

DUMP
AL SOLE HOTEL
Venice Italy

29-3-77

Dear Roy,

Here we are in Italy and its only 18 days until we get out of Europe. Yes, you may not believe it but we are counting them. This GLOBAL trip has been a big disappointment (and expensive) - save your money Roy, Europe is not worth it, but don't ask me what to do with it! - Very disappointed with Belgium and Holland - dear and cold - Germany interesting but dear & Austria wonderful but unreal for costs. This dump is cheaper and nastier - crumbling buildings & people who don't give a hoot - no service at all - strikes everywhere in a small way.

Weather has been cold for Spring - we came through a heavy snow storm from Austria yesterday - just like the Xmas cards. Joy has a bad cold - I have lost mine - 3 of our 25 have had to get a Doctor (no English). The tour is a flop - courier a real English dude - have had a few rows over poor Hotel rooms - food only fair. A group from TRAFALGAR are full of similar complaints. Don't come to Europe Roy - Vienna was a great experience but Venice is far from the glamorous place it is painted to be (no paint anywhere in Europe) - just 18 days!! Can't see too well - one globe has gone and they couldn't care less - I pinched one from the Hall but it was a different base. Hope you got my card with new London address for H/O. four letters cost \$2 AUST from Austria - Coke is up to 70c - coffee from 30c to \$1-40 a cup!!

Nothing is priced reasonably in Europe. This causes people to say England is cheap. Britain is falling apart - the man in the street is fed up with the Leyland type of strike but the Independence movement in Scotland & Wales will finish them for good.

We have been amazed at the amount of land under cultivation in England & Europe - they don't have any deserts like us. All the buildings are 200 to 900 odd years old & the look like it - cars are plentiful even though petrol is up to A\$1.80 a gallon - fruit very dear in Europe - I used my last Austrian money to buy 2 apples - 48c Aust.

We have the best country in the world Roy if only we realised it.

No news from Australia at all - in fact no news as we can't understand it.

Rates vary a lot and the Australian Dollar is worth less than the US instead of about 10% more - something must have happened¹ - Most frontier banks are robbers & Hotels worse - I find BANCA COMMERCIALE ITALIA the best - even get a smile & they know of us quite well.

Have had news earlier that Toby is going for a walk with Pat Campbell OK. This is a great load off our mind - not many dogs in Italy - mostly muzzled for rabies - In Belgium, Holland, Germany & Austria they are allowed into Hotels & Cafes - In London you can take them on the bus & train OK - 8p English in bus - Sorry to use both sides but no paper at most Hotels now - some no soap - don't come over Roy. Best wishes to you and Lettie - Regards to all at work - only 18 days!!

Dave

¹ Dave is referring to the devaluation, in 1976 of 17.5% against the trade-weighted basket of currencies against which the A\$ was monitored. This was an attempt to regain control over monetary conditions following the easing of capital controls throughout that year. See Note by BIS: <http://www.bis.org/publ/cgfs33rba.pdf>

NEW LONDON ADDRESS

41- STANHOPE COURT HOTEL
46 STANHOPE GARDENS
LONDON SW7-5RT

AUSTRIA
HOTELS

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Weather has been cold for Spain - we came through a heavy snow storm from Austria yesterday - just like the Xmas cards (25) have had to get a Doctor (no English). The Snow is a flow - Covered a real English dude - have had a few rows over the poor hotel rooms - food only fair. A jump from THAFALGHK are full of similar complaints. Don't come to Europe Roy - Vienna was a great experience but Venice is far from the glamorous place it is painted to be (no paint anywhere in Europe) - just 18 days!! Can't see too well - one globe has gone & they couldn't come less - I pinched one from the Hall but it was a different base. Note you got my card with new London address for 1/10. Four letters to AUST from Austria - take up to 70 - coffee from 30 to \$1-40 a cup !!