

77 Arthur Circle,
Forrest, A.C.T. 2603,
26th August, 1975.

Mr G.W. Hewitt,
British High Commission,
CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600.

Dear Mr Hewitt,

Thank you for your informative letter of the 19th August, which I have discussed with my wife.

If I am required to visit London after mid-November and before mid-April clearly my wife is a non-starter. Whether or not I could make the journey myself must inevitably depend on the state of my health at the time. I have not been very well of late but it is possible that I may pick up after a reasonably long spell of warm weather.

We both agree, however, that if well enough it is my duty to go to London should my presence there be considered desirable by the Counsel for the Crown. In this event it will be necessary, therefore, for me to make arrangements for my wife to be cared for during my absence, the nature of the arrangements being dependent on her own state of health prior to my leaving Australia.

I note from your letter that circumstances might make it expedient that I should remain in London for more than six weeks. In the event of this proving to be the case, and my being able to stay well enough to attend the Court, it would not seem right that I should offer objections on personal grounds in opposition to national interests.

I would ask, however, that my stay in London be kept to as short a period as proves consistent with the overriding purpose of my visit, firstly because in 45 years I have never succeeded in staying in London during the winter without getting ill and secondly because of my natural anxiety over my wife's well-being and care during my absence.

As my wife cannot now accompany me it would seem best to cut down my period of travelling to a minimum. I therefore suggest flying via America, with only one mid-point stop-over of two days to recover my balance, and returning via South Africa, again with a single stop-over. I understand that a round-world ticket by this route would cost no more than by any other.

In view of the fact that the British Government will not now be paying the cost of my wife's return fare to England and maintenance while there, while I shall have the additional cost of her maintenance in Australia, it would be appreciated if

sanction could be given for me to purchase a warm suit of clothes for wear while in England (I have none at present and do not require one for use here) and for an adequate daily ~~all~~ allowance to be paid to me while absent from Canberra, sufficient to cover all incidental expenses over and above my board and lodging.

In this connexion I would emphasize that I do not enjoy a salary but am a pensioner, and that while my pension enables me to live quietly at home it does not, and is not intended to, enable me to live the sort of life which I should be faced with through having to travel to, and stay in, the United Kingdom. Furthermore my supplementary income as a professional writer cannot be earned while I am away in effect working for the British Government.

I am grateful to you for your offer to discuss any points with me personally and shall certainly take advantage of your kindness should the necessity arise.

Yours sincerely,



H.E. Maude.

77 Arthur Circle,
Forrest, A.C.T. 2603,
26th August, 1975.

Dear Mr. Harrell,

I enclose an answer to your official letter and trust that it is satisfactory. You may consider that I am unduly apprehensive about having to visit England in mid-winter but I can assure you that it is born of bitter experience. Even in Canberra we stay at home except when the sun shines bright and warm.

In any case my apprehension appears to be no greater than that of the learned Judge at having to visit Ocean Island, vide his statement that: 'A view of Ocean Island would be far removed from being a pleasant holiday trip to the South Seas. The journey would be long and exhausting, and a proper inspection of the rugged terrain would probably involve a considerable degree of strenuous agility in a high temperature'. He goes on to speak of legitimate 'limits to the degree of judicial wear and tear'. I have walked over every inch of Ocean Island, and in its delightfully warm and salubrious climate I should still be glad to carry on all day; and feel all the better for it. And the Judge is presumably still in the prime of life.

My wife has been in bed off and on since you were last here and I am seriously concerned at having to leave her. But even if I survive a visit to London in winter she most certainly could not.

There is one point on which I feel rather strongly and that is if I am willing, as I am, to go to London if and when required by the Crown I should not be expected to defray any part of the ordeal from my pension which, from the British Government, amounts to £1,377.24 per annum, from which the U.K. Income Tax authorities deduct 35% before payment.

When I work for the Australian Broadcasting Commission I receive \$60 a day at home, or \$100 when away; and when H.M. Government once before required me to go to London for consultations they not only paid for the cost of all clothes necessary for the exercise but gave me a more than adequate allowance, although I was on a high salary in the Colonial Service at the time.

I cannot believe (nor do others to whom I have spoken on the matter) that the British Government can expect a pensioner to leave his wife and home and work for them in London in mid-winter; and end up perhaps several thousand dollars the poorer for the experience.

I gather that Jenny Barraclough of the B.B.C. is working on a documentary on the Banabans (presumably a counter to Four Corners) and has threatened to visit Canberra. It may be that you are the motivator of her project and will know her movements.

X That article in Private Eye for the 25th July was a bit one-sided - presumably written, like so much else, by one of the two Banaban public relations firms - and the letter by the peregrinating M.Ps in the Daily Telegraph was distinctly tendentious. The Banaban propaganda machine is well-oiled, but I suppose it would be unbecoming for H.M.G. to point out some of the fallacies in their arguments.

Not everyone feels that way, however, for yesterday Professor Ron Crocombe of the U.S.P., a former student of mine, wrote to me:-

'I listened to a long public address by Tekoti Rotan on the Banaban issue the other night and at comment time congratulated him on his presentation but pointed out that I thought that all or at least almost all of the literally dozens of statements that he had made during the evening were fallacious. I then picked off 20 of his assertions at random and showed the fallacy in each of them and then said that if he would care to repeat any of the other assertions he had made during the evening I would be happy to point out the fallacies in them. By this time he was a little cross, or perhaps a lot cross, and the only comment he could get out was "its imperialists like you we've got to get rid of!". The twenty or so Gilbertese students who were present rather enjoyed it all.'

With our best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Harry M. ...

PS. The sentence at 'X' above was written before I received the account of the G & E Governor's press conference in The Times (20.8.75) this morning. What does he mean by the ending: 'Nobody is interested and terrible things are happening' - sounds like Portuguese Timor?