

SEP 1 1971

W. E. D. STOKES, JR.
"THISTLEWOOD" - BOX 864
LENOX, MASS. 01240



30th August, 1971

Honorable Charles Diggs
House Office Building
Washington
District of Columbia

My dear Congresssman Diggs:

Have received a letter from a personal friend in Africa who belongs to the same engineering society and I am sure that you will be interested in the impression that you left down there in your recent instantaneous visit. I wish that in-laws would make their round trips as instantaneously.

The radio commentator's observation of your trip seems unfortunate and not likely to promote friendly relations. Goodness knows, this country needs friends and has few to count on. At the present moment I cannot remember any country in the wide world who would stand up for us with the possible exception of Israel and there again I would have my doubts.

We need the friendship of the countries in Southern Africa because the tanker route from the Persian Gulf to the U.S., Europe and Japan goes right along their coast line.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. E. D. Stokes, Jr.", written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

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Dear Bill

We have been having a week or two of rather turbulent political weather, with one bright patch. I am not competent to comment on the weakening of the dollar; but I do wish that the price of gold were substantially increased. I know that this country produces about 70% of the free world's gold; but the price has been pegged at the same level of \$35 since about 1932, and it must be the only commodity in the world which has not become more expensive since then. It now costs substantially more to produce an ounce of gold, owing to increase of labour and material costs, and, of course, progressively deeper mining.

The situation in Northern Ireland is tragic and senseless, for this controversy cannot be settled by violence. The Eireann Government is not supposed officially to countenance the I.R.A., but no doubt has many friends in that organization.

Finally, the situation in Malta is, to me, about as disquieting as any can be.

Against all this gloom, the visit of Dr. Banda of Malawi has been conspicuously successful. He has just returned to his country. He was enthusiastically received here, and appears to have enjoyed himself. He himself worked in S. Africa when young, and today we employ migratory labour from Malawi in their thousands.

Banda spoke with modesty and avoided controversial matters. He also used a good deal of practical common sense. My impressions are gained from the Press and the Radio.

This visit almost coincided with the visit of the Congressman Charles Digges, who left quickly before Banda did. Presumably he wasn't getting enough of the limelight. But he gave a bad impression: and showed very bad manners. I don't know whether Banda had him in mind when he said (I think at a banquet) that "he had no respect for people who came to see Africa in five days, picked up a lot of talk in bars, and then retailed it at top level when they got home." That is not quite verbatim, but very close to it. It caused us great joy.

A radio commentator observed that it was very often difficult to know whether to grant a visa or refuse it to a travelling celebrity; or which would be the more dangerous course. In the case of Digges he had no doubt that we should have been favoured by his absence.

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P.T.D.