

Chat: July 1986.

1 Eyssen Street

Gcce^e^CKoaU'.

MONTAGU 6720

SOUTH AFRICA

2 July 1986

Dear friends,

Time really flies! It is already two weeks ago that I arrived back in South Africa. Coming back was quite a "comedown". I left New York on Wednesday June 11 and arrived in Rome the next morning. I spent the

day in Rome and left for South Africa at midnight. I did not see any English newspapers in Rome and therefore did not know about the State

of Emergency until we landed at Jan Smuts airport in Johannesburg on Friday morning. The presence of police at Jan Smuts and later the day at DF Malan airport in Cape Town suddenly made the reality of the State of Emergency very real. During the trip from Cape Town to Montagu

we passed through several road blockades.

On arriving in Montagu I heard that 14 people had been shot in Zolani (Ashton) in a fight between the Vigilantes and Young Comrades. The Vigilantes received arms from the police. Although nobody died, some were very badly injured. I talked to the doctor on duty at the hospital when the casualties were brought in. He said he hopes that he will never in his life experience something like that again. More recently, some 17 youngsters from Ashton and Montagu have been detained under the

spurious and evil regulations of the State of Emergency. In terms of the new laws these young men can be held for 180 days without trial, without so much as a visit from a lawyer.

Day after day we receive news of friends who have been arrested. The MAG correspondence is very censored and there is a lot of information that I would like to mention to you - but better not in a letter!

Enough of this horrible situation!

I look back on my visit to the U.S.A. with great gratitude; Gratitude to Ford Foundation who made it possible. Gratitude to all the wonderful people who helped to make my program a success; Gratitude to all the friends I made.....

It was wonderful to see Lorraine (my wife) and the children (Koos and Lizelle) again.

After my return from the U.S.A. I had one short week back to work and then left Montagu for a week's holiday with my family up in the North-Western Cape, where my brother Gawie, has a farm. It was really wonderful

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full to get away from all the tension and I was quite tired too.

Thinking back - to my wonderful experience in the U.S.A. I am sure that it has been one of the most important 14 days of my life.

It was Goethe who said:

"The world is so empty if one thinks only of mountains, rivers and cities but to know someone here and there who thinks and feels with us, and who, though distant, is close to us in spirit, this makes the earth an inhabited garden".

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In our situation one tends to flee to the mountains and rivers.... one tends to withdraw from contact - apartheid has taught us to well - The visit to the States has taught me anew the value of friends who "feels with us, and who, though distant, is close to us in Spirit", and I thank you all for that!

I hope to hear from you soon; and promise to keep in touch (as far as it is practically possible).

Much love

DIRK MARAIS.