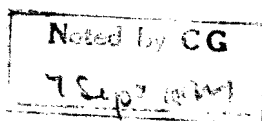


THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AMERICAN EMBASSY

ROME, August 21, 1950



Dear General:

Jane and I had hoped to see you and Mrs. Smith on our way through New York but we were obliged to spend all of our time during the two days we were there in trying to salvage some of our clothing and household effects. They had unfortunately been shipped on ahead on the EXCALIBUR which was rammed in leaving New York harbor. All of our things were soaked in sea water and oil for ten days and we saved very little apart from the china and silverware. I particularly regret my books and pictures which can never be replaced.

The purpose of this letter, however, was not to weep on your shoulder but to tell you how glad I am you have consented to take on the CIA job. I know how you felt about it and that you are taking on this major headache only out of your sense of public duty. I have had a good bit to do with the Organization from the State Department side during the past four years and I believe there can be few jobs more important than getting the whole intelligence set-up to function the way it should. I also know from my limited experience what a tremendous job it will be. I can highly recommend to you Dick Helms as one of the sounder of the younger men in the Organization.

With best regards to Mrs. Smith,

Sincerely,

Llewellyn E. Thompson, Jr.

Lt. General Walter Bedell Smith,
United States First Army Headquarters,
Governor's Island, New York.

DM.

LHE

11 September 1950



Dear Tommy:

Until I received your letter I thought I was the only one with real troubles. What thoroughly rotten luck! I trust you were covered with insurance; but know that doesn't help to replace the loss of the personal things that one accumulates through the years.

As you can well imagine, I dodged the new job as long as I could. With the advent of the Korean situation, however, I no longer felt that I could say "no" to something that was being presented to me as a duty. I am for it now, and will do the best I can. I can only hope that you and my other friends will be prepared to identify the body when it finally emerges from the Washington mill.

I appreciate your recommendation of Dick Helms and will keep my eye on him.

Mrs. Smith joins me in sending our best to you and Jane,

Sincerely,

Is/Bedeal Smith

The Honorable Llewellyn E. Thompson, Jr.
Counselor of Embassy
American Embassy
Rome, Italy