

April 7th 1933.

To The Board of Trustees
of Roerich Museum
New-York.

Gentlemen:-

I very carefully read the copy of Mr. Alan Lee's letter of Feb. 21st to Miss Lichtmann, sent to us from New-York together with other copies of the Institute's correspondence. In view of the fact that in this letter Mr. Alan Lee expresses not only false accusations against all members of the Institute and even concludes his letter with threats, I want, as President-Founder, to leave my definite statement on this subject on the files of the Institute.

Firstly, I personally met Mr and Mrs Alan Lee only once when we arranged for them a luncheon at my estate. Up to that time I have heard from Mme de Roerich, Miss Esther J. Lichtmann and all other members of the Institute only very high opinions about the personality of Mr and Mrs Lee, about their sense of justice, and all members of the Institute always expressed only best feelings of friendliness towards him. During this my sole meeting with Mr and Mrs Lee, I think they could have had no cause to complain about my attitude towards them as host. I presented Mr. Lee with several of our publications, and not being in a position on account of variance of languages to talk to Mrs personally, when we sat at table, I asked her husband and Colonel Mahon repeatedly to transmit to her my most friendly remarks. Thus neither during this visit, nor during the time of my son's Dr. Georges de Roerich's and Mr. Shibayeff's visits has there ever taken place anything that could have resulted in any change of our friendly relations, although to Mme de Roerich's personal invitational letter to Mr. Alan Lee of March 9th, he already abstained from replying. Thus matters remained up to lately, when we unexpectedly received several evidences of his hostile attitude towards us, which found its climax in his abovementioned letter of February 21st 1933 to Miss E.J. Lichtmann.

Secondly, in the said letter, Mr. Lee points out that we have invited the botanist for the special purpose to kill birds and animals during an unlicensed season, thus committing an act of cruelty which does not correspond to the conception of Culture. In this grave and malicious accusation Mr. Lee shows that he is operating with false facts. The botanist was invited for botanical work. No zoological work was ever planned as can be seen from the Institute's programs. The botanist forcibly and taking advantage of my and the Director's absence, by his own will began this zoological work, despite the repeated objection from the President Founders, of which Mrs and Colonel Mahon and others are well aware. Besides he even took his license in his own name, without mention of the Institute. It has also to be remembered that he always and deliberately

bought more ammunition than permitted. More than that in December 1931 the botanist gave his recommendation that "the establishment of a zoological museum is imperative" and when this request met our refusal, he at once turned hostile and showed to full extent his open enmity. And when he was commissioned to America to appear there at a certain date, he suddenly changes his route (the ticket for which was bought by the Institute) and without notification disappeared for weeks, refusing afterwards to give an explanation of his mysterious doings. But at this instant I will not touch more upon the criminal activities of the botanist but will keep to Mr. Lee's letter.

Thirdly, after the absolutely unjust accusation of us for cruelty, Mr. Lee makes the strangest allusions in capital letters about HIGH CULTURE, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD and religious feelings. As I am President of the World League of Culture I must naturally understand that these allegations refer to myself. My activity for forty years in the field of Culture, all my paintings and writings are sufficient evidence of my point of view in regard to Culture and humanitarian work and therefore prove the complete absurdity of Mr. Lee's slanderous remarks. But I am referring to this point, because in his letter Mr. Lee mentions and thus insults all members of the Institute and for this reason I cannot leave the proceedings of the Institute without an adequate contradiction of this absurdity. I take upon myself to affirm that not only the members of the Institute at Naggar not only those residing in America, but also the members of the Institute at Manali all unitedly protest against the unlawful actions of Koelz and that together with myself they are surprized that Mr. Lee puts upon our shoulders the very accusations which were part of those that caused us to break with Koelz. Should I understand from Mr. Lee's letter that he approves and sides with all the slander and misappropriations which will forever remain connected with the name of Koelz?

