

University College of Fort Hare,  
P.O. Fort Hare, Alice, C.P. 52  
September 8, 1958.

Mrs V.M. Ballinger, M.P.  
House of Assembly,  
Cape Town.

Dear Mrs Ballinger,

Thank you for your telegram which I received late yesterday afternoon. Its contents came as a complete surprise to us here because only on Friday last we had had a telegram from Pretoria indicating that my son's passport was still under consideration. That telegram came to Mr F. Cooper, the travel agent, with whom all arrangements about travel had been made. By that date the young man had already missed the boat by which he was going to leave from East London on September 5, but we had hoped that it might still be possible for him to catch the boat at Cape Town. Your telegram came as a great shock to us.

It is difficult for us to understand why this passport should have been refused, unless it is because he happens to be the son of his father, a veritable case of visiting the sins of the father upon the children. As you know getting into the medical schools in the United Kingdom is not easy, and it was with great difficulty that we managed to persuade the authorities of Birmingham University to admit him this year. He was due to start there on September 27. Now he is likely to lose an opportunity which may not occur again. There may be reasons for all this, but how is a young man like this to be made to understand that the denial of an opportunity like this to him is in the interests of the State to which he owes allegiance?

I am glad to hear you say that you are pressing the Minister to review this case, and I sincerely hope your efforts will be rewarded with success, but I regret to say that I am pessimistic about the result. In anticipation of a favourable reply in this matter we had naturally already gone to a great deal of expense. All that must now go. Something will have to be done to speed up decisions on passport applications, not only to avoid the suspense but the unnecessary expense.

The other young man, Jeppe Mei, whose application has also been turned is on the staff of the Jabavu Secondary School. I suppose his application was unsuccessful because he was going over on scholarship provided by a certain organisation of Oxford University students, but in our case no such situation is involved. The family is to be primarily responsible, and all the working members were going to share in seeing him through University.

In conclusion I should like to thank you most sincerely for all your efforts on our behalf. You must be having a very busy time in Cape Town with your Parliamentary duties, and to take time off to attend to a matter like this must interrupt your business unduly. I cannot tell you how much we all appreciate what you have done.

We here at Fort Hare are to some extent relieved to hear that the University Apartheid legislation has been postponed to next year, but I suppose that is merely putting off the matter for a little while longer but will not affect the real issue.

With kind regards,  
Yours sincerely,