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'Zapiro'
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Dear Jonathan

ON SATIRE

I write to tell you I enjoyed your talk a week ago at the Book Fair tremendously. First off, your opinion of David Bullard was music to me, and boy you surprised me. You said you always wondered reading his columns, 'How can they keep this guy on?' I thought I was the only white man here who couldn't stand him, with his English immigrant pin-stripe attitudes and basic contempt for Africans.

As for your work as a cartoonist, I go with that guy in the audience who said it 'ranges from the brilliant to the horrific'. 'That's far enough now, Ronald' was obviously a hoot for me, but the cartoon I liked the most was COPE scraping Pieter Marais from the bottom of the barrel with flies buzzing around him. I found it screamingly funny at the time, and remembering it as I type this you've got me laughing out loud again.

But on the other hand. You spoke of drawing your cartoons 'to make some point about something or other', intended to 'hit a nerve', be 'shocking' and 'to make you feel uncomfortable'. Sure, but even at his most ostensibly misanthropic I find Ben Trovato's satire fundamentally humane, whereas so often your cartoons have a Talmudic vengefulness about them: a cruel and hateful animus. I think that's what the guy meant by 'horrific'. Someone else in the audience said they were 'vicious, vicious'. Yet that's not the spirit you radiate in person.

Your 'AIDS denialism just got even weirder' cartoon on 20 November 2007 had me claiming in a voice balloon, 'I'm the President's No. 1 AIDS crackpot loony-tune wacko!!' This reputation – and your friends in the DA and the TAC rate me similarly – springs from a little book I wrote many years ago, *Debating AZT*, showing the drug to be very, very bad stuff. Like arsenic injections in the olden days. None other than its inventor Professor Richard Beltz agreed, and emailed his support for my case against it. Our country's sharpest investigative journalist Martin Welz agreed too, and wrote the book's foreword. His English counterpart the late great Paul Foot took the same view. None of these guys is a 'crackpot loony-tune wacko'. So hey, why me?!

As your cartoon correctly suggested, the manuscript of the book changed Mbeki's opinion of the drug; and all those well-meaning whites, you included, who always know what's best for the blacks, and who'd unthinkingly swallowed the marketing propaganda, went berserk. A cartoon of Mbeki stepping up a stairway of dead babies' bodies into his presidential jet and everything!

Anyway denialism has been completely defeated in South Africa now so we can all relax. You'll be pleased to learn of Minister of Health Dr Aaron Motsoaledi's assurance in his foreword to the HSRC's *South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey, 2008*, published earlier this month, that 'South Africa has the largest burden of HIV/AIDS and is currently implementing the largest antiretroviral treatment (ART) programme in the world.'

Of course it's the blacks who are carriers of this 'burden of HIV/AIDS' according to the white scientific authorities: one in seven of them (13.6%) has HIV teeming in their privates, going up to one in three black women aged between 20 and 34 (32.7%), whereas less than one in three hundred whites (0.3%) has.

And this is just what one would expect since a typically 'chauvinistic' black man like Jacob Zuma 'can't control his sexual urges', as you say – echoing Judge Willem van der Merwe's advice

to him when acquitting him of rape in 2006: 'And if you can control your body and your sexual urges, then you are a man, my son.' As both of you rightly implied, whites are much better at disciplining their sexual urges than childlike blacks are.

Don't think I'm suggesting you have a basically racist point of view about blacks, sex and AIDS. Constitutional Court Justice Edwin Cameron is a very liberal person who likes the blacks a lot and he also thinks 'sexual practice among African men' has 'contributed to its spread' (not 'sexual practice' among white men like him). What's more, such thinking is extremely scientific. Jerry Coovadia, Professor of HIV-AIDS Research at UKZN, knows more than anyone about this subject and he says it's the 'unbridled sexuality' of 'newly liberated people ... especially the promiscuity of men' that has led to 'AIDS ... ripping through millions of our people'. And all you have to do is compare the 'HIV prevalence' rates between blacks and whites reported by the HSRC's mostly white AIDS experts to find all the scientific evidence you need that blacks are 50 times less able to control their sexual urges than we are.

I've written a lot else since that first little book of mine, but my all-time favourite is a satirical piece I wrote as a political prank in the International Criminal Court at The Hague in January 2007. You said of satire that it 'doesn't have to be funny' but that it's 'best if funny to make a point'. You spoke of the importance of 'freedom of expression' and 'pushing the boundaries'. Dude, it was *extreme*! Some people cracked up laughing, and phoned me from around the world to tell me so. Others scowled. My German friends hated it – while the Dutch loved it, but then I've read that 'the Dutch have an endless appetite for venom served with a wink'.

Tom Eaton said at the talk that 'A lot of our stuff goes over people's heads.' My ICC complaint went over so many people's heads that I wondered whether it hadn't been a mistake, since most white South Africans are so dull, narrow, and unimaginative. You remarked on 'the incredible stupidity with which some people come to the party.' I encounter it all the time in what I do,

and the generally stupid media reaction to the complaint was just another instance.

Well, like you, I don't write for fools but for the brighter sort with a sense of humour. I enclose a copy of the complaint and hope you find it as amusing as the brighter sort did. Bear in mind that my humour comes charged with a slow fuse, so be patient as you read it.

Since you mentioned Palestine in your talk, I also enclose a letter I wrote to Harvard Law Professor Allan Dershowitz concerning his fraudulent account of the history and conflict up there, comparing it with Ronald Suresh Roberts's fraudulent Mbeki book that you lampooned. As with the ICC complaint the bang's at the end. Also another little piece, 'Where are all the dead Zulus?' – which you're likely to find interesting as a white man convinced that blacks are riddled with a new sex disease they originally got from monkeys and that they need whites to help burn it out of them with AZT or they'll die.

Speaking of which, I enclose a couple of similar product labels for you to look over and compare as grist for a possible future cartoon. It could be your funniest ever.

Cheers

ANTHONY BRINK

PS: I didn't walk over to thank you for your enjoyable talk afterwards, because I've found such first meetings so often disagreeable. For instance, when I introduced myself to CapeTalk's John Maytham last year, giving him a copy of my latest book to maybe chat about on his show, his response was to snarl: 'Look I think you're a complete loony.' Then, after a double-take, 'OK, you're not a loony. But on this subject I think you're totally off the wall.' And when I was introduced to *Sunday Independent* books editor Maureen Isaacson a couple of weeks ago, she stuttered a couple of words in horror at mention of my name and literally fled the scene. Amazing the power of cartoons.



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