation is endlessly discussed and debated both within South Africa and among the exiles. To me, culture is, and always will be, the expression of peoples' lived reality, and its form and content is dictated by the economic environment in which people live and work. I do not regard artists' work as 'unnecessary luxury goods' - far from it. To me, art is an essential part of the development of civilisation, and without it we can hardly change peoples' visions of the world. Art and society are inseparable concepts, and it is impossible to conceive of a society without art. I subscribe to the views of the art critic, Herbert Read, who wrote that art is a supremely important instrument of human evolution. That it is the means by which humans acquire, then refine, consciousness; form and order are perceived in the organisation of chaotic elements; progress in human evolution is dependent on a realisation of formal values.

When you consider the South African question, racialism and apartheid, you begin to obtain a better perception of what this means. In countries of the Western, highly developed world, the issues become blurred, the choices of 'freedom' are too many, the options too large. Artists (in the widest definition of the word) do not feel the pressure of the world and its conditions; they are cushioned and removed. In South Africa, on the other hand, (to quote the SA writer Nadine Gordimer) 'The moral imperative is made on any artist who lived among people who are discriminated against and repressed. Whether or not she herself belongs to the oppressed does not alter much the problem of the conflict between integrities.' She writes: 'Art is on the side of the oppressed . . . if art is freedom of the spirit, how can it exist within the oppressors?'

You mention your reluctance to 'cash in' on the Mandela release. Of course, many people did, it became a 'commercial opportunity'. But you have to work in the first place at what moves you most. Then you must also bear in mind that nobody can live in the 'attic' mentality - you have to consider the marketing of what you produce, and that means finding a balance between your own artistic integrity and what is considered to be saleable. This applies to all creative people, and when writing one has to think of what publishers will accept, what people want to read, what is the current trend in literature - and weight this up with what one intends to say.

The interesting thing is that the present struggle in South Africa has given birth to a flowering of culture in many forms, particularly in the theatre, but also in literature, poetry, and all forms of art. It is extraordinarily vibrant, lively, very political, sometimes crude - the poetry becomes mere sloganising, the repetition of slogans and certain images become cliches and lose their force and meaning.

But this does not invalidate the worth of the good work that is being produced, and it is surely out of this mass participation of unschooled, untutored, untrained writers, poets and painters that a smaller number will achieve excellence, which is what we all strive for.

I hope that at some time, later on, I will have an opportunity of seeing your ceramics. At present I am working on research for a book about the exile experience of South Africans, and this is taking me to many different places, a lot of travelling, to interview exiles. I really have no time for anything else until the book is finished.

I liked the ceramic brooch you sent me, although I feel that the reduction in size of the Mandela image to some extent detracts from its value. That is only a personal opinion, and may not be correct.

I send you my very best wishes for your continued productivity - we all receive inspiration from each other, and reinforce our most profound beliefs by exchanging our ideas and visions with each other.



29th December 91

Dear Patrick,

How nice to hear from you, and I hope this reaches you, as you do not indicate how long you intend staying in Nairobi - at the Country Club. But perhaps you will leave a forwarding address when you go.

Your brief outline of wanderings left me drooling with envy. It's just the kind of thing I have always most wanted to do. I must tell you that old age has no real advantages that I can see, and one of the disillusioning things is that there are all sorts of things you wanted to do that you now realise you haven't the time, or physical energy for (apart from the cash.)

So what have I been doing? For the past 2½ years it's been the book on exiles, now at last reaching completion - almost finished. The last trip I made was to the USA in May, and since then I have been living like a hermit, just working on the book the whole time without a break. Over enthusiasm. I ended up with something like a million words. Have discarded a third of the interviews, and still have a manuscript about twice as long as it should be. However, my editor is prepared to read it all and then we'll start the cutting. I don't remember when I last spoke to you, or if you know anything about this book, but it's inspired by Studs Terkel - oral history. And in the course of the time since I signed the contract the publishing houses have been playing their continuous game of swallowing each other and merging into conglomerates, so that my contract went from Hyman Unwin (Pandora) to HarperCollins, and has been finally bought from them by Jonathan Cape - much preferable to Murdoch's outfit, I think. We hope publication will be in Autumn.

It ended up with Rusty and myself both working on the editing - it would never have been finished without him, and we ended with two word processors - one loaned and one bought, We have had no social or cultural life for months, but when the final pages go off (in a few days) I reckon we will be liberated, and start thinking seriously of trying to move closer to London, and me, to visit South Africa, though at this stage neither of us are thinking of returning to live there. But I do feel a very strong compulsion to go, just to see things, people, lay a few ghosts. So many of our friends have already left - this is part of the price of exile, the splitting of families and relationships. I won't comment on the political situation either there or in the rest of the world, except to say that I mourned the ousting of Gorbachev - I really love that man. But the world - what a mess! Been reading an excellent book by an American journalist, Blaine Harden - Africa, Dispatches from a fragile Continent. Get it -0 it's really worth reading.

We'll meet up one of these days. Enjoy your life - it goes by too fast.

And love

11 January 92

Old House Farm  
Dorstone  
Herefordshire HR3 6BL

Dear Patrick,

I did a very silly thing - I received a card from you from Nairobi, and without thinking, sent back a card and note to you at the Country Club there. Of course, you had left and returned to Cambridge, which I should have known. So I don't know if it will be sent on, and I don't remember what I wrote anyway, except that I was green with envy at the thought of the trip that you and Lee did ... and wished to be a lot younger, and to find someone like you to take me around those places in a boat.

I am just coming to earth again after 2½ years work on the big, big book on exiles - manuscript has gone to my editor, but it's 670,000 words - more than three times as long as it can be - cut down from about 1 million words. The dire process of murdering all my babies now begins. I don't think it will be out for another year, which depresses me. Jonathan Cape are the publishers, my contract having been relayed from one to another as the publishing firms conglomerated themselves, ending up with Cape buying the contract from HarperCollins. I'll never write another. I'm going to paint pretty pictures from now on.

We're still talking about moving nearer to London. Daughter Toni is in South Africa, and sends rave letters saying she's come home and never wants to live anywhere else, despite the violence, poverty and horrendous life-style of the whites in their ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ razor-bound high-walled suburban homes. Now I've done the book, I'm planning to go (on a visit) as soon as possible - have to stay for a while for the editing. But feel that I must, must, go back and lay a few ghosts. And friends keep writing - why don't you come?

This is only intended as a link-letter, to make contact again, hope you and Lee are both well and happy. Love to you both

19 Jan 1993

57 Lock Crescent  
Kidlington  
Oxon OX5 1HF

Dear Patricia,

Thank you for letting me hear some of your poems, which I enjoyed. Yes, you did sound nervous, but it was not helped by the inane laugh of the interviewer, together with what I considered to be his ineptitude in interviewing you both. You were precocious to write your first poem at age 4. I also started young, at primary school, with terribly imitative poor stuff. I was also interested in the animal poems you wrote for your granddaughter. I wrote animal poems for my daughter, but they are all South African animals; if I knew where they were I would send you a copy. They were published in a children's newspaper that folded after about a year. I particularly liked the 'artist' poems - Lowry, Matisse and Spencer.

I have been unable to do anything. Our house is in an awful mess, with someone putting in central heating, Rusty re-wiring and putting in plugs, floorboards up, furniture moved around, but it is gradually getting done; and in any case, done or not, if you go to London, please stop on the way.

You are fortunate that both you and Jim love poetry. Rusty 'doesn't understand it' - well, makes no attempt to read it, and it's a bit late for him to change now. I seem to be the only one in my family that reads poetry, except for my daughter Frances, who is too far away. When you come, remind me to show you poems by a South African friend~~s~~ (dead now) who wrote the most beautiful poetry.

