

Wormley (042879) 2529

Lower Farm House,
Hambleton,
Surrey,
GU8 4HE

21st October 1989

Dear Adrian & Vera,

It is just 2 years since we returned from Spain and we seem to have gone through a mini-version of the events of October 1987 - stock market reverses, gale-force winds and generally unsettled times. However ^{at least we} can draw comfort ^{from the fact} this time that we are, at least, not regretting our decision to return here to live and I, personally, more and more thankful as time goes by that I am out of the Lloyds Bank orbit. Occasionally I come across erstwhile colleagues, either at Waterloo Station, or on the "tube" or just in the City, and I find myself increasingly unable to relate to them and life at Lloyds Bank. I sometimes wonder if there is a touch of bitterness in all this but even if there is, I have only to

Speculate at what I might be doing were I still here, plus recalling the "early retirement" package that I took, and all such thoughts disappear.

So did I join the Cubans, you must be wondering - the short-answer is no. In the end, they tried to get me on the cheap and this, together with a job which would have required extensive overseas travel to such countries as North Korea, Vietnam and some southern African countries (to generate 3rd country trade), plus the obvious factor that Cuba under Castro must be the most backward Comman country, all added up to a "niet". Incidentally the friend who introduced me to the Cubans, Ernst + Whimsey's (now Ernst + Young) UK bombing partner, died 6 weeks ago of a heart-attack (aged 53). He felt slightly unwell at the office, got an office car to take him home, and he just died within minutes of

2

reaching his house - an awful shock but, as Claudia keeps reminding me, with a moral - which is if one were to feel rather ~~rather~~ odd, breathless or slight-pains in the chest area, one should take a taxi to the nearest hospital + not try and get home. So doing will give some chance of survival.

So my business life continues with Banco Exterior - U.K. The period of familiarisation is over and I am now embarked on a fairly extensive new business seeking campaign, but initially directed at a selection of existing customers of the bank which seem to have been ignored. The bank has, in essence, been a reactive one with little attempt at hard business getting on any level of

sophistication. Barring one British executive (who is current Deputy General Manager, & retires in Feb 90), the whole management are Spaniards who grew up with the organization here. So without wishing to bore you with the whole story, there is much to do but before being able to achieve a great deal, we have (a) to await a major organizational change in London and (b) to hire new managers. I am in touch with Nick Beng Smith & he has sent me his CV. However in the end, he may well think that joining us might not be in his long term interests. I shall be meeting him towards the end of the month to pursue the matter.

Meanwhile, I see from your letter of 8th July (for which many thanks) that you are losing some of your key staff to Amsterdam. Is this all a prelude to closing your Rio de Janeiro office?? However, whatever the outcome, you seem to

3

be mentally attuned to whatever happens.

- I wonder how your trip to the U.S. worked out - I seem to recall that you were going this year. We had a good break for 3 1/2 weeks in July/August - at our house in Spain, though it was a little long for Ursula + me. We prefer to do say 2 1/2 weeks + then ^{take} a week ~~visit~~ (without the boys, selfishly perhaps) in the Spring. Next year we shall be planning something a little different, I think. Ursula keeps herself busy enough, now more involved than before in a local cultural ~~group~~ grant, and, I am glad to say, playing some more regular tennis. The boys

are making normal progress at school, Alastair in his second year at Wellington (now with his own room) and growing up fast. Julian continues to perform extremely well academically and is also doing well with the violin. He changed to a 3rd size instrument - this term (a 60 year old German one) and making big advances. They are both back today for a 10-day 1/2 term break.

Now I will have to do a little business mail - also on reading today's Times, I must just make sure that my Home Insurance Policy contains protective clauses against "earthquakes, storm damage and subsidence". It never ceases to amaze me how relaxed Californians are about covering earthquake damage in their insurance policies - only 25% do. When we lived in L.A., I added it on for only \$100 extra.

Love from Mervyn + me, Stuart