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See para 4 of the 1/14

letter)

J.R

19/1/15

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J.R

19/1/15

at once

for 2. 1. 15

2174
14th January 1918

133

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office,
Whitehall, S. W.

Sir,

I have the honour to address you in the following circumstances. My family and myself (Mrs. Ritch and four children) arrived in England just before Xmas having been deported from Mombasa, S.E.A. without any charge having been laid or explanation or reason given and in my respectful submission, quite unwarrantably.

I beg, therefore, that you will be good enough to cause investigations to be made, and meanwhile venture to append the following particulars concerning my personality.

I am a Barrister-at-Law, (a member of Lincoln's Inn) and my name may, perhaps, be recalled in connection with the South Africa British Indian Committee of which I was Honorary Secretary up to about four years ago.

I returned to the Transvaal in 1910 and practised there up to a year ago, when I proceeded to Mombasa and there established myself in practice. My South African Indian connections led, perhaps, to my acquiring a very extensive Indian practice throughout British East Africa and to my appointment as standing Counsel to the Ismailia Council, the M. E. A. Indian Congress and other representative bodies of a similar character.

Shortly before the declaration of war I was happily able to accept the invitation of the General Manager of the Uganda Railways and assist in a settlement of the Railway strike.

The Chief of the P. Works Department was good enough to ascribe the return to work of his Indian employees (they having struck in sympathy with the Railway "fundis") to my assistance.

With the outbreak of the war I joined the Mombasa Town Guard and subsequently with the approval of the Acting Provisional Commissioner assisted Captain Beard to organise an Indian contingent of which I was appointed second in command. It may, I think, be fairly claimed for this contingent that it did valuable Town Guard work and considerably relieved the pressure upon the small European defence force then available.

On subsequent occasions I was happily able to assist the military authorities to obtain emergency labor from my Indian clients, e.g. military uniforms &c., which were needed at extremely short notice and had to be done on the spot.

My offices were during some weeks converted into recruiting offices and the headquarters of my contingent, and my days and nights given to the duties above indicated.

With the arrival of the troops from India the local volunteers virtually resumed their ordinary vocations.

On or about the 22nd November while I was engaged as counsel in a suit in the High Court, my chief clerk came and reported to me that my offices were surrounded by military and that ingress and egress were forbidden. The learned Judge kindly adjourned to enable me to investigate and I discovered that the house wherein my family resided - they had arrived at Mombasa from South Africa but a few days previously - was also surrounded by military with fixed bayonets.

I searched for and found the Provost Marshall and he very courteously informed me that I must consider myself under arrest. After being permitted to reassure my wife - she is an invalid and the shock to her might have proved a serious matter - and having explained to the learned Judge the fact of my arrest and my consequent inability to go on with my case, I was marched to the fort (the gaol) and there detained during the remainder of the day, that night, and until evening of the next day. The Provost Marshall appeared to be unable to give me any explanation. The General in command at Mombasa met my request for an interview the next day. I have to acknowledge having received the utmost courtesy at his hands. I did not appear to know why I had been subjected to the treatment above

described, ordered the return to me of the keys of my offices and of my safe, both of which had been thoroughly searched and over-hauled, but brought me the news that orders had been received for my deportation from Africa, to either London or Bombay. I preferred London feeling that here I should be the better able to approach the Colonial Office and secure justice.

A couple of days later we were put aboard the S.S. Sosphore and transported to Port Said where we were transferred to H.M. Transport "Kenilworth Castle" and landed at Plymouth.

Two members of the Private-Clothes Police force met us at Plymouth and virtually saw us off to London.

Here I am with my family ruined both in reputation and financially.

I ask for justice with as little delay as possible. The reference to such small services as I was privileged to render the authorities is introduced only because deportation naturally suggests disloyal or traitorous conduct on the part of the deportee.

I have the honor to remain

Your obedient servant,

W. Ritchie

GRAMS: 25, TEMPLE, LONDON.

TELEPHONE: 100-HOLDEN

1463 Central

1, GARDEN COURT,
TEMPLE, LONDON, E.C.

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21 January 18

The Under Secretary of State
Colonial Office S.W.

Sir,

I had the honor to address a letter to you on the 14th instant in which I ventured to set out particulars of my deputation from the West Africa.

The letter was written at the suggestion of Mr. Bottomley who was good enough to see me when I called.

No acknowledgment or reply has reached me up to the time of writing and I am consequently compelled to trouble you with further enquiry. I am cut off from the means of livelihood in Africa and am getting very anxious about ways and means for my family.

Yours obedient servant

L. B. Rites

R. 2174/1915

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E.A.P.

C. B.
M. 29 2011

to a doctor known
to the Ritz

DRAFT

L. W. Ritch Esq

MINUTE.

Mr. Harper 21/1/15
Mr. Bottomley 21/1/15

Hiddes.

Just.

Anderson.

ington.

Larcourt.

25 January 1915

Dear Sir,

Sir,

I am directed by the Secretary
Larcourt to acknowledge the

receipt of your letter of the

14th of January

and to inform you that

he is consulting

the Gov of the East

by telegram on

the subject of your

being sent to this

country.

R 2174/1915 CAP 103

Sent 4.5 PM
21 Jan 15

21 January
Jacketed

DRAFT Telegram

Sir Nairobi

MINUTE.

Mr. Harper 21/1/15
Mr. Bottomley 21/1/15 for
Mr.

- Mr.
- Sir G. Fiddes.
- Sir H. Just.
- Sir J. Anderson.
- Lord Islington.
- Mr. Harcourt.

W.B. 25 Jan 15 4.5 PM

By whom was ordered
Courtney advised
deportation of Ritch
Linnemont

and on what grounds
are you reporting by post

Harcourt