

Jan Margo
8 rue Albert Bedouce
31400 Toulouse



Mrs. Hilda Bernstein,
Old House Farm
Dawstone
Hertfordshire HR3 6BL
UK
Angleterre.

8 ave Albert Bedouce
31400 TOULOUSE
Tel : 61 55 20 23

7 août 1990

Dear Hilda Bernstein,

Thank you for your letter which I found very interesting, I'll answer your main question by and by.

The only knocking down I did at 54 regent street was when I put a window into the garage. When I left, the house was full of students but they hadn't knocked anything else down yet. Incidentally I left in a hurry, decided one day and left on a plane the next, to avoid being arrested by the SB, but not because I'd done anything more than criticize the government publicly on student platforms.

In fact when I ran away, I was no longer politically active at all, but had entered a Buddhist universal nature phase (long since over I'm afraid). Unfortunately or fortunately I had become involved with an American journalist who was looking for material for a book and doing a bit of dissenting on the side. She was ordered to leave the country, refused, went underground to continue her research, was found, arrested, sentenced to 50 days in jail, and deported the next day. The night she was in jail, our house was raided. The next day, I was followed blatantly in the street while on the way to work for Fanny and Joe Klenerman at Vanguard books. I had no solid reason for going to jail, but it would've have happened sooner or later, if only for my previous connections with different radical students; so I left. Do I qualify for your book? If so, yes you are welcome to interview me and we could probably put you up in our living room for a couple of nights if you wanted to visit Toulouse, if

it was worthwhile to you.. Otherwise just send me your questions and I'll write my replies.

Now for **my** mercenary part. Thinking about your projected visit, I wondered, has your publisher arranged for distribution in France ? Is he aware of the FNAC, which arranges public conferences for authors ? (I once interviewed Doris Lessing there for French radio). Is he aware of the English department of Radio France, which broadcasts all over the world ? Breytenbach will of course know all those things and useful contacts. Well thinking about that, I wondered, is your book going to be translated into French and if so has the translator been chosen yet ? You see I run a translating company here in Toulouse (with cheaper rates than Paris) and I have in mind a young French woman, daughter of French communists, but not herself a militant and a good, trained, professional translator, who could certainly do a good job. If you think it's worth pursuing, would you mention this to him ? Our commercial name is **Coup de Puce**, and our fax no is : 61 52 18 50. We also have the facilities for word processing.

Enough of that. To reply to your other questions. Do you know Bokwe Mafuna ? He appeared with B Breytenbach on French television in connection with Mandela's release. He's an old trade unionist, from the Jhb area I think, and probably one of the most interesting people to interview. Baruch Hirson's son, Denis Hirson is also living in Paris, and in fact translated one or two of Breytenbach's books, address 15 rue Emile Lepeu, Paris, 11. I think as I do for myself, that he is not politically interesting, but perhaps this is not a necessary criteria for you.

Otherwise I have another friend, Philip Scheiner, from Cape Town. His fiancée works for La Croix, the Catholic Daily, and last year she undertook a similar project

to yours, interviewing a whole sprinkling of Sudafs as they say here, and published an article in the newspaper. She would be a good person for names I think and you can phone her. Her name is Sophie Laurent and her telephone number is 43 58 72 69. Last thought, working at Radio France, English Dept, is a woman whose father was/is (?) one of the leaders of SWAPO. The more I think about it, the English Dept there will be a very good source of information for you and they would probably want to interview you too about your book. Ask for Simpson, an American, head of the dept (or was when I was living there,) or John Abrams, and you can mention my name.

I write too, one short story published, and several self produced amateur plays, so I do understand the writer's need for appreciation. Tell Rusty Bernstein that my father is still alive and still checking concrete stresses at 81 years old.

best wishes,

Ian Margo.

FRANCE

Nams given by Ariane Bonzon

X PIERRE HASKI - Book The White Africa. Works for Liberation,
11 rue Beranger 75754 Paris. 42-761789.
Knows many exiles

GEORGE

GOERG LORY Journalist, friend of AB. 29 rue George Sand, 75016 Paris
45-27-77-79

X DANIEL BACH Friend of AB. 38 rue Jude, 33200 Bordeaux.
56-28-83-74.
University professor. Has writtn book jointly on SA
Maybe something about exiles.

GERARD SEKOTO - Ask Bach.

MARIANNE CORNEVIN Friend of AB. 10 rue Vandrezanne, 75644 Paris
45-898647. Historian. Wrote book on SA



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→ (but your comment is the
best way to get a quick
reply!)

Talence, le 11 juin 1990

Dear Ms Bernstein,

No, your belonging to the area is no obstacle to me! In Paris you should contact Georges LORY (translator of Brecht's poetry into French and a regular columnist on Smile Africa). His address is: 29, rue Georges Sand 75116 Paris. The phone number is: 45.27.77.79. Georges L. knows Ariane Bruze so that you can use both her and my name.

Antoine BOUILLON (Bouillon) for the French anti-apartheid movement is another valuable contact you should try. Address: 3 Villa Curial 75019 Paris.