Fourthly, Mr. Lee closes his letter with an open threat "I may also have to write articles on this subject to the Indian as well as American Press". It is difficult to guess what Mr. Lee means by this threat. But anyhow this hostile threat is evident and certainly is fully contradictory to his remark earlier in the same letter that he "always wanted to live in peace". Our motto "Peace and Culture" is known to the whole world. I believe that peace contains in itself first of all truthfulness. If Mr. Lee wants to remain just and truthful, he cannot say that we have ever been against him, or belittled him. He cannot state that we are for cruelty or slaughter of animals, but if Mr. Lee will continue to insist that the slander and misappropriations committed by Koelz are within human dignity, then I can but say that our conceptions of ethics are diametrically opposed. And by the way, if any fowl was ever killed at Hall Estate, it was for Dr. Koelz's dinner and certainly not for us, as Mr. Lee knows very well. Altogether I am surprized to see this tone of Mr. Lee's letter of February 21st, when Capt. Banon, who was with him recently, not only assured me of Mr. Lee's peaceful, friendly attitude towards me, but even showed me some of his notes, according to which Mr. Lee thanked me for my recent message given to him by Capt. Banon. Finally, when Mr. Lee gave us the advice not to employ one of his former servants, we, without even asking for his reasons, gave full heed to his request. Therefore, when the Institute in a most friendly way, within the shortest period after such facts became known, advised him about the behaviour of Dr. Koelz, it was strange to observe how Mr. Lee acted non-reciprocally. But this is his business, we have done our duty as neighbours.

In expressing my point of view towards the above subject, I request all members of the Institute to leave Mr. Lee to himself, may he see the truth from his own experience. Our files with all facts and with corroborated statements are open and time will soon express its just verdict.

Yours cordially,

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Bundrole Orchards
Bandrole P. & T.O.
Kulu, Punjab

2-5-1933

My Dear Hugh,

You asked me to let you know of any further developments. Yesterday I received a letter from Miss Lichtmann, some of it is very very conciliatory but there are some passages which are the contrary. I have not done anything in deed or word to annoy these Members of the Institute but I am being attacked on all sides without rhyme or reason. I cannot think why there should be such a hue and cry over my having extended my hospitality for a few nights only, to this individual, I have so far not helped him to do anything, against anybody nor ever intended to do so, as I have already told you, I only did what I am accustomed to do with anybody who may come here. All I can now say that if Miss Lichtmann persists in saying that she is right and I am wrong I will have to protect myself, she started this and her own letters have brought things to light of which I had no knowledge. When you go to Naggar will you kindly show this letter, and also the enclosed, I think it is only right to inform them, as Miss Lichtmann's letter has resulted in bringing in the Institute into this most undesirable and uncalled for controversy due to this letter to me, which was quite uncalled for. I don't know what has become of Koelz but I suppose he will turn up one of these days, when he comes I will ask him to give me a full explanation of all things.

If you have not read De Profundis by Oscar Wilde you should read it now as you will find it all the more interesting. I have no other news to give you just now.

We hope this will find you all very flourishing,

With our love to you all

Yours Sincerely,

Sgd A.H. Lee.

Bundrole. 25-6-33

My dear Hugh,

I am sending up some Apricots hope you will find them eatable. The Botanist was here some days ago to take away all of his art collection and bulbs. Several people from Naggar came to him asking him to write them letters about land and houses to enable them to show them and spread rumours he would have nothing to do with them. I dislike the idea that these people should spread reports with the hope of getting money. Will you again make clear that my Cooks house is not being rented or bought by the Botanist, and I can assure you that at present no land will be bought by him in Naggar, you asked me to do this and I have done it. incase he wants any land in the Autumn I will let you know but I think there is little possibility of it unless I help in the matter.

I would be very grateful to you if you can find out and let me know who wrote to the Vice-President that I was helping the Botanist in his malpractices, this was a very low thing to do as this statement is without any foundation. I hear that several irresponsible people are being employed to collect news so it is no wonder that they invent stories to get a little money. If I don't get an answer to my letter to the Vice-President I will again write and ask her to give me the name of the person who wrote that I was helping and if she does not answer I will write an article to the Papers in the Autumn when I expect my Attorney up here.

You are very welcome to show this letter to the members of the Institute.

With our best wishes to you all,

Yours sincerely,

signed A.H.Lee.