I am pleased that we moved, although I miss the beautiful country; but Oxford does have delights (a beautiful exhibition of Clare Leighton woodcuts at the Ashmolean) and I'm waiting for Spring.

My love to you both

26.1.93

Hi Hilda,

I'm so glad you're coming. We'll make you really comfortable. The drive should take about 2 hours.

From the A40, south out of Oxford, you take the A418 all the way until just before the M1, when you turn left to get onto the A421 to go over the M1 towards Bedford. It is important not to miss the right turn onto the 5134 to keep south of Bedford - I think it's marked to Elstow at first.

The A603 seems to become the B1042 between Sandy and the roundabout by Arrington.

Take the second right turn to Orwell. You come into Barnington at the south end of the green, and you turn left leaving the large green on your left. At the end of the green there is a right turn to Foxton. You come onto A10 opposite a petrol station, turn right, go over level crossing and immediately left. At T junction at end of Station Rd, turn left, leaving village shops on your right. We are second house on left <sup>at back</sup> behind a flint wall - terracotta tudor house.

I would expect you 4 to half past 50

you arrive in daylight.

Oh - In Potton I believe you will find that you come into the village, drive straight through but have a right turn to leave towards Wrestlywate - which is not quite how it looks on the map.

I believe signposting is fairly good.

I'm looking forward to seeing you. Would you like Fiona (Sinclair - Slater - Crawford) - Clive's sister - to come to dinner with her husband? I haven't asked her and don't know if she can. I think you have met her in the past - maybe at a dinner in London ages ago -

Lots of love

Patrick.

P.S. I suppose from Kidlington (now I've had a look where it is) it is best to take the A41 to Aylesbury & join the A418 there.

You can have a ride on the Zike  
'Sunday morning'!



**MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X1000, Pretoria, 0001

14 April 2005

**Ms Hilda Bernstein**

**Cape Town**

**My Dear Hilda**

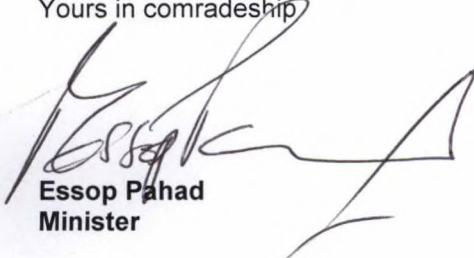
It grieves me to have to let you know that, because of official duties that will take me to KwaZulu Natal this weekend, I shall simply not be able to make the remarkable celebration that is taking place to mark your 90th birthday - and indeed an event that I was keenly looking forward to attending. This is an achievement by any standards, but for a person who has fought so doggedly against the ravages of repression in the cause of justice and freedom for so long, it is a memorable and inspiring milestone.

In the rush of life these days, particularly as the challenges of the new order in SA, though so different from the old, tend grow with the passing years, it is possible so easily to lose sight of the important things in that very life. I want you to know that your influence on a whole generation of fighters in the same cause has had an impact which is both indelible and powerful. Wherever your name is mentioned, the comrades salute your life of selfless dedication and service.

You were a true mentor; one of those who, when my generation was young, inspired us to carry on and not waver; and this despite the odds we all faced at the hands of racial and right-wing tyranny. Your solidarity in the cause, with other greats such as OR Tambo, Chief Luthuli, Lillian Ngoyi, Yusuf Dadoo and Moses Kotane, has enriched our freed land, and it is so gratifying to note that as recently as last year you were awarded - and richly earned - the accolade of the Order of Luthuli in Silver. This aptly marks out your contribution to the measure of social justice, caring and non-racial, non-sexist stability that we have managed to achieve, as we fight on to extend these values and benefits to all our people.

Do have a marvellous celebration, Hilda! May the autumn weather be appropriately fine and refreshing, with the rain at bay. I - and so many others - will be thinking of you.

Yours in comradeship

  
**Essop Pahad**  
**Minister**

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