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Dear Eliot

Thank you very much for the check I received through the Healey Foundation address accompanied by that good letter. Once again thank you I am happy and doing well with the Healey Foundation lectures. I have spoken extensively in the West Coast particularly in the Los Angeles area. On the 20th of January I will be in Cleveland to talk in their Natural History Museum. There after I will be heading home to Africa via London.

Attached is a short proposal of the study I want to carry out when I return home. It is my belief the study will be of great importance for wildlife and people in that part of the world, and without doubt I am the right person to carry it out. After the study is completed I hope to join the government to see if it can be implemented. This work can only be done if funds to do it can be found. I have applied the required funds from various foundations. The Foundations as you know can only consider one if recommended by a recognized person; because of this I took the liberty to use your name for reference. Do you think you can one day visit in the Serengeti. I will promise you a lion and a camp fire. Say hello to your family and to yourself.
your friend
Ole Saitoti

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100WN 608



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It is six years now since I came to the United States through the efforts of the National Geographic Society. As you know, I came here to narrate one of the National Geographic TV Specials entitled "MAN OF THE SERENGETI" in which I portrayed the main character.

My appearing in this film has transformed my life totally and no doubt for the better. After the film was televised I showed it in colleges around the country. Some of these schools were: Cornell, Columbia, Harvard. I also showed it in Zoos and Museums - for example, the Museum of Natural History in New York.

While showing the film I was able to meet students and professors and I was highly impressed with the desirability of obtaining a college education. I therefore enrolled in Emerson College and received a B. F. A. degree in Creative Writing in June 1976.

My purpose in majoring in this subject was to be able to write about the history of my people. While thinking about the Maasai, it became clear to me that one cannot consider the Maasai without considering the wildlife of East Africa with which they live side by side. It may well be that if the animals vanish, so will the Maasai. Because of this I have decided to become involved in the effort of conservation in East Africa.

This intention led me to a Master of Science degree in Natural Resources at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, with emphasis on ecological management and administration of parks and conservation areas.

After completion of my graduate work, I was fortunate enough to attend the 12th International Seminar on National Parks and Equivalent Reserves which was sponsored by the University of Michigan, School of Natural Resources; National Park Service, U. S. A.; Parks Canada; and Department of National Parks, Mexico. This Seminar complemented my academic studies greatly and enabled me to meet people in the field - a situation far different from that of a classroom.

Now that I have obtained this education, I am calling on you for funds to help me put it in productive use.

I want to do an ecological study of the total land mass of Maasailand highlighting pastoral and wildlife interaction, including agricultural

encroachment on the same territory. With hope, it will be a guiding light or at least will influence crucial government decision-making concerning this delicate region towards a promising future for both wildlife and people.

In Michigan, I wrote a thesis detailing the cultural ecology of the Maasai and how peacefully they can live together with wildlife. The thesis gives historical as well as present-day problems confronting the Maasai region. Agriculture, which is replacing pastoralism, is one major problem as agriculture is devoid of both domestic animals and wildlife. Also, the present methods of separating pastoralists' animals from wildlife by creating national parks reserved exclusively for wildlife exacerbates the problem instead of solving it. For example, they shoot cattle when the cattle enter the park, even in times of extreme famine. And, wildebeasts are allowed to overgraze the land supposedly reserved for people. In addition, the wildebeast spreads contagious diseases such as malignant catarrh to which domestic animals are susceptible. All these and a host of other urgent problems like poaching must be dealt with rationally.

Most conservationists who have worked in these problems have always been foreign experts. With all due respect to them I feel that since they don't understand the psychology and language of the local people they cannot effectively deal with the most pressing problems. They have tended to care only about the animals, ignoring the people of the area and by doing so have created animosity between the two sides. As Boyce Rensberger said, "A thorough examination of the state of wildlife survival in Africa demands not only a knowledge of wild animals but also an understanding of the legitimate needs of human beings living in the same land."

The Maasai, who share most of their land with wildlife, are my own people. I therefore owe them a great deal. It is also my duty as an ecologist and a former game park ranger to promote and advocate conservation of wildlife.

I am attaching my Master's Thesis to enable you to get a better understanding in detail of the nature of the study I want to carry out over a two and one-half year period.

Early months of the study will be spent meeting various East Africa ecologists like Norman Mayers, David Western, Iaian Douglas-Hamilton and including Mary Leakey; I will also work closely with Hugo van Lawick; I will contact Nairobi and Dar es Salaam universities' faculties and students. The Serengeti Researchers will be consulted regularly concerning present events in the whole ecological area.

My studies will concentrate more on agriculture encroachment, environmental impact and abuse, interraction or overlapping; water and grazing competition plus predator/prey relationship on domestic animals; and poaching. The study will not be sociological or anthropological as such because I already know the Maasai, being one of them. It will no doubt reflect the views of the local people who must have acquired immense and valuable experiences concerning their environment from the many years

they have dealt with it; it will also take into consideration the views of government ministries like Agriculture, Veterinary and of course National Parks. From each and every one of these and particularly from my first hand observations, I will come up with a rational scientific analysis to present to the government. To do this properly, I will need a year in each country (Tanzania and Kenya) to observe a whole circle of seasons - rain and dry plus a half a year to write up my findings. While travelling I will also try to educate people by showing films like "MAN OF THE SERENGETI" to encourage them to appreciate their wildlife. The budget for the total 30 month period is attached.

I would welcome the opportunity to explain my proposal or answer questions in person. I will still be in the U. S. A. until mid-January and could stop over in Washington, D. C. on my way back to Tanzania.

Hoping to hear from you.

Faithfully yours,

Tepilit Ole Saitoti

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