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Subject: lost contact**Date:** Sun, 31 Dec 2000 00:09:44 -0500**From:** nrubin <nrubin@compuserve.com>**To:** magnus gunther <magnusg@magma.ca>, nrubin <101775.1601@compuserve.com>

My Dear Magnus,

What a millenarian message to have received at the close of the millenium! You know me little indeed if it has not yet dawned on you that I follow diligently EM Fortster's famous aphorism on friends. (something like "If I am forced to choose between loyalty to my country and my friends, I hope I shall have the courage to choose my friends.")

Your last email to me on 24 October - a week or so before my departure from Lyon to Cape Town - ended with a soubriquet about not bothering to reply as you were off gyrating around various parts of the the world's greatest democracy and that I needn't be in touch until well into November. I took that to mean until I next heard from you, which was the rather disconcerting message of yesterday.

If I may I hazard a guess at the silence, it must be the that it is a manifestation of the kind of shock appropriate to a political scientist after the events of November, though I do concede that as someone who was actually in Florida on or about the jours fatidiques there is good reason. (For myself, I marvel at the process which decided things by a majority of 5/4 instead of a plurality of 500,000 in an electorate of 100,000,000 or so of whom some 50,000,000 voted. Or to put it another way, in the context of my own discipline: the phrase "The Rule of Law" now has an altogether different meaning, courtesy the US Supreme Court)

To cheer you up for the next 1,000 years (of which I hope you enjoy many, MANY) take heed of one of the few good jokes I've heard recently, involving three proofs that Jesus was in fact a Jew: (1) he lived with his parents until he was over 30; (2) his Father took him into the business; and (3) His Mother thought he was God.

Cheers, as you so rightly say.

Yours,

Neville..