

Copy of my answer to
Mrs. White's friend.

Oct. 24th, 1930.

Dear Mrs *Finch*

Your long silence gave us worry not knowing your whereabouts, and I was so glad to hear from you. I read your letter with great interest and thank you for your confidence. Shall try to answer all points.

^{you} If ignoramuses consider the scientific results of the Roerich Expedition un~~s~~ufficiently great we can but be astonished at such evident small understanding in qualifying thus the great scientific material brought back by the Roerich Expedition. Is it possible that a discovery of a mountain, a lake or an egg of dinosaur are considered to be greater contributions to humanity than the whole artistic panorama of the East so uniquely represented in the masterpieces of Prof. Roerich's brush. And the gathering of the synthesis of the religious thoughts of the East and the historical data which will form the basis of the future work of Dr. George, are they of lesser importance than a fossil? It would be more than naive to expect that all these data could be given out before thorough elaborating of the whole material. A Boston paper wrote beautifully to this effect about the great importance of the R. Exp. in comparison to the wild beast hunters and fossil excavators - "the R. Exp. has brought back the Heart of Asia".

Do not reproach yourself, dear Friend, for having committed yourself in speaking to Mr. Laden La about the Scientific Station, as precisely this was the aim of Prof. Roerich's visit to the Viceroy. Since long the Himalayan Research Institute has been incorporated and has received international interest having become a world wide known fact in which all greatest Universities are interested and great scientists have joined our members. The work has already practically begun not

with an Observatory (which will be erected in due course of time, as astronomy is on our program of scientific research) but with botanical zoological and biological Researches. The botanical and zoological Department being headed here by a Professor of Michigan University, who took part in the Bird North Pole Expedition and who joined our staff this spring. Since he has done remarkable research work. The pamphlets about our Scientific Station are already widely spread and our scope of work is known and open to all. Soon another scientist will join us.

Concerning Mr Laden La his biography is known to every coolie in Darjeeling and so far back as 1923, on Prof. Roerich's first arrival at Darjeeling, without having any interest in this personality the Roerichs knew everything about him. The activities of Mr. Laden La being as the French say "le secret du polichinelle". At their second arrival at Darjeeling Mr. Laden La appeared on their horizon and as you justly observed did his utmost to come nearer to the Roerich home. But this little man, was so engrossed in his own grandeur and importance that he spoke only about himself and had no time for investigation nor observation, having to search for some stories and gossips in outside sources and in his fertile imagination.

We fully realize that this man having such an imaginative power can make up a whole plan upon which he can show his valuable service to the British Government and hence rise in rank. As to the things he will want to misconstrue and say for his own purposes and ill-intended against Roerichs he will have to give facts and documents to prove them. We esteem that a cultural Government will never base itself solely on sayings slanders and imaginations, but will demand tangible proofs. And where are those tangible proofs? Are all the imaginings of a shrewd but igno-

rant man as idiotic as the story of Prof. Roerich receiving money from the Soviets and conquering Mongolia and China???!!!

The accusation of Prof. Roerich having ^{||} Russian affiliations^{||} was so unfounded that the British Government hastened to take back this vile accusation in a letter sent to Prof. Roerich from the Foreign Office in London signed by Mr. Henderson. We, the followers and collaborators of Prof. Roerich, knowing whence and for what purpose the funds came and were used for, we would have left no stone unturned to justify the name of Prof. Roerich and would be assisted by the greatest financial representatives of America. If Prof. Roerich, the Founder and Honorary President of our Institutions would have ^{||} Russian affiliations^{||} do you deem it possible that our American Government would honor us with the great trust as to entitle us to have the right to bring to America people above quota to study under the auspices of our Institutions? - The right which only a few of the greatest Universities have. We who collaborate so closely with the Board of Education, who have the greatest esteem for our Institutions knowing of our aims and having proofs of our work, do not you think that they would withdraw from us would there be a shadow of suspicion of "Russian affiliations"?

Altogether if Prof. Roerich would have any political or anti-British aims on his mind he would not offer the great opportunity of cooperation with Great Britain and would not come to burry himself in God forsaken Naggar. As a Colonel of the British Army so justly remarked, that Naggar would be an ideal place (a St. Helena of its kind) as exile for Prof. Roerich if he would be really an obnoxious person.

Mr. Laden La's informations are not up to date if he considers it a stain on Prof. Roerich's reputation as a world citizen to have ^{had} a Kerensky

passport, as precisely this Government was so highly esteemed by the British Government and in order to obtain a British visa in Sweden, for London, at that time Prof. Roerich had to change his Czarist passport at the Russian Consulate in Sweden for a Kerensky passport as the British Government did not recognize any more the Czarist passports, and later two visas for India were granted to the whole Roerich family without any objection. Sad would it be if Prof. Roerich would have had a Soviet passport.

And whose imagination is it about the underground wireless? First time that we hear about such a possibility for wireless.

We esteem the British Government to be much more cultural as to be lead by detectives who have to make up stories in order to keep their jobs, otherwise the necessity to have them will be exhausted. We still believe that we do not live in the mediaeval ages and that the opinion of the whole cultural and ecclesiastical world will prevail over the malevolent machinations and slander of jealousy.

And we have the right to say that ^{the} whole cultural world stands up for us because now already representatives of 15 countries continue to make their demarches and the whole case went even to the International Red Cross and Geneva. All churches have united on this case and even the Pope of Rome has sent now his "imploration for the abundance of Divine favors and Apostolic Blessings". The Society of Friends of Culture under the auspices of the Roerich Museum and Friends of R.M. are spreading all over the world. It is remarkable to observe how this great injustice and persecution has given us the sympathy of the world. It is a wonderful sign that light conquers darkness and the world begins to realize and appreciate above all the cultural con-

structive work. Yes, Mrs [redacted] we are not destroyers, but we are builders of Culture, Knowledge and Beauty, and Prof. Roerich is the inaugurator of the Roerich Peace Pact which is accepted by the League of Nations and hailed by the whole world. Letters of admiration continue to pour in for Prof. R's constructiveness and creative work. Prof. Roerich's life was, is and will be as pure as a crystal and this is why he has such a great following all over the world and also strong enemies. The greatest names are eager to cooperate with us. Great will rise those who will prove to Great Britain the Good Will of Prof. Roerich but great will be the downfall of those who will be disclosed later as the slanderers of the innocent and great figure of Prof. Roerich. Take it as a prophecy or.... The Truth always triumphs!

What a great page this situation will make in Prof. R's numerous biographies. We are quite certain that a great enemy of Britain incites all these strange actions in refusing Prof. R. reenter India, thus arousing indignation and non-comprehension of the cultural world at a time when great English minds appreciate Prof. R. cultural work and various British Associations of the Friends of R.M. are founded in London and New-York for a better cultural understanding between America and England, and our Institutions arrange the first Exhibitions of Australian Artists in America. A blind will see how Prof. Roerich's entire activity is just opposing all these vile incriminations.

Am enclosing an address of Prof. R. to one of the Branches of the Friends of Culture, which will interest you.

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D. J. L.

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With hearty thoughts from M-me R. and myself

Yours very sincerely

Esther J. Lichtman

Nov. 22d, 1930
Naggar, Kulu, Punjab

My dear Mrs Finch,

Have sent you in haste the other day a note so that you shall know the cause of my silence. We lived through a very strenuous time and I would give my life if it would help Prof. Roerich and his son to come home and thus relieve M-me Roerich's condition in giving peace to her heart. M-me Roerich begins slowly to recuperate from her attack, but is yet very weak and does not leave her room.

What a beautiful note you have struck in your letter to the Viceroy in speaking of the great significance of M-me Roerich's Soul and inspiration for our works. Yes, her great spirit has imbued with her fires and noblesse all our works. Each activity and creative thought bears the imprint of her inspiration. She is the great Co-Creator and Co-Founder of the Institution which has branches and affiliations in 17 countries already. To her and Prof. Roerich we owe the gratitude for the treasure of thought and expansion of consciousness. They have shown and taught us by their deeds and thoughts what the all-embracingness and tolerance of truly great souls are. Hence our deep sorrow and indignation to witness this undeserved martyrdom of those whose thoughts, when embodied in life bring happiness and raise the standard of life, wherever it is without mingling in the dirty game of politics of which they are now the victims.

