

Walter Bedell Smith to GCM, ALS

Moscow
January 15, 1947

Dear General--

Herewith both my sincere congratulations and my sympathy. It is good to be serving directly under you again, but they certainly passed the baton to you in the final lap of the relay race. The conferences which have been held so far are only the curtain raisers for the coming all important session, and unless I miss my guess badly you will need all your great patience and self control before it is over.

You will, of course, be briefed until you are full up to the ears, and I shall not attempt to add a word. But I will venture one suggestion. George Kennan, now senior state department instructor at the Army War College, and until recently my Minister-Councillor here, knows more about the Soviet Union, I believe, than any other American. He speaks Russian better than the average Russian. And not only has he served here under four different ambassadors, but he has had almost equally valuable service in Germany. I strongly recommend that you bring him with you as one of your staff. I know all of the Russian experts, here and in Washington, and they are all good, but Kennan is head and shoulders above the lot, and he is highly respected in Moscow because of his character and integrity.

I have a suite for you (and we hope, Mrs. Marshall) at Spasso house, and we hope you will be willing to stay with us.

Please tell Mrs. Marshall that her book is charming, but that I could have added as one "human interest" item

that her distinguished husband still refers to a hand made fishing *rod* as a "pole"!

Mary send affectionate greetings to you both

Faithfully

Bedell Smith