

COMMENTS ON THE 1947 SEMINAR

The following extracts are from letters and published accounts written by some of those who were present at the 1947 session as members or visitors.

Laurence Duggan, Director of the Institute of International Education:

"It is evident that your idea of giving European students an insight into our American culture and contemporary problems opened an entirely new field to students who have been unable to learn about us without coming to this country. The success of this first venture should enable you to continue the Seminar and perhaps to expand your efforts to other centers as well.

Samuel H. Williams, Chief of the Education Division, Headquarters, United States Forces in Austria:

"It is our belief that the achievements of the Student Council Seminar were valuable enough to warrant its continuance and we hope that Harvard will appreciate the splendid contribution of the Student Council to the solution of problems which confront this troubled world.....It is a pleasure for us to submit a most favorable report to General Keyes and the State Department."

Lyman Bryson, Educational Director of CBS:

"These young people were brought together to talk and to study together, and the whole enterprise was admirable, because the young Americans who dreamed about it, and worked very hard to make it happen, were not just writing essays about international difficulties and international understanding; they were doing something about it.....They maintained in that beautiful, but strange and old-fashioned atmosphere, a spirit of American freedom that was a lesson in essential democracy to the Europeans. They made a gesture of friendship that may have great results."

Uj Magyarorszag, Hungarian weekly on world politics and intellectual life:

"There wasn't even a shadow of propaganda in Salzburg. In this excellent atmosphere all the problems of an intellectual cooperation between the United States and Europe came to the fore with no regard for political prejudices."

F.O. Matthiessen, Faculty lecturer in Literature:

"It was the greatest teaching experience I have ever had, or ever hope to have."

Margaret Mead, Faculty lecturer in Sociology:

"(The European participants) all learned something more of the complexity of American culture, and I think most of them learned, as counterpoint to an increasing sense of what American civilization was, that there was something which might be called European civilization, which was not merely an aggregate of national cultures, but an old shared tradition.....In listening to the way in which Americans participated in discussions, many of them experienced, probably for the first time, the particular quality of a democratic tradition which valued the existence of differences of opinion."