Also: unknown to me unfortunately -

Alfred Sobota, I have not seen Gerard for the last two years. He lives at the Maison des Artistes, 14-16 rue Charles VII 94130 Nogent s/Marne. I do not have his phone number.

I wish you the best of luck in your research. If you wish to come to our center in Bordeaux you are welcome in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Boel

INSTITUT D'ÉTUDES POLITIQUES DE BORDEAUX

P.S. we have a book coming out in July on "Sullivan Africa and France". The volume is in French, will be published by →

Kerthala and may contain some interesting information
for you. The full French ref is:

J. Bach, ed., L'Asie céleste
et la France: histoire, mythes et
expériences, Paris, Kerthala, 1990, 480 p.

5th June 90

Old House Farm
Dorstone
Herefordshire HR3 6BL

Dear Professor Bach,

Your name was given to me by Ariane Bonzon, who I met in Lusaka, when she interviewed myself and my husband in connection with the release of South African ANC leaders.

I am collecting material for a book on the exile experience of South Africans, and would like to come to Paris this month, if possible. Ariane suggested that you might be interested in the subject of exiles, and possibly make some suggestions about people to see.

She also said that you might be able to help me to get in touch with Gerard Sekoto.

I am a South African writer living in exile, and a member of the ANC. If this is a nuisance to you, please do not hesitate to say so.

Yours sincerely

Hilda Bernstein

Phone: 0981-550-466

Old House Farm
Dorstone
Herefordshire HR3 6BL

23 July 1990

Dear Lai (?) Margo,

I can't quite decipher your first name in your signature. Thank you for your letter; I have been travelling around a bit, which delayed a reply.

I met Elias in Lusaka when he and the others came there after their release. I had arranged to send copies of the book to all of them, Elias included. I hope they arrived, but it was good of you to order a copy for him. He tells everybody that I was responsible for bringing him into political life, but never adds that this resulted in 25 years in jail. I tend to think he would have arrived at the same course of action even if he had never chanced upon the CP on the City Hall steps.

My husband Rusty says he knew your father.

That probably was Patrick who gave you stomach ache. And that was our house. It ended up smashed by drug-taking students - I actually saw a couple of photographs of what they did; hope that was after you left.

I am at present researching material for a book on the exile experience of South Africans. I want to come to France later on this year to interview Breytenbach and any other stray South Africans that can be found. I have already done interviews in Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and many here in Britain, and recently in Germany. The point about going to different countries - apart from the fact that I like travelling - is that the host country in which the exiles settle influences their perceptions of their time in exile.

Are you an exile or an immigrant? And would you be prepared to be interviewed? And are you in touch with any other exile South Africans in France? I would probably go to Paris, but would be prepared to travel elsewhere if it would provide me with good material. This sounds very mercenary, but time and particularly money are limited. Anyway, as you say, it would be nice to meet.

Thank you for good remarks about the book. Writers need constant boosts to their ego.

Good wishes,

Hilda Bernstein

23 July 1990

Old House Farm
Dorstone
Herefordshire, HR3 6BL

Dear Lai (?) Margo -

0981-550-466

I can't quite decipher your first name in the

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Dear Hilda Bernstein,

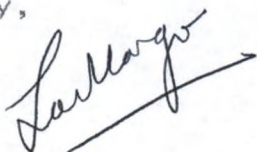
In December 1989, while visiting my father Lionel Margo in Johannesburg I had the chance to meet one of your old comrades, Elias Motsoaledi who had just been released from prison. We had a chat about people, politics and the ANC and those dark years towards the end of the sixties and beyond when all opposition in SA seemed to be crushed. Having received the South African Review in France, I asked him if he had read your book. He said no, but that he would very much like to. So I ordered it on my return to France, and am sending it him this week through a friend. He is by the way, very alert and combative and full of a warm humour, as is his wife and the different unknown people we met in his house.

I just finished reading your book by the way, and it brought back lots of memories for me, as well as filling in some of the holes in my political upbringing. I was born in 1949 and started university in 1966, thus arriving after the various trials you describe and in a sort of political vacuum following the state repression. I had the chance during this time to meet the Schermbruckers and it was through Leslie Schermbrucker that I happened upon N° 54 Regent Street which was condemned for demolition, and managed to rent it on a month to month basis. I lived there with about seven fellow students for a year or so, then left in a hurry for England. While living there, I remembered or thought I remembered a childhood event which left a marked impression on me. If all this seems a waste of time to you, I understand, please skip it and excuse me.

Here's what I remembered. I was enrolled at Mrs Barnett's kindergarten in the old Scout Hall. One day I was invited by a little friend Patrick to come and play at his house just behind the school grounds. We got into an apricot tree and ate a lot of ripe and unripe fruit, after which I had a very bad stomach ache for a day or so. Leslie thought it might have been your house and your apricot tree and your son. Was it ?

In closing, may I say that I found your book fascinating and heartwarming, even though these days it is hard to know what to think about politics, other than that new dreams have to be invented. Best wishes to you and your family. I hope some day that I shall have the chance to meet you. In the meantime, carry on writing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lionel Margo', with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

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