

13 Lyme street,
London N W 1.
20 January 1971.

Mr Neil Middleton,
Penguin Books,
21 John street,
W C 1.

Dear Neil -

This is to confirm Ronald Segal's indication to you that I should like to do a book on Libya for the Penguin African Library.

It would focus, together with relevant background material - on the four principle ingredients or issues of contemporary Libya :

Soldiers and the Coup D'Etat of September 1969 which installed the Revolutionary Command Council under Muammar Gaddafi, this is a culmination of Libyan political history subjected to a series of foreign occupations from the Phoenicians and Romans to the Ottoman Turks, the Italians from 1911 to the British Military Administration of 1945-51, then independence granted by the United Nations under the Kingdom of Idris and then finally, after a series of political crises and regional conflicts as for instance between Cyrenaica and Tripolitania which led to the dissolution of the Libyan Parliament after 1954, to the seizure of power by 11 young Nasserite officers - and the abortive counter-coup plot of December 1969.

Oil. The spectacular oil yields, and revenues, after 1959, the Year of Oil; its importance after the blocking of the Suez Canal ; and the confrontation between Arab (and Latin American) oil producers organised in OPEC and the international oil cartels themselves making a first attempt to bargain collectively on the price of oil.

Arabism. The new awakening-cum-xenophobia since Libya's admission to the Arab League in 1953; what is Libya's view of Pan-Arabism?; how real the attempt to devise a radical Arab states' strategy in the Arab-Israeli conflict?; the Federation of Libya, Egypt and the Sudan and the pressures for this from Libya.

Revolution? The end of Wheelus Field and other military bases: an anti-imperialist strategy? During and after oil - what development?
Has the Revolution a social base for change? Libya and Middle East, African and Third World Perspectives.

I propose completing a manuscript of between 60,000 and 80,000 words within a year or at the outside 18 months, and am agreeable to world rights for an advance on royalties of £1250, payable, I would suggest, half on signature, and half on acceptance of the manuscript.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth First