

NANCY NEWHALL

August 1958.

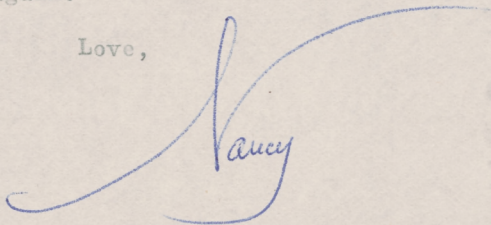
Dear Laura:

USIA is now finding the time to get their records in order on the Nation of Nations exhibition. They cannot trace an agreement for permission to use your black-and-white photographs. So would you sign the enclosed form and return to me for transmission to Washington, please?

I am enclosing one of the official USIS reports on the exhibition as it begins its travels in Germany.

Bean and I are taking off for a brief holiday in Maine this weekend at the end of which I shall be leaving for San Francisco to work on a book for the Sierra Club based on The American Earth exhibition. What are your plans? Are we likely to cross paths somewhere? Would be fun to get together again.

Love,

A large, elegant handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be "Nancy". The signature is written over a faint, circular postmark that contains the word "RECEIVED" and some numbers.

Miss Laura Gilpin  
Santa Fe, N.M.

*Exhibition arranged by Harry  
Newhall. My prints included*

AIR POUCH.

UNCLASSIFIED.

015941

FROM: USIS BONN

TO: USIA WASHINGTON.

June 19, 1958.

*Gang Lopez  
Summer Hogan  
Tribal Council  
Tribal Chairman  
Candace S.I.*

SUBJECT: ICS : Exhibits - Report on Exhibit "Nation of Nations"

USIS Bonn is happy to report that the subject exhibition was an overwhelming success when shown in the Amerika Haus, Essen.

- 1) Statement of condition of exhibit when received:  
Good: a few panels slightly damaged in shipping.
- 2) Did the exhibit include any taboo elements? No.
- 3) Dates of opening and closing of exhibit: April 12 - April 28, 1958.
- 4a) Estimated total attendance: At least 6,000.
- b) Important personages: Mayor of Essen and other city officials, leading labor union officials, the clergy, the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, the faculty of the "Folkwang" Schools of Fine Arts, the press, etc. Excellent audience. In addition to the Amerika Haus patrons there were many high-ranking people that had probably never before been in the Amerika Haus.
- 5) Name of any sponsor: Amerika Haus, Essen.
- 6) Post produced catalogues: No special catalogue was available for the showing in Essen. The Amerika Haus used the monthly program which features the exhibit on the cover and in which a double page was devoted to the exhibit. Six copies are attached.

In the meantime a give-away pamphlet was prepared by USIS Bonn of which six copies are likewise attached.

The exhibit was advertised by a poster, copies of which are attached.

- 7) Translated extracts of pertinent press comments: Enclosed. The press was enthusiastic. Every Essen newspaper carried stories and pictures on the exhibit the contents of which clearly show that the exhibit was not viewed as merely a photographic show but that the theme "Nation of many Nations" was grasped to full extent. All press reviews praised Walt Whitman's quotation as an extremely powerful presentation of the sense of the exhibit.



- 8) Quotations of spectators' comments: "The best you ever had in the Amerika Haus", "I saw it three times", "Wonderful".
- 9) Extent of media coordination: During the exhibition Amerika Haus Essen showed a daily film program. The 27 films shown paralleled the geographic coverage of the exhibit and underlined the overall theme. A press reception and guided tours for correspondents helped to stimulate press interest.
- 10) List of promotional activities employed: At the request of the Amerika Haus director, the Mayor of Essen opened the exhibition. He addressed a small gathering of invited guests (see 4b).  
  
A special cover of the monthly program showed three photos from the exhibit. A total of 300 posters were displayed in Essen. (see enclosures to 6).
- 11) Post's evaluation of the exhibit: Without exaggeration the exhibit can be rated as an outstanding success. Many people came to see the exhibit who had never entered the Amerika Haus before. We are confident that such a favorable first impression will in most cases lead to a closer acquaintanceship.
- 12) Captioned photographs of visitors inspecting the exhibit: Enclosed.

Nedville E. Nordness  
Public Affairs Officer.

## TRANSLATION OF NEWSPAPER REVIEWS

Westdeutsche Allgemeine

Nation of many nations. - Photo exhibition shows America: People, land, architectures.

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I HEARD THAT YOU ASKED FOR SOMETHING TO PROVE THIS PUZZLE THE NEW WORLD, AND TO DEFINE AMERICA, NEW ATHLETIC DEMOCRACY. THEREFORE I SEND YOU MY POEMS THAT YOU BEHOLD IN THEM WHAT YOU WANTED. This quotation from Walt Whitman invites the visit to the Amerika Haus to view an unusual exhibition.

The visitor will really find what he wants in this exhibition which is an optical impression of the NATION OF MANY NATIONS.

America - in the veins of her people the blood streams of many people, especially the European have merged. In her architecture the elements of other architectures are found; the different peoples are reflected in the faces of hers. And yet, through all this diversity runs a common thread uniquely American. The cities in which the many have come and fused; the vastness of its countryside impressing and preserving its variety in the character of its people; the different customs observed for decades and even centuries...all these myriad facets together merge harmoniously as in a large symphony orchestra.

The photo, this penetrating means of documentation is the formula for the people, the cities, the landscapes, the professions, and sources. The pictures actually speak; that means. In spite of the snapshot character there is something essential, something unmistakable. It is a fascination which needs no explanation to be understood, and to be lived.

The photo "The great plough" shows tractors which draw furrows. The technical aspects of the machine disappear behind the wonderful play of the furrowed soil uniting for the seed.

Another photo parallels this one: golden waves of wheat. On an immense plain: three churches one behind the other, each one for a different confession; God being called from this solitude. A colored Methodist preacher, the snow white temple of the Mormons in Utah. The leathery faces of the Indians; the silent boy of the Amish who fight the progress loving 20th century by despising automobiles, radio, television and who ride in old horse-driven carriages - all this is America just like the doctors and musicians, students and poets, dancers and singers and far more, all playing different instruments but all part of the whole. Walt Whitman's poetic quotations stem from the "Leaves of Grass". Messages from the many peoples of America to



other peoples: THIS MOMENT YEARNING AND THOUGHTFUL, SITTING ALONE. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THERE ARE OTHER MEN IN OTHER LANDS YEARNING AND THOUGHTFUL, AND IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IF I COULD KNOW THOSE MEN I SHOULD BECOME ATTACHED TO THEM AS I DO TO MEN IN MY OWN LANDS I KNOW I SHOULD BE HAPPY WITH THEM.

The quotations from Whitman underline the full meaning of the photo exhibition which shows people in another country, worthy of our love.

Essener Stadtnachrichten, Essen. April 12, 1958.

"In this bread earth of ours, nestles the seed perfection."

Large exhibition "Nation of many Nations" in the Amerike Haus.

LET US STAND UP. WHAT IS KNOWN I STRIP AWAY: I LAUNCH ALL MEN AND WOMEN FORWARD WITH ME INTO THE UNKNOWN. This quote from Walt Whitman is beneath a large photo of the statue of liberty in New York. This photo is at the beginning of the impressive exhibition "Nation of many nations": a cross-section of the North American Continent, its landscapes, its people, its culture and its works. A symphony of America on 150 large photo panels. Quotations from Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" are interspersed with the photos; the powerful expression of the first poet of the new world has - in a strangely severe way - become an integral part of this exhibition of master photos.

IN THIS BROAD EARTH OF OURS RESTS THE SEED PERFECTION. What a proud sentence! So much of the spirit of liberty and independence of the new world is mirrored in it; so much of the religious emphasis with which the Americans had put the young continent under their law. The land of unlimited possibilities is not only an economic miracle it is - before all - a spiritual miracle, if I may say so.

What made America big were not only the resources and riches of the country, it was - before all - the faith to create an unequalled community system. Freedom is a Goddess, the face of the statue is inaccessible and severe. Whitman calls the American idea: THE STERN REMORSELESS IDEA.

The exhibition ranges from Manhattan to the Rocky Mountains, from Alaska to Mexico reflecting the diversity of what we call America. DO I CONTRADICT MYSELF? VERY WELL, THEN, I CONTRADICT MYSELF. I AM LARGE, I CONTAIN MULTITUDES.

