Received 4/3/68.

Robben Island Gaol,
P. O. Robben Island.
14th February, 1968.

Mr Benjamin Pogrund,
705 Barrow,
Van der Merwe Street,
Hillbrow,
Johannesburg.

My dear Benjie,

I've looked all over for your last letter but can't find it. I remember that Veronica read it as she read all your other letters to me. It's just possible that she put it in some other place. That's the price one has to pay for company.

Well, you no doubt have the full report by now. Thank you for everything. I was very pleasantly surprised to note that you had arranged for the circumcision of the boys so expeditiously. They were themselves very anxious to pass on that information to me.

They brought their toys along ~~too~~ and before they left we played a little

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badminton, although I took the opportunity to introduce them to tennis. The car rally we didn't assemble. I didn't have any glue. But they have left their toys behind and when I have my claws behind me I'll have time to attend to such matters.

It was the first time I could talk to the children without feeling rushed and I found myself sharing your concern: they are almost completely inarticulate in English. Wiliawa's letter misled me. She writes the language tolerably well, all things considered. But when it comes to speaking it, she's quite dumb.

I tried to drill them in a few of the vowel sounds but I soon realized the hopelessness of the task. For a whole year they pronounce "bird" as "bed" and what ~~chance~~ possible hope can I have to correct that in a fortnight?

It appears also that their teachers complain that they are weak in arithmetic. I made a few tentative moves but as I ~~am~~ do not know what methods are

being pursued by their teachers, here, too, I retreated. We played plenty of Scrabble, though, and at least here I had the pleasure of seeing them use their heads.

Zodwa and I couldn't agree on the matter of their weight. I thought they were grossly overweight. She thought they were fine on the whole - just a little paunchy!

By the way, thank you for the paintings. They were most interesting. I have read the biographies of Michelangelo and Lautrec and Van Gogh. I had read bits about the others, too, Cezanne, Seurat and the others. And it was a real delight to have the works of all of them in front of me.

Ernie sent me a couple of expensive records but I haven't played them yet. And that brings me to a matter I wish to discuss with you.

Zodwa will have told you, perhaps (you will excuse me if I do not always refer to her as Veronica. I call her and refer to her as Zodwa and that comes more naturally to me than Veronica which, incidentally, is what all her sisters call her!)

she will have told you then, as I say, that I played a sample record to demonstrate that the Record Player is "busted". I had hoped she would take it along with her as I believe it can still be repaired, but she didn't want to carry too many things.

I have now received word that the heater, which, in my last letter to you, I told you was in for repairs, cannot be repaired. It appears a whole part or something will have to be replaced and the repairers apparently cannot get that part.

In my last letter I asked you to arrange that I get another heater. I had hoped this would be an additional heater, but it would appear now that it will have to be a substitute. In that letter I had raised the question of subscriptions to the newspapers. I hope you received it - dated 23rd November, 1967.

While we are about it I think it would work out cheaper if, for such repairs, I could have either Clive or somebody else collect the article at the docks and take it to a shop of their

choice and then ~~return it to the~~ send it back from the docks. Please let me know what you think about it.

Thanks for the Cohen food. I'll comment on that in my next letter, when I'll also deal with the Israeli-Arab conflict. But I may as well say now that as I had had no instructions I ate the bread first and found it absolutely delicious. But the fish! I finished it out of loyalty to you.

In my letter of the 14th Dec. I'd said I would prefer that Yehudit bring the heater with her rather than have it sent by post. I had hoped that this one here could be put right in a jiffy. But in the altered circumstances, I'll have to ask that the new one be sent as soon as possible.

There's a lot I should like to discuss but I'll leave it off for now. Again, thanks for everything. The reports I received concerning your skirt-world aren't particularly sublime, you know. Glad to know Bob Cunthy is still around.

Love and best wishes to Jenny. Shalom.

Yours Sincerely,

Bob.

P.T.O.

I've long been wanting to inform you that "toothless bulldog" is a typically Fort Hare expression used to indicate that however brilliant the speech the means to effect it are lacking. It was used of the Native Representatives in Parliament – Miss Bullinger etc – they didn't command the votes! We ex-Fort Hareans knew what Simbarle was talking about

Bob

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