In spite of her suffering and illness M-me Roerich tries valiantly to give courage to her own, who having brought a Dr along to help her, are not permitted in. The distortions which have taken place for the last few months are of an unheard of cruelty, while for instance, M-me Roerich had one attack after another and even twice fainted in front of people outside the house when she went out for a little air - the officials reported to our State Department upon a demarche the latter did for Prof. Roerich's visa, that "Madame Roerich was well!!!" When M-me Roerich was taken to high altitude seeking relief during the monsoon from which she suffers so much, suffering all the strain of the journey, being carried in a dandy and living there in the most primitive and uncomfortable conditions, upon a demarche made by France the officials answered that "M-me Roerich far from being ill, went on a pleasure trip". When cruelty goes as far as calling a trip as dangerous and difficult was this one for M-me Roerich, then we can call likewise a "pleasure trip" the going to the mountains of tubercular patients who make the journey back often in a coffin or else have to stay there for the sake of their life because this is the only place where they find relief.

All testimonies of Dr. Lapeyre from Paris, who is a great heart specialist, who has treated M-me Roerich for a long time and knows so well her condition have been completely disregarded and the proposition of a medical examination by a civil surgeon was proposed to me by the Gov. through our Official here. This proposition cannot be laid before M-me Roerich as such offensive measures may be fatal for her, so I have implored everyone who knows of it, not to mention it to M-me R. and she is not aware of this great offense proposed to us. As a representative of our Institutions, I regard this proposition, and so do all our Directors, as the greatest insult to the Institutions for M-me R. is not a prisoner and not only a beautiful and honorable person, but she is the Representative of Culture, Head of all our Institutions, which have such a tremendous following. She is a Great Lady of high

noble birth and a proud nature and to submit her to such humiliation is out of question. We do not live in the mediaeval ages. And how could we trust any one sent by those who have treated Prof. and M-me Roerich and so distorted the truth and all evident facts? It is a known fact in the Kulu Valley that a police official was rebuked and transferred to another District not knowing how to answer, because upon an inquiry he replied that "everybody in the Valley knows that M-me Roerich is ill". You wrote so justly about cowardice. Indeed, who will be the valiant to stand up for the just without fear to lose one's job?

Dear Friend, I am writing you about all these facts, because you have the pure desire to help us, knowing the potentiality of Prof. and M-me Roerich. We are so thankful to you for your intention to help our cause in applying to the Viceroy. All you said about M-me Roerich's greatness is true and answers life itself. As to the source you mentioned in your letter, we hope it will be taken in a broadminded way. My private letter to you which you have sent on may reach Mr. Laden-La and he, seeing that his disguise was always so obvious, may conceive some revengeful action as the whole story of Prof. Roerich's detention is a made up story for personal gain. But whatever he may conceive the case of the visas has taken on proportions which spread more and more giving us the esteem of the whole world and crowning Prof. and M-me Roerich with the thorns of martyrdom.

So far, we have restrained the arousing of public opinion in the Press as we still believe that the Gov will realize the purity of Prof. Roerich's aims, but if this condition lasts too long we shall be no more able to restrain it. And why do those, who handle at present this case, place their own country in such a light before the whole world in treating as they do such a world-famous figure as is Prof. Roerich. We, the followers of Prof. and M-me Roerich we are deeply hurt at this attitude. Every offense inflicted upon our Founders is a direct insult to our cultural Institutions and we shall not stop before anything in vindicating the name of our Founders, whose creative thoughts and work for humnaity we all reverence so deeply.

We still are puzzled as to how this antagonism was created, as there was always such wonderful relationship between Prof. and M-me Roerich and fine British minds. M-me Roerich's father was educated in an English school and I have so often heard M-me Roerich praise the English character. Shall we now ascribe it to the past? Still we have wonderful and numerous friends amidst the British fine minds and only recently a British Sir wrote us from London how benevolently our influence spreads over a wide area. Who has created forcibly this antagonism? Hope you are well.

With kindest regards from M-me Roerich and myself,
Yours very sincerely
(signed) E.J.D.