

Trips: Trips - 40

HS L 179:65



National Library
of Sweden

Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

Trip to Geneva (ACC) 1954

May 20

Memorandum for Sec. Gen. (for Geneva visit)

20 May 1954

For Secretary - General

MEMORANDUM FOR GENEVA VISIT

(ref. Mr. Pelt's
letter of 12 May '54)

1. The Evans Assignment to Indonesia. I talked to David Owen both here and by phone in England regarding the assignment of Mr. Evans to the post of Resident Representative for Technical Assistance in Indonesia. Mr. Owen showed some reticence but agreed to present his name to TAB next week. I have come to the very strong conclusion myself that Evans would do a far better job in Indonesia than here. In Indonesia he would operate with a limited number of people. His job would have well defined limits and it has all the creativeness which he seems so much to seek. In fact, I think it would be a very good thing for his health to take that kind of an assignment. His judgment and personality would only add to his frustrations here and probably lead to a breakdown in short order.

David felt that Evans' D-2 status could be maintained in the Indonesian post. I presume that he should be given a two year contract. In view of his last letter, he will likely want some guarantees beyond that. I do not see precisely what guarantee we can give except to suggest that we will take his interests fully into account in his further placement.

2. Observations on Mr. Pelt's Letter of 12 May

A. I think that the point raised in this section of the letter is slightly academic. Obviously, the Geneva buildings must always be maintained in the combined capacity of office building and conference centre. There is very little likelihood that another conference like the Asian Conference will be held there for a very considerable period of time. The transfer of the two divisions from Headquarters does, of course, produce a problem and yet not a desperately serious one. It has always seemed to us at Headquarters that while the Palais was never designed with an eye to efficiency in the use of space, that there has been too much of a tendency to put relatively junior officers in offices by themselves. A certain amount of doubling up would be helpful in solving Pelt's problem. Also, in a rather more limited way, adjustments could be made in office walls to accommodate more people. I know that the idea of grouping staff in Geneva has not been popular, but it is certainly preferable to spending money for new buildings.

B. I agree with Pelt that the building of specialized agency buildings on our grounds requires careful planning and possibly

closer administrative integration. But there are degrees of satisfactory integration and I do not think that this problem in itself is insuperable. I do not see, however, that the Fifth Committee would approve U.N. funds as implied in yesterday's cable from Geneva to provide money for the building of specialized agency buildings on U.N. ground.

C. I agree with Pelt on the question of archives. I think Geneva needs a trained archivist. Yesterday we received a request for releasing certain League materials. The U.N. materials are also very bulky and need the attention of a trained archivist. To have a trained archivist at Geneva might also help to get the IRO records back from Paris.

D. I need add little to our past discussions on Palthey's post at Geneva. No doubt your explanation to Pelt regarding his own status would be of assistance in his understanding of Palthey's role.

E. Martin is well briefed on the Gros and Picard matter. In addition Alf has just completed a memorandum to you covering the whole question of the NGO set-up. It might be useful for you to take a copy of that memo with you. I agree strongly that both Gros and Picard should be dropped next year. Picard, of course, understands it completely. He has already been extended twice and doesn't anticipate a further extension. Gros is something more of a problem. However, the only one who would object as things seem to stand now, is Laugier and of course he is not in a position to make his objection effective.

As far as representation is concerned, the U.N. should be very well staffed in Europe with Pelt, Palthey, Yates, Lukac all available in Geneva and Blickenstaff in Paris. There is really no need for reorganization at this point. David is doing an effective job of contact with Evans and other UNESCO people in Paris.

F. In connection with Appointments and Promotions, Pelt, I think, is right in wishing to have the right to nominate to Headquarters the most satisfactory local candidate. I do not think that this should necessarily exclude Headquarters examination of the qualifications of all local candidates, but Pelt should certainly be given the right to indicate a preference. Alf is working on the question of improving procedures for ensuring that Geneva staff are considered for vacancies in Headquarters.

G. Policy on transfer of staff. It seems to me that Pelt makes the issue a bit too mechanical and artificial. I do not think we should go on record as aiming to transfer a specified number of

people each year. It seems to me more satisfactory to adhere to the general policy of expediting inter-change and to weigh each case on its merits, keeping in mind always, of course, the legitimate interests both of Geneva and Headquarters.

H. Austrian Tapestry.

I doubt the wisdom of accepting this tapestry, although it is a fine piece of work artistically. The battle theme of another era tends first to irritate the other party concerned, and certainly does not lend a proper atmosphere to our buildings.