

77 Arthur Circle, Forrest,
A.C.T. 2603, Australia,
21st August, 1975.

Dear Paddy,

Just heard from Commander David of the Hydrographic Office that you have been wasting his time (in Taunton?) so I suppose that you are running around on the hunt for Admiralty records - the indexes at the PRO are pretty useless, not being arranged geographically, but all the ships logs on Pacific voyages have been abstracted and microfilmed; and are in Canberra. I believe Robert Langdon has had an index of ships made but I have not seen it.

So Rotan's evidence got you ropable? Me too: the Assistant Treasury Solicitor (N.D. Ing) and Le Quesne, who leads for HMG, were shrewd enough to guess the effect it would have on me so they sent the whole transcript and supporting documentation (150 pages) by airmail with a request for my comments.

I sat down for several days and sent them a 7 page critique entitled 'Statement on the Evidence of Mr Rotan Tito'; and within three hours of its receipt they cabled asking me to fly immediately to London to advise. Honor said it would be too embarrassing to get up in Court and give evidence against the Banabans; but why should one feel embarrassed to refute a hotchpotch of lies, personal attacks and innuendoes?

Anyway I was not well enough to go - more or less at a day's notice - and so they gave up the idea of my coming for the first case. Now they are asking both of us to go for the second, but thanks to Megarry's Pacific jaunt it looks like being held in mid-winter, which would be the death of us.

I too wrote to Mr Brown, the Banaban solicitor, telling him how lucky he was that I had not gone to give evidence for the Banabans, as Macdonald and he wanted, since I should have had to stand up and refute Rotan's idea of truth; and as a result they would have had to get me declared a hostile witness.

Holland left me his correspondence and notes covering his period on Rabi and I read right through these to refresh my memory. In one of the files I came to a telegram from him to Chamberlain (20.10.1948) stating that at a meeting of the Rabi Island Council held on the 20th October, 1948, Rotan stated that: 'Maude and Macdonald had carried through the Statement of Intentions hastily as a trap to bind the necks of the Banabans'. He agreed to retract part of this to Chamberlain orally, but not in writing 'for reasons of conscience'! Rich when you think how we let them talk on for three solid days until everyone had spoken about everything they could think of about three times, and nobody had anything more to say. And then I stayed on for another two days so that anyone who wanted to go back to Banaba could come and register for a free passage.

Honor and I look forward very much indeed to seeing you here from the 6th to the 9th November and will be at the airport to meet ANA flight AN384, leaving Melbourne 0830 and arriving at Canberra 0925. It is, alas, no longer possible for us to invite you (or anyone else) to stay in our palatial abode for the unfortunate reason that Honor is no longer well enough to cope with things, or even to go out herself. Her brother, and later my sister, came for a few days visit; but I had to book them in at the Canberra Hotel. During the past two months she has probably been in bed more often than up, and is laid up again at the moment. Hence I spend much of my time fetching, carrying, preparing meals, washing up, shopping, cleaning the house, and keeping the garden ticking over; and my work for the time being has had to take a back seat.

Even to go out to dinner at night doesn't seem to work, for on the last two occasions I had to bring her home again before the meal started, partly I fancy because she is highly allergic to tobacco smoke. Also she has cataract in both eyes and has to be driven about, which she dislikes because she doesn't trust my driving.

So we'll book you in at the Forrest Lodge, which is quite near, and I can ferry you to and fro in the car: the Canberra Hotel has folded up but the Lodge is quite good - and nearer. I don't think the second case will have started by then because the Judge has been talking about 'undue judicial wear and tear' visiting Ocean and

Rabi, and in any case the doctor says I'm not fit enough to go at present, and certainly not to a colder climate. But if I have to go I'll send you a cable, because Honor won't be here either, but in Adelaide where she can be looked after.

Thanks for the tip about Jenny Barraclough. I've just been paid \$3,000 for work done for ABC television features but would naturally expect something a bit more handsome from the BBC. Honor did 4 radio broadcasts on a 'per minute' basis earlier in the year. In these hard times both of us write, talk, sing, dance, or what have you only on a contract signed in advance; its wonderful what they try to get one to do for nix.

The Hon. Roniti Teiwaki, Minister for Education, turned up the other day to discuss information sources for the Gilbertese Central Reference Library. He is really interested in Gilbertese history, and particularly in the bibliography project; and has promised to send lists of all Government publications. But there is much to talk to you about it all and I've reached the end of the paper so will hold it over until the 6th, when we can at least still provide a bit of food and drink; and elegant and refined conversation suitable for the aristocratic ears of people who dine with Lord Chancellors.

Yours ever,