Then the faces which come from all parts of the world have - unconsciously - something in common: The spirit of freedom, a powerful enjoyment of life, and neighbourhood spirit. Their forefathers elected this country as homestead and sowed their hopes in its soil: FROM THIS HOUR FREEDOM! I INHALE GREAT DRAUGHTS OF SPACE. How many generations have followed: farmers, engineers, workmen, artists, soldiers, intellectuals.



The face of a farmer, reminding of Gary Cooper: SHAPES BRACING THE EARTH AND BRACED WITH THE WHOLE EARTH. Or the face of Dr. Salk who gave the world the vaccine against polio: EACH OF US IS INEVITABLE, EACH OF US LIMITLESS, EACH OF US WITH HIS OR HER RIGHT UPON THE EARTH.

No more quotations! What I wanted to say: This is not a photo exhibition, it is much more: Something of the spirit of America comes to life in these photos. And since photos are the contemporary expression of our time, this show is a real fascination.

The best photographers of the USA, i.e. Ansel Adams, Edward Weston, Margaret Bourke-White, Paul Strand, Andreas Feininger, and Dorothea Lange have contributed. Many series stem from the big magazine "Life" and others.

How many fascinating views: Canyons, water falls, rafts, factories, workmen, and oil wells. The mansions of the South, the churches of New England. Harvesting on immeasurable plains, The Great Salt Lake, the herds of cattle. Then family life and neighbourhood, churches, sects and cults. Faces of all races, buildings of all styles. Amid them photos from the 19th century, Walt Whitman's America. Everything blends into a symphonic picture.

.....There is special emphasis on the fact that this nation has its roots in almost all nations of the world and that the energy of this powerful country melted its people into a national whole. This was only possible in the framework of the democratic idea of complete personal freedom under which everything was created and developed what there is today.

.....Everywhere are superbly selected quotations. Sometimes he is the interpreter of a proud self-esteem; but there is never any reference to "unlimited possibilities" or to the symbolism of the skyscraper; but to the men, no, to the man of these 48 states in East and South and North and West.

Only photos are the material of this exhibition, about 150 black and white and color photos of artistic quality.....The whole in no way boasts of the riches and resources or of the achievements. Nothing but the situation is reported, and the visitor is left to draw his own conclusions.....It certainly is not easy to create an interesting exhibition by showing nothing but photographs. This is, however, a full success. Subtly and so much the more effectively the colored accents are set. One of the most beautiful: The church in New Mexico at sundown.

You should take your time to view this exhibition: it is rewarding...

Essener Stadt-Anseiger, April 12, 1958.

"This is America" - "Nation of Nations" - an extremely interesting exhibition.



Nobody should go by without entering.....Artistically photographed observations mirror the new world. USA, the People of many peoples, as has never been done before. Human beings like you and me, landscapes, buildings, and architectural miracles in remarkable dimensions inform me about the country which has developed a model democratic thinking and a high standard in the art of living. Mr. Sailer, the director of the Amerika Haus, pleasant and polite and who speaks such an excellent German that you have to ask twice whether he comes really from Illinois, is very happy to be host to this exhibit. He has sacrificed his own office to make room for the many hundreds of photos which acquaint all visitors candidly with his home country. There are landscapes, human beings of all kinds, architecture, sport, and engineering; the great men are presented without forgetting that the influence from outside is balanced by that from inside. Quotations from Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" link the sections of the exhibition and facilitate the introduction of the visitor into the free democratic thinking of the American people ....

Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, Essen, April 14, 1958.

#### People to People

The Lord Mayor of Essen said in his opening speech, (with this exhibition) America proves that it is possible to create a nation without asking what race, tradition or creed the individual has if he is willing to contribute his achievements. Without any false sentimentality and without any preconception America has created what today looks so powerful to us.....

Ruhrnachrichten, Essen, April 14, 1958.

The Lord Mayor of Essen said in his opening speech: "Of what use is all literature about America to us? Our era is anxious to experience through seeing and hearing and living. Therefore the impact of this exhibition will be powerful. It will help us to realize the mutual ties of both our peoples."

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