

New address from 18 June 1974: Appt. 31, 4, rue Oscar-Bider, 1220 Avanchet-Parc

Mme E.-P. BARRITT-PLAYEL Geneva,
35, chemin Moïse-Duboule (Suisse).
Petit-Saconnex, Genève
(Tél. 33 24 00/int. 89)

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My dear Phyllis,

I am pleased to read your letter of 18th on my return from holiday in Germany. How on earth was my letter "clever" ? I can't remember what I put in it, even - ha,ha!

Oh, yes, it is a miserable arrangement, dividing up the children like that, but perhaps they will be able to take the "bonne côté" as they say here (the "good side") and develop into well-adjusted adults. Only this afternoon a Swiss lady was saying how her parents were unhappy and they, the 4 girls, the children, took the psychological attitude of "an interesting study of what we don't want in OUR lives", and 3 of the girls are happily married including herself, and the 4th, not so happy because she married for "pots and pans, furniture &c" like 90% of women seem to do. I, myself, married a poor man for love and got cut off from the family (in England, they worship success and prosperity and despise poverty, so I was quite outrée from their point of view). I have never regretted it and though I had a divorce finally, and my son had the "beatnick-hippie" period, he is turning out quite well at least psychologically, though he has missed in education, having been to good schools but spent time dreaming, who is right, mum or dad? Refusing to play with their toys when with me, and vice-versâ.

Born of irresponsible parents (his father and my humble self), no wonder he erred a bit but he is now turning out quite well, apart from having left his over-possessive wife, and talking about going to Canada with a wonderful-sounding Canadian girl who has just gone back and left him desolate in London. English girls are generally insular and possessive and I would have preferred him to have married a Jamaican goddaughter of mine or a Continental girl. But there, when the women (girl of 17 in that case) do the "running" and men let themselves be caught, what can be done?

I am admiring your wonderful work for the 10 men from Robben Is. that hell-hole, was Nelson Mandela or Bram Fischer among them? Thank God for their escape or release. I am a member of Amnesty International of London and Geneva, but in my opinion they are not active enough. Anyway for the jerseys and jackets I contacted Mme Benso an Adventist friend and they have plenty in their Dorcas of the Adventist church, and I am trying to contact Mme Diane Perrot, secretary of the Anti-Apartheid Movement of Geneva, but I think they are away, as I hope the two will get together, as Mme Benso had some difficulty in her parcels to Cameroon being stolen (I sent one, myself, to my godchild by Airmail Registered which is more or less safe) = If Mme Perrot will do the posting and packing, in league with Mme Benson providing the clothes, we might work up a good, permanent thing. If not, I will send the things airmail to you, myself, and please God we can get down to it early next week when she is at home. God bless you, keep smiling or say "Cheese". Love Edith



Siri Tjissen