


From: A.D. Dirkzwager djatirot@me.com 
Subject:
Date: 25 April 2021 at 08:57
To:



From: A.D. Dirkzwager <djatirot@me.com>

Subject: Yes It has been too long !

Date: 22 April 2021 at 13:35:42 CEST

To: Faysal El-Khalil <faysal.elkhalil@continentalbeverages.com>

Cc: "Vera.C.T. Dirkzwager-Ypma" <vdirkzwager@me.com>

Dear Faysal and May,

After

reading the newspapers and watching the political unrest in Beirut on TV, we tried to email you to express our condolences to the sad situation. The Lebanese treasury was short of money and came up with the idea of taxing tweets, messages and email messages, I remember. That was the beginning of the protests in the street. That was also the cause for the beginnings of Humpty Dumpty society in Lebanon.

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall

All the king's horses and all the king's men

Couldn't put Humpty together again.

We understood that Continental Beverages headquarters would be relocated outside Lebanon and for good reason your email address would be changed. However, we were not informed of this. I remember a conversation on the last day of our visit when you mentioned that on the board of the 'Prince Clause foundation' was a daughter of one of your friends, who addressed you as uncle Faysal. The 'Prins Clause Foundation's office' is situated in the center of Amsterdam, close to where we live. Vera has attempted many times to get in touch with her to ask for your email address without succeeding. Then we had no choice then just wait until we receive a contact-restoring email from you. Now we can let you know that we comprehend the misery. Now we can let you know that we understand the misery that both of you have endured.

You were preparing to spend the last 20/30 years of your life in Beirut as your hometown. And then that idea is being disrupted, to quote John Lennon's statement: 'Life is what happens to you when you are busy making other plans'.

This famous saying from John Lennon reflects a paradox in our **lives**. Many of us would like to have a peaceful ride, enjoy the present moment, yet **we** can't help but **make** future **plans** so **we** feel secure, or **we** spend time digging on past hurts.

As a matter of fact you and May are a displaced persons who, due to the circumstances, have been forced to leave your beloved country. What a calamity !! It must have been an awesome effort to keep all of your personal effects safe.

We feel sorry for May for all her efforts she has made to bring the Beirut Marathon to great brand awareness in the Middle East and around the world. And then it disappeared into a black hole like an outgoing star. But the memories remain and the Beirut-Marathon is recorded in words and pictures.

Covid virus.

In my experience, humans were able to control nature. Man made nature suitable for his needs. We were, as it were, above nature. That is an illusion that has been punctured by the corona virus. Without a vaccine to protect us from the virus, the infections would cause a global calamity. Lockdowns; supply shocks and then demand shocks have crippled the world economy.

As long as the virus is around Vera and I are only going outdoors necessary on visits. It is not possible to attend concerts, theaters, museums and cinemas due to the lockdown imposed by the government. Such is life.

Reading papers and books, watching the telly and gardening on our roof terrace are our main activities. In this way, the 80-year-old and his 76-year-old wife avoided infection from the virus. I hurry to write that it would be a mistake to think we are lonely and pathetic. Of course we visit our sons and granddaughters and we maintain contact with a large number of friends and acquaintances. Life is still bearable, especially now that contact between us has been restored.

Could you please let me know your current address to which I can send you a very very interesting book (non fiction) that will certainly

give you the necessary distraction from your day-to-day responsibility to keep the business going.

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Kamal Joumblatt

The Cultured

When Kamal Joumblatt was asked,
If you know that you have only one day left
to live, what would you do on this day?
He replied, I would read the last book
I could get my hands on.

During his visit to the National Publishing House in 1960

We still fondly remember our visit to Beirut. Few visitors to Beirut have seen the treasures the way we have seen them.
Vera and I hope that the aftermath of the virus will also be mild. By the way we both have gotten the two Pfizer vaccinations.
Hope to hear whether all members of the family have left Lebanon. As we have met Zen, who is devoted to life in Beirut, has she also left the country? Also I'm curious how Continental Beverages has fared so far during the pandemic?
Much love to you & May from Vera & Aadje