

**Pogrud to Sobukwe, 12 September 1967 (Ba5-60)**

My dearest Bob,

I saw Veronica earlier today, and am happy to be able to report that she is looking and keeping well. After conducting a strenuous cross-examination, I was satisfied that neither she nor the children lack for anything. And I can promise you that I subjected her to a host of questions.

Veronica told me that in response to a telegram from you recently she telegraphed R10 to you, which we hope was safely received. In case you are still short, I have, under separate cover, sent an additional R10 to the Officer Commanding with the request that it be put into your account. It is some time since I last sent you postage stamps and I thought that, among your other needs, you might wish to buy stamps from the post office on the Island. And if you need more cash, you will promise to let me know without delay?

I asked Veronica about your clothes position and she said that she thought you were still alright. But will you let me know about this, Bob?

Ernie and Jill, as always, send their fond greetings. Ernie asks me to tell you that the books which you acknowledged in a recent letter (I think there was a Koestler book among them) were sent by him as a Xmas gift last year. Have they only recently reached you?

In my last letter (of August 31) I omitted to tell you about Jenny's first-ever school report. It was one which gave me a great deal of joy. It said her reading and number work were good, and on co-ordination it said: "Very good. Jennifer is artistic and creative in her work in this sphere."

The general comment was: "Jenny has made very good progress at school. She is a confident, capable and bright pupil." To which the principal added: "A very pleasing and encouraging report from a delightful little lady."

In fact, this has been my week for "nachas" (do you know the word? – it is a peculiarly Yiddishe phrase which means "joy" and is usually used to describe what parents derive from their children!). I had a verbal report yesterday from Jenny's school that, when the children have to write down their news of the day, Jenny writes more than anyone else – and when questioned by her teacher, she smilingly agreed that she wanted to be a journalist like her daddy (so the Government of 20 years hence had better watch out!). And I took her to her ballet class today and was delighted by the lovely things which the teacher told me about her – her intelligence, her independence, her charm and her good manners. So my chest is very much puffed out tonight.....

How are the studies going? Are you still having difficulty in concentrating? I have, by the way, attended to your examination fees and entrance forms. But I haven't had a reply from the British Embassy – perhaps they have written direct to you? – and I had better phone them tomorrow to check that everything is in order.

There have been some hilarious stories going the rounds about the recent Israeli war. One of them tells of the Russian officer handing over a batch of new tanks to an Egyptian who asks why there are five reverse gears and no forward gears and, of course, getting the

answer: “what do you need a forward gear for?” The latest variation on this is the tank with five reverse gears and one forward gear. And when questioned by an Egyptian about the need for a forward gear the Russian replies: “Well, what if you are attacked from the rear?” There is another one about Nasser<sup>1</sup> phoning Kosygin<sup>2</sup> and asking for 200 tanks and being told: “Look, if Eshkol wants tanks, let him phone me direct.”

Sorry, Bob, for the display of chauvinism, but you know, whatever might happen politically now in the Middle East – whatever settlement is reached – the recent events have had a profound effect on Jewish behaviour. The 2, 000 years of being quietly led to extermination are past. Today, among Jewish youth, there is almost anger – in fact, it is anger – at the six million who went without a fight to their deaths. The real original turning-point, I suppose, came with the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto<sup>3</sup> (do you know the story?), and it has reached its climax in modern Israel and more particularly in the recent war.

Did I tell you that Jenny and I now go regularly to synagogue on Friday evenings? I think the main reason she goes is so that she can have a sip of the wine after the cantor has recited the blessing at the end of the service! But, in addition, I have for long been unhappy about my ignorance about my own religion, and now, with my rabbi’s help, I am trying to get started on a proper study of it.

Otherwise, life is very quiet, and I am afraid that this dull letter is a reflection of it.

Oh yes, one thing which I forgot: I spoke to Veronica about the possibility of you and her each having a small tape recorder and exchanging tapes every week or so. If you are interested in this idea, perhaps you could approach the authorities on the Island and find out if they would be willing to accept the idea. It would be simple to carry out as the machines are uncomplicated, and the tapes are sent through the post at little cost. Let me know about this will you?

All for now. I look forward to hearing from you soon, and as always, you are in my thoughts and in my prayers.

God bless you,  
Affectionately,

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<sup>1</sup> Gamal Abdel Nasser Hussein, president of Egypt between 1954 until his death in 1970.

<sup>2</sup> Alexei Nikolayevich Kosygin was made Soviet Premier in 1964.

<sup>3</sup> Pogrunder is referring to Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, which was an act of Jewish resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto in German-occupied Poland during World War II to oppose Nazi Germany's effort to transport the remaining ghetto population to the Majdanek and Treblinka concentration camps. The uprising took place in the 1943.