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Robben Island Gaol,
P. O. Robben Island.
12th June, 1968.

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

My dear Benjie,

the exams are over, thank
G-d. I started writing on the ²⁰17th May and
finished on the 28th May. I wrote eight
papers in all: two on Tuesday ^{21st} 21st; two on
Friday ~~24th~~ 24th and two on Monday 27th; and
then one on Monday 28th and one on Tuesday
29th. You will notice then that they were
bunched up.

However, they were very fair. On this
occasion I made sure that I scrupulously
obeyed instructions. On that score I have no
fears whatsoever - no ink splashes and
no scratch-outs. I wasn't at my
best, though; so instead of a First Class
Honours I shall be satisfied with a
plebeian pass. One thing that struck me
was the difference in approach between the

University and the Correspondence Colleges. The latter are kind of cram institutions: the exam papers ~~required~~ demanded interpretation rather than a regurgitation of the facts. I think I have passed. If I fail I authorize you to arrange for a re-examination of the scripts!

I don't want to waste time and ^{so} I want to start on the next course immediately. I have to decide between a Masters in English and a basic course in Maths, Physics and Chemistry. For a Master in Economics I shall need Maths in any case. Please advise. I should prefer to do English for the next two years or so, provided I am not required to do French as a "pre-requisite".

For three weeks or so before the exams I decided to put everything aside and concentrate on my studies. For that reason I have not yet sent the record-player to Mrs Stott nor have I written to thank her for the heater and the chair. I'll do so now but you may, in the meantime, do so on my behalf.

And thank you for the shoes. And

if I sounded ungrateful about the beige shirt (or is it mustard?) I apologize. I have worn it since and find it very comfortable and not at all as loud as I thought at first it was. Alas I have seen that it ^{has} ~~been~~ worn by Lord Snowdon and the late R.H. - the latter, at any rate, could not be described as a mod. - so - I apologize!

Incidentally, I am very sorry about Kennedy's death. I know it is easy to praise a man when he is dead and no longer offers any competition. But I am going to be truthful and say I stand by all that I said about him in my letter. I did not want him dead. I wanted him to be beaten by McCarthy. Failure would have done him a lot of good.

I think it is Robert Frost who says - I am paraphrasing - 'When you meet the Common Man, note him well; for to-morrow there will be more of him than today. The papers are full of diagnoses and examinations, I know. But what does impress me forcibly is this determination by the 'Common Man' to make

and break things: his utter rejection of the "accepted" standards that was the rejection of status based on birth - the aristocracy. People apologize today for belonging to the "nobility". For two centuries money and education have been the determinants of status. But both have become common-places and are, consequently, rejected as determinants of status. There is nothing to take their place. What prevails is an attitude of rejection: deep dissatisfaction. Some fool is going to suggest war as a cure: and he'll be heeded: to give mankind's accumulated frustrations, release.

Now that I have the time I intend to work on the novel and the Xhosa stories and poems. I shall also, at a later date, try to work out my religious problem. Somebody from Three Anchor Bay, incidentally, has sent me Muhammad's * biography. My thanks to him/her.

Also I have received a stack of books. I bot my head, I am afraid, and approached them greedily. I was reading a story volume - Reichardt and Politics - when they arrived and it has demanded tremendous

self-discipline to continue with it in the face of the blatant cogmetry of Shaw, Somerset Maugham, Oscar Wilde, George Orwell and other luscious characters.

Did you read in the "Sunday Times" of 9th June, the article by Dayan's daughter? Very well balanced, I thought, with none of the arrogance that characterizes her father's references to Arabs. I say it once more, Benjie: Nobody is going to be "taught a lesson" by anybody. The days for that type of mentality are over: between nations and between individuals. Our own children demand that we justify our "right" to teach them a lesson.

Am looking forward to the children's visit. I don't know yet when they'll be arriving.

How is Jenny faring? And what is the news from Norma? I'll remember to answer fully your question about what I thought of Dr. Byers Nandé's article.

My love to Jenny and to all friends.

Yours affectionately,
Bob

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