

in them any more, feel my years could have been more usefully spent in painting and writing, which is what I intend doing from now on, plus travelling. Rusty and I want to go back to Europe, I want to go to Spain again, I love Italy, dream about being back there, haven't seen Greece or Portugal, would like to visit the USSR and see what is happening (they're publishing Death is Part of the Process next year) and would like to go to the GDR as well as a few other places. How about Norway, for instance, all those fjords and glaciers? No, I don't want to be so far away from it all. What limited money we will have won't take us from Southern Africa to Europe. And even when their is black majority government in SA, the situation 'on the ground' as they say, won't change for years and years in most respects - who'se going to pull down all those Soweto matchboxes, rebuild the schools, equip them, dismember the Bantustans, find jobs for all the unemployed, uneducated and often brutalised youth? Apart from all the other problems. It's not going to change overnight, and I don't want to give any more of my energies working for that change. It's for the young to do it.

We rejoice in the gradual slide down of the Thatcher era, while still feeling Kinnock is a nasty opportunist. But what could be worse than what has happened to Britain in all these years? The whole social consciousness of the people has changed, and that also won't change overnight when she has gone. At least without TV we don't have to see her any more, although we do hear that voice from time to time on the radio.

Vera, the London Review of Books has been ariving and i find it very interesting and worth reading. I think I shall continue to subscribe to it after I return. Why not regard that as my Christmas present? This year I shall send nothing to anybody, not even the cards I usually send, havent got any and postage costs too much from here. I keep making notes of books I want to get when the opportunity comes, but don't go to the expense, they cost so much to send, and time is going by. Keith sends us batches of magazines (New Statesman, Spectator, Listener, etc) from time to time when he can pick them up free at the Telegraph and post them at the T's expense. We enjoy the Weekly Guardian, although it's arrival is also erratic, and read the whole thing, (except the sports news). Rusty and I are planning a trip when we finish up here, before we return to England. We want to go to Zimbabwe (R has never been to the Victoria Falls) and to visit some of the marvellous game parks here in XTanzania.

I meant to tell you about the man we share our house with, Zoni, he is a sweet, quiet, hard-working little man, but there is a clash of cultures. Tell you all about it when I return.

Much love

Where's Olga off to next?

7. 12. 89

Dear Hilda,

It was lovely to get your letter. I immediately rang Olga to read her the bit about her writing - Julie Jones gave her an intro to the BBC & they <sup>are</sup> ~~was~~ interested, and I think she has now been spurred to send some pieces. I agree with you and I am sure they will arouse great interest. Did you ever hear the "Child in the Forest" broadcasts ~~by~~ later published by the BBC in band & paper back? She is playing a big part in the nurture of Melissa, & enjoys it. Linda is like I was, having to learn maternal feeling, perhaps it is something to do with being unconscious at the birth (Glenda had a caesarean by epidural & was conscious &

experienced that great surge of emotion that  
you described to me about Keith's birth)

Last time we were at Olga's Melissa was  
sent over "for a cuddle" because Stuart  
& Linda were too busy - on a Sunday.

She is a lovely strong affectionate baby.  
Glenda is like Frances, totally besotted  
and I can't convince her that other  
mothers have babies as wonderful as hers.

(I'm joking, I don't try to tell her that)

She is having a hard time just now,  
the baby has flu, following German's  
measles - I'd forgotten how frantic  
with worry I used to be when she,  
as a baby, wasn't well. We had  
a joint birthday party & Morgan &  
I were tired for 2 days after. Harrison  
is walking & opening every cupboard &  
chirking - pulling out drawers to get at  
the ones alone etc. We've taken fossils  
off shelves & put breakables out of reach

also Henry's contract is ended  
so he is seeking a new  
company - w/b. at a normal price!

They'll be here for Xmas, all being well.

The news continues to race ahead, almost too fast - I agree with Rustus "reform" & "democracy" are parrot cries unless there's understanding; however the anger of the people is understandable; those leaders who were preaching the values we believe in, were privately amassing fortunes in Swiss accounts, feeding & clothing themselves from luxury stores, occupying luxurious dwellings etc.

But if they <sup>people</sup> were living in a western "democracy" they would accept all that - the enormous fortunes of the land-owning & wealthy entrepreneurs, the money we pay to them; the asset stripping (like selling off water to the money-takers) why isn't our population up in arms & demonstrating about our rotten transport system, our rotting sewers, our broken pavements, the filthy litter everywhere, the lies, scandals

frauds that are being exposed, daily,  
 it seems. The thing is that socialist  
 leaders are not expected to behave like that, &  
 it's part of capitalism & accepted. But  
 is that what the East Germans & others  
 want to change to? We shall see,  
 we don't know who or what their  
 new leaders are - some must be as  
 narrow & greedy as those they've over-thrown,  
 the same I suppose, who've been imprisoned  
 & persecuted for sticking to their principle.  
 Anyway it is an exciting time & I'm  
 glad I've lived to see an end to the ~~old~~  
 rigidity & stupidities <sup>of</sup> the old leaders.

I forget whether I paid a year or  $\frac{1}{2}$  year's  
 sub for London Review of Books, I'll please  
 them to find out. That's by the way -  
 to go back to the previous paragraph -  
 we're bowing scandal after scandal  
 being exposed over corruption, really

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cynical mismanagement's cheats that would  
have brought down any labour <sup>51</sup> feet -  
people just joke about it - no doubt  
who rules in a "democracy" - the fat cats.

I have just watched a TV programme  
about poppies - showing fields of poppies  
in the corn. One of our favourite walks  
was through a corn field that used to be  
ablage with poppies - now with the  
eradication of weeds they've tried to  
wipe them out, but the field, & the  
footpath through it, is always  
outlined with the glorious scarlet  
and I consider myself lucky to have  
had, & to be able to remember, such  
pleasure.

8<sup>th</sup>. Next day. There are still some brown  
leaves left on the trees, mostly oaks, & we go  
out whenever there's sun to see the  
magnificent trees in Ashridge. Our garden  
is used, I don't mind as we have lots of  
birds - one shrub - a viburnum - is in flower

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now & the sparrows take nectar from the  
blossoms (I read that in the Esbenov, Frances  
Perry, 83, still the best gardening writer)

I'm reading Bonfire of the  
Vanities (Tom Wolfe) a devastating novel  
about New York, very funny and deeply  
disturbing - it's putting me off going there.  
Semibell description of life in the Bronx as it  
is now, the ~~pe~~ hopelessness of the school system -  
I think our cousin Gertrude's daughter, Betty  
teaches there still, tho' they now lived in  
a classy area called White Plains.

There'll still be some places in Europe  
fit to travel in, for a short time. Not  
Switzerland, it is choked with car emissions  
Nor Athens, in permanent smog.

At least we made our limited journeys  
early, before the proliferating roads, high  
rise hotels & cars cars cars everywhere.

If only those nationalistic groups, now  
reverting to tribalism could see where  
their real interests (& enemies) are

then the best places to visit would be in towns like Dubrovnik, Plovdiv (Bulgaria) & the surrounding mountains, ~~the~~ And Spiciale and the Dolomites - perhaps it's changed <sup>even</sup> there, by now. We're lucky we're so close to open country that won't be built on, acres of splendid woodland & downland still full of wild flowers in season.

You ask where Gega has been. ~~Now~~ Mauntas (I think) with Linda Stuart & the leaky, where Gega & Helen sat on the boat while the others scuba-dived, & on the beach while they water-ski-ed; before that she was on a cruise, I forget where, they are all going to Jersey for Xmas, & ~~they~~ skiing afterwards. She ~~often~~ sometimes meets the same people on the expensive holidays, it's like a club. But she really enjoys her opera class, writing class & theatre group, & I do envy her those, Hemel is a desert as far as "culture" is concerned & going out at night is horrible in the cold dark

winter.

I used my basil seeds up long ago, they sprouted a few leaves & then died. I have the opposite of green fingers. But my orange tree, grown from a pip, had one blossom this year.

lots of love, I wish I could talk to you both, I fear for the good men that are being tarred with the brush of anti-communism -

Vera.

↓

That's a bit mixed, I expect you know what I ~~mean~~ mean, Gorbachev & others like him.

12th June 1990

Dear Vera,

You ask for my reaction to the cutting that was sent to you. I feel a sense of absolute outrage and anger. Let me take it sentence by sentence.

1) This sentence was underlined in ink: 'The fact that Jews the world over were involved in the campaign to gain his freedom has apparently had no impact on the Black African leader's choice of political friends.'

What incredible nonsense! The fact that Moslems also worked for his freedom doesn't mean he must embrace the Ayatollah; millions of Catholics also campaigned - must he then support the Pope about abortion? Yes, millions of Jews were among (not exclusively) those who campaigned, but it was a Jew who sent him to life imprisonment - Percy Yutar, the prosecuting attorney in the Rivonia trial. Should that, then, turn him against all Jews? In addition, thousands, tens of thousands, of Jews in South Africa voted for the apartheid governments throughout the years, and supported ~~xxxxxx~~ apartheid in their life styles, in their professions and businesses - what has this got to do with Mandela's political choices? Nothing.

Is the article writer (and underliner) suggesting that because Jews were among those who demanded his freedom, he must then ipso facto agree with the policies of the Israeli government?

2) Next, a revolting act of anti-semitism - the severed pig's head - is placed between two paragraphs about Mandela, thus linking Mandela with this act. What has it got to do with Mandela and with the South African Jewish community's fear of anti-semitism? Where has anti-semitism come from in South Africa? From the Nationalists, the upholders of apartheid. Where has a policy of total non-racialism come from? From the ANC and Mandela. How dare they suggest that it is Mandela's policies that heighten fears of anti-semitism? On the kind of logic that the writer of the article employs, Mandela and the ANC should be violently anti-white, because of the treatment blacks have received over the centuries from whites. I would have thought that Jews, of all people, would appreciate the clear logic and humanity of Mandela's policies on racial questions.

3) Quote: 'Last February supporters of the extremist ARM raised Nazi flags and burned a Star of David to protest ~~agunament~~-sponsored anti-apartheid reforms. Mandela's pro-PLO remarks were made just two weeks later.'

Here again, like above, is a nasty smear by juxtaposing two entirely unrelated incidents. What has ASW policy, as expressed by Mandela, two weeks, two months, later or before, got to do with the anti-semitism of the ARM?

4) Finally, I despise the attempt of the American Jewish lobby to brand as anti-semitic everyone who opposes Israel's reactionary policy. What about those Jews in Israel who demonstrate for recognition of the PLO? Does this make them anti-semites? I support the PLO, I'm deeply against the acts of the Israel government in the occupied territories that bear such a close resemblance to what is happening in South Africa. The Israeli government is going further and further down a blind alley that can only lead to more conflict and violence. Of all the people in the world, Jews most of all, should recognise and feel compassion towards the displaced and the oppressed. And take a long hard look at the way their government, their army, their prisons, are behaving.

This may not endear me to our relatives in the US, but I only hope that it may make them try to think again, with their intellect.

Much love

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