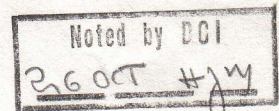


DOUGLAS SOUTHALL FREEMAN

ONE HARLAN CIRCLE • RICHMOND 21, VIRGINIA

September 26, 1950



acknowledged
20 November 1951

General Bedell Smith
Central Intelligence Office
Pentagon Building
Washington, D. C.



Dear General:

George Washington was one of your distinguished predecessors as Chief of Intelligence, his own Chief, because he had no Bedell Smith. Since you have started to follow in his footsteps I have thought often of you and this morning before daylight I ran across so interesting an observation of his in the realm of your present study that I thought you would be interested in having it.

It comes from a letter of October 18, 1778, addressed to Brigadier General Charles Scott, and reads as follows:

"... too much attention therefore cannot be paid to the choice of persons employed in collecting advices of the enemys transactions and designs, and to the directions given them for governing their inquiries; an enemy is always supposed to be secret as to their real intentions, and may generally be suspected of a view to deceive, when they speak openly of them; but there are some circumstances which attend every considerable move, or expedition which cannot always be concealed, and which by being compared together and combined may almost infallibly point out the enemy's true design. As it now seems to be ascertained that a considerable embarkation has taken place, many concomitant circumstances may satisfy us as to the destination of the Ships. Such are, The number and species of Transports, passages taken on board them for Europe or the W. Indies, the strength of the convoy, the quantity of Provisions, Water &ca. said to be taken on board, the quantity of Artillery, in fine every particular that considered singly or with relation to something else can give us light; much more confidence is to be placed in such facts when they can be ascertained, than the common conversation or opinions either of inhabitants or Military Men. . . ."

I think often of you and of your gracious consideration when I was in Frankfort. I belonged more or less to your organization and am, as always, at your command.

Faithfully yours,

Douglas Southall Freeman

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