

HI NO 9 [Typed copy of original]

Robben Island Geol.

Robben Island.

4th June, 1967.

Mr Benjamin Pogrand,
P.O. Box 1138,
Johannesburg.

My Dear Benjie,

Thank you for both your letters. Accept my belated good wishes on your birthday. I knew you were young but I did not think you were that young! You must have been twentyish when you got your Masters and still in your early twenties when you got married. Damn it man where are you hurrying to?

You will have heard from Veronica that we had a very lovely time together. She came with her youngest sister, Mrs Ribeiro of Pretoria, and Clive accommodated both of them. He's been very wonderful: said Mass for Veronica before she went to interview the Minister. As usual she is being rather perverse. All these years ^{she's} been rather an indifferent Anglican and a more indifferent Christian. But now, because I abjure this faith, she's beginning to swear by it!

For the occasion I used your yellow-flowered sheets. She said she would tell you about it. They are very fine sheets indeed. Thank you for them and the pillow cases which arrived later. I am sorry I did not list the balsalava in my letter. I have been wearing it night and day in a separate development way.

The books on Judaism to which I refer are those listed in your letter of 7th December, 1965. I wrote to you, after you had sent me a copy of that letter with your letter of 28th March 1966. I listed the books that I had not received as follows: Weiss Rosmarin: Judaism and Christianity; T Difference. Epstein: Judaism
Lewisohn: Selection of Jewish Short Stories
Conquest: Marxism Today
Griffiths: The Road to Freedom
Honey: Communism in North Vietnam
London: New Nations in a Divided World
McKay: Africa in World Politics
Carew: Moscow is not my Mecca
Appleton: The Student Trap

Fortunately, you had earlier sent me Epstein's Judaism. As I said in an earlier letter, if I were not an African, I would choose to be a Jew - in the ethnic not just the religious sense. With the present crisis in the Middle East I had better not state my reasons lest I encourage an incipient chauvinism!

The BBC, a year ago or so, gave Jewish scholars an opportunity to /state

state their faith and say where it differs from Christianity. Their impact it is said, was shattering.

Speaking of the BBC I am glad to hear they have made you so thrilling an offer. You will be working in a congenial atmosphere where your integrity will be respected. And, of course the professors will be ready to challenge your views at every turn. I don't think I can advise you here. You will enjoy academic life in the USA, I am sure. The opportunities for research are great. And the collision of ideas is fiercer than in the UK I think. Whichever you choose, you know you have my best wishes.

About Norma I have two worries which I am sure you, too have considered deeply. The obvious worry are the children. You will both have to face that obstacle sincerely. And then there's the question of her husband. The type of prisoner he is ensures him a great deal of sympathy and you have enemies in the journalistic and political fields who will not hesitate to put the worst possible interpretation on your relationship.

By the way, I have not yet received the Auto-bridge set you said Ernie and Jill were sending me, nor have I received the sloop-pail that you said Clive would be sending. He has, however bought me a charcoal grey pair of trousers which my wife took in for alterations.

Finally, Benjie, you are undoubtedly going to be quizzed about me. You know me when I was a timid lecturer at the Wits in my early years. You know the pressures to which I was subjected and you saw me react to them. You were, yourself, a struggling, frequently frustrated beginner on the Rand Daily Mail. I saw you react to the pressures to which you were subjected. In other words, I am not a superman and it will be your task, more than anybody else's, to keep my proportions true. On my side, too, I'll keep yours true.

* safe and pleasant journey, old man, and success attend your work.

Yours affectionately,

Bob

P.S. Thanks for your photo. You look executivish without a beard! Norma as an individual, I find most attractive. But I don't want you hurt any more.

Bob

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