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Villa Serbelloni (2)

AUG 27 1959

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Dear Dave:

We were quite interested in your letter of March 26th about the Villa Serbelloni, which Mr. Charles Rogers had taken up with you. I am enclosing a letter to Mr. Rogers which you might wish to forward to him, with any comment which you might care to make.

For your private information, The Rockefeller Foundation is frequently offered gifts, bequests or properties for one or another prescribed purpose. The general policy of the Trustees has been not to solicit gifts of any sort, and not to accept gifts which limit our discretion and freedom of action in any way. Since we do not need money, we do not wish to be encumbered with restrictive obligations. The Principessa's idea is a generous and interesting one which could fill a real and important need on that side of the Atlantic. We would be glad to consider the possibility of using the Villa and the two million dollar endowment for the general purposes which she apparently has in mind. Your own thought of something similar to Arden House at Harriman, New York, is an excellent one. But if we should get down to specific discussion, our basic requirement would be that the Principessa, in effect, put her confidence in the judgment of the Trustees of The Rockefeller Foundation.

You will note that I have not made this underlying policy of ours precise in my letter to Mr. Rogers. I have not done so because the Principessa might be frightened away from her main idea, whether our Foundation were involved or not. It is our thought that if the Principessa knows that there is a possible interest on our side, she at least might be encouraged to the point of thinking more about it. The question of specific terms might be left to further exploration.

I have seen Kenneth Holland's letter to you on the uses to which the Institute of International Education might put the Villa Serbelloni. His ideas are excellent and along the general lines of your own and the Principessa's thinking. My only suggestion to Kenneth

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would be that he broaden his view somewhat and think of the Institute's role somewhat more as the trustee of a property which might be used by others for purposes which go beyond the internal activities of the IIE itself. We do not wish to bid against the Institute of International Education in any way. After a preliminary talk with the Carnegie and Ford foundations, it was agreed that if the Principessa wishes to take this up with a foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation would probably be a suitable one. It would be for the Principessa and her advisers to determine whether she would like to discuss the matter with us. If she decided to give it to us, in reliance upon the judgment of our Trustees, we might very well in turn make it available to Kenneth Holland for the general purposes outlined by him.

To sum up, we should be interested in a friendly discussion of the possibilities but would not be prepared to bid for it nor to accept restrictive covenants.

Cordially,

Dean Rusk ✓

The Honorable J. D. Zellerbach
American Ambassador
American Embassy
Rome, ITALY