

DCFB/514/5/34

2 Buchan Road, Newlands 7700

22nd April, 1988.



Mr. P. Brown

Dear Peter,

I have been thinking of you since Alan died and wonder if you would like to publish this tribute, which Gerald Gordon has written for the Civil Rights League, in REALITY. I will also enclose a copy of the speech which Eddie Daniels delivered. He spoke with great vigour and his usual combination of militancy and generosity of spirit. I don't know what either the Cathedral or David Philip intend doing with the addresses delivered at yesterday's service in St. George's Cathedral. Eddie's is the only one I am sending to you. Gerald's was not used in the Cathedral, but has gone to Anne P. *I am sending the latter to some newspapers, but they won't use all of it.*

I asked the Dean if I could have a copy of his address - it was simply splendid, as you can imagine - and he agreed, but I have to pursue this. Helen Suzman, David Welsh and David Philip also spoke on different aspects of Paton's life and writings, and all (of course) did so excellently. Eddie was the other speaker. Gerald Gordon and Eulalie Stott read passages from Alan's writings. Abner Mtshizana from SAIRR and John Ramsdale from the Diocesan Office staff read passages from the scriptures. The organist, Barry Smith, played the Kontakion, it was not sung, just a thin, silvery stream of pure sad music filled the Cathedral. It seemed just right. ¶

Because of my back I was transported by Bunty Aitchison, and we also took Jane Penny and Sylvia Bool (Collingwood's ex-) who insisted on the 'phone that she was getting away from her job at Groote Schuur Hospital to go to the Cathedral, come what may. She was thrilled by the service ~~and also~~ as we were by seeing so many old familiar faces. I was asked to sit near the front and read a passage in the event that Eulalie did not arrive in time (her plane from EL had been delayed) but she did come in good time and I relaxed. Eglin and Walter Stanford were sitting behind me. Mr. Mtshizana looked around and said the main body of the Cathedral was pretty full, but not the sides. (I am unable to turn my head - well not easily).

On the Thursday before Easter weekend, David Philip phoned me and told me in confidence that Alan was going to have the operation on his throat. I had recently been writing to him, and he enquired about Maggie and Oscar, and I passed little messages between them of love and enquiries re their health. So I was pleased to see that Oscar attended the service - Bridget Scoble drove him in. He has had a hip operation also a prostate gland op., and is looking old and pale, but the spark is still very much there when one speaks to him. Maggie, I'm afraid, has lost her short-term memory - when I phone her, she has forgotten that I phoned previously, and she obviously did not know Alan had died when I rang to just tentatively sound her out in case she might want to go to the service - so I didn't even mention his death. But I've omitted to say that I did phone Alan on Easter Saturday morning and wished him a happy Easter and asked how he was. He said gruffly "Oh, I'm in trouble again." Then there was an awkward silence, so I covered by telling him quickly that Oscar was getting on well, and he sent his regards to him and his love to Maggie, and he asked about Harry too. So then I just said Goodbye and he thanked me and said Goodbye. We will never forget him.

Are you coming down for the book launch on 29th - if so I hope to see you.

with love, to you + Phoebe.

Dot (Harry is in Mossel Bay / George looking at a newly discovered cave).

*F.B. I have sent Anne Paton as Gordon's tribute which he addressed to the Paton family, but not the copy. I shall fit a copy of the tape via P. Philip. I tried to phone you this evening, but I don't have the latest no.*