

5th October, 1996

Dear fellow staff,

Well, I have much to say, probably little of which I will put into this letter, but I must begin by thanking you all once again for your extreme generosity and kind wishes on my birthday. It was unprecedented and I appreciate the feeling behind it enormously. You, in your turn, deserve equal thanks.

Of things here, I am sure you are by now reasonably familiar with the way it is. It is not for us to complain, not at all; we are merely witnessing a long, slow, rather vacant departure for our Master. It is, I suppose, a waiting game. A bit like waiting for a bus: the timetable says it should have been here by now, but we all know how it is with the buses. In this sense, the Master has remarkable patience, and good-naturedness to go with it. He seems in no rush, just acceptance. Who knows when the bus will appear round the corner.....?

For us, like you and all of us, we go on; doing

Today what we did yesterday, and for the time, what we will still be doing tomorrow. It is mind-numbing in a way but we each know why we are doing it and the value which goes with it. I dare say that it is even what brings insight, and insight after all is surely what we seek.

As for myself in particular, I have little to complain about (very little) and much, much to savour; but then you find me writing after dinner. Were it earlier or later, in the day perhaps I might be less contented and ^{truthful.} I am generally pretty content after dinner! - and also (if the dinner was good) at my most philosophical. I can be pretty philosophical after a poor dinner, come to that, though certainly less poetic.

But now you see I amble, and ambling does not go with a hovering Dick and a pile of washing up. So I shall say farewell to you all and get to those dishes, and, with luck, escape the wrath of Dick who is, in so many ^{many} ways a remarkable two of our times. But then, in truth, I believe we all are.

With my sincerest best wishes
and thanks to you all,
Paul.