

Trips: Trips - 99

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Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

Trip to London 1953

Dec. 22

Georg Juan Smith (Director, U.K. Information Centre, London)

— to D.H.

Yours sincerely
Georg Juan Smith
Georg Juan Smith
Director

London Information Centre,

22nd December, 1953

PERSONAL

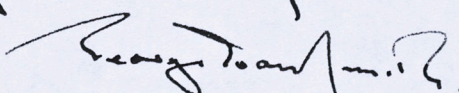
Dear Mr. Hammarskjöld,

In this personal note, may I thank you very sincerely for accepting with such graciousness some of the rather curious and ad hoc arrangements made for you during your visit to London. It is unnecessary for me to remark that the arrangements for your departure were a little unusual, to say the least. A few minutes after the 'plane took off, all of the appropriate officials arrived, the lounge was brilliantly lit, and I walked into the expectant throng only to announce that you had already gone and that you would appreciate their thoughtfulness in coming to see that the departure was smooth. In all truth, the change of plan was too quick for the rather inflexible machinery for farewelling distinguished visitors.

However, apart from the minor excitement of that hurried exit, if all the other arrangements here seemed to be a trifle dull, I would like you to know that this is because we went out of our way to avoid making other formal commitments. There are many distinguished people here who would have welcomed an opportunity to meet you, and it would have been an honour for us to have made arrangements for dinners and receptions so that they could do so. But I had the feeling that, so soon after the Assembly, you would probably welcome a chance to avoid meetings and obligations, and that is why things were planned as quietly, and perhaps as unimaginatively, as they were. May I confess, however, that I enjoyed every day of your visit very much indeed. I only hope that you do not now feel that a trip to London has the character of a visit to some frontier town in the Australian bush where you are likely to be exposed to the most unusual and informal happenings.

The day after you left, the "Sunday Times" published the attached photograph and profile. UNA is still talking with pride about your visit and this, together with your speech, has done an enormous amount to inspire those good people who do work very selflessly for us out in the far and remote places of these islands. But I cannot recall those moments in the Speakers' Room without a set of shudders down my spine. I only hope that De Noue never gets to hear the full story of Ambassadors fighting their way through Boy Scouts to be introduced to you.

With kind regards, and again sincere thanks for the very understanding way in which you accepted us and what we had to offer.

Yours sincerely


George Ivan Smith
 Director

Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld,
 Secretary-General of the United Nations,
 U.N. Headquarters,
NEW YORK