

41  
23 Lynton Road,  
KLOOF,  
Natal, South Africa.

27th April, 1966.

Dearest Diana,

I must say that it was a great blow to us, too, and of course it has been made heavier by the banning of Ruth Hayman and her 12-hour arrest which includes 24-hour house arrest during weekends and public holidays. It is unspeakable that this should be done to a person who has broken no law. We also had two further blows in Natal when Ken Hill was banned and house arrested, and Heather Morkill was banned in Maritzburg.

I was toying with the idea of asking for a passport so that I could accept a joint fellowship from Harvard and the Union Theological Seminary, but recent events have shown me that I could not possibly accept it even if it were granted to me, which I think highly improbable. We are fully expecting that more bannings will take place. It makes one understand the attitude of those who believe that only violence can change the situation.

Yes, Dorrie was in hospital in January but she has been much better for the last two or three months. We do feel the strain however, and I find in myself a disinclination for work which unfortunately includes writing. We have been talking of taking a holiday on an Italian ship to Cape Town and back, but even that we don't do anything about. So you will see the new novel is not beginning.

I like very much the six lines of verse that you sent, and you can send me the poem too.

You must not regret that you came out here. I think it was a good thing. It might have hastened our end but that is all  $\frac{1}{2}$ . Whatever you do in future you will have to use other instruments, but you probably know that. None of us is now allowed to carry out similar aims. This is most distressing, particularly in the Port Elizabeth district as you know. Although one gets tired, I cannot really say that one despairs, and I cannot really think of one banned person who falls into despair, except of Ann Tobias perhaps. But she was unmarried and was virtually living in complete isolation.



It seems probable that the courts will take a stricter and stricter view of the words 'social gathering', and interpret them as meaning 'no conversation whatsoever except in the family and on matters of business. I hope my fear is not justified. A Judge in Cape Town has expressed strong views about the things the police may and may not do to detained persons. I look forward to the day when some Judge will condemn the idea of solitary confinement altogether except for short periods and for physically dangerous people.

Yes, I did get the HOFMEYR review, and was naturally very pleased with it. Many thanks.

We send our love to you both even though Dorrie has never met John, and all good wishes for the book which will be out now.

Yours ever,

P.S. I am asking John another favour. Bessie Head is staying in Bechuanaland and is still in need of help. Do you think that John could send to Patrick van Rensburg, Swaneng Hill School, P.O. Box 101, Serowe, Bechuanaland, a sort of monthly contribution so long as she stays in Bechuanaland. Some people are trying to find her a job but without success so far. John might if he were able, discuss the possibility of giving her a job in the school, if John were able to pay the salary. Of course I don't know if Patrick would want her.

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