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BY ~~W.~~ D. CARTWRIGHT FOR BEVERLY SMITH, JR. OF THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
(PRELIMINARY REMARKS ABOUT ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASSIGNMENT):

I have been working in Washington for two years after coming back from my assignment in the Pacific. Because I had charge of all the observation stations in the Weather Bureau, I naturally got caught up in the plans for setting up stations in the Antarctic. These plans were in connection with the International Geophysical Year which was expected to start in July of 1957. They called it a year but actually it was to run for 18 months. I was amused at our Canadian friends who came down here to talk about some of the planning. They said, "By God, you Americans always do things in a big way. Here you have changed the year to 18 months." Of course, in the Antarctic to start observations in July you have to have all your planning done at least a year before that so that the equipment and everything will be down there and set up certainly no later than January of that same year. I had always some interest in the Antarctic. In fact, my predecessor in the position I held then had made rather a name for himself by his part in one of the earlier U.S.-Antarctic expeditions called "Operation High Jump," I believe. This was, as I recall, in 1947 or 1949. As the plans progressed, I remember my first conversation with Hugh Odishaw who was at that time, and is still, Executive Director of the IGY Committee for the United States. I don't remember what we talked about--simply something in connection with the Meteorological Program for the IGY--but I was impressed at the outset by this compact, short, dark, very keyed chap. You got the impression right at the outset that something was going on upstairs all the time, and he had a beautiful way of getting his ideas across to you. My part was one of consultation and seeing that somebody else did certain things in preparation for the stations, budgetary

work, ordering equipment, helping out on recruiting personnel, observers--that sort of thing. So I knew quite a bit about the IGY program in the Antarctic--in fact, I was later selected as a member of the meteorological panel under the U.S. National Committee for the IGY. As the planning accelerated -- began to get people in for training, observers who would carry on the actual work in the Antarctic, I became more and more keen about the idea of going down. Because of the special attachment in the minds of the people to the Antarctic there were lots of fellows who seemed to be organizing a trip to the Antarctic for the summer, and this seemed like a wonderful idea; but for the time being I didn't seem to have any urgent reasons to go except, of course, there is always the need to familiarize yourself personally with the problems--the special problems that always make it possible to do a better and more intelligent job in planning for some of these programs. So I kept looking forward in a vague sort of way to the chance of going down the first summer. It turned out that several of our top people had more compelling reasons to go than I, and as the planning progressed it began to look a little remote that I would actually be able to go. That was in July of 1956. As you may know, there was a World Planning Committee for the IGY called the SOGGY Committee _____

(I am getting my Russian mixed-up with my French). But, any way, it was the Special Committee for the International Geophysical Year of the International Geophysical Body. This body has been in existence for many years. I will check on the exact title of both of these programs. And when the plans for an International Geophysical Year were first proposed, this was the logical body to do the international coordination that was certainly going to be necessary. They

almost at once set up this special committee which has been functioning during the several years prior to the IGY and is still carrying on very important work. It has its headquarters in Brussels, and the secretary of this very competent committee is Monsieur Nicolay. I am not certain what his field in science is, but these things I certainly can find out. At any rate, they had held one meeting already and lots of the broad planning was well advanced. Then, this second meeting was called to discuss primarily the Antarctic program. These meetings were attended by all the countries that had suggested they would be interested in carrying on, cooperating on programs in the Antarctic. The chief of our research office, Dr. Harry Wexler, was a regular member of the Antarctic Committee - of this C.S.A.G.I., as it was called - and attended the meeting in Brussels. When he came back he almost immediately held a briefing with the various division heads of the Weather Bureau in which he gave us a rather thorough account of what the meeting involved. One of the things that was prominent in his remarks was the attitude and planning of the Russian delegation to this meeting. He spoke rather favorably of the friendly atmosphere that seemed to exist at the conference, and the outspokenness and freedom with which the Russians seemed to be able to speak about their own plan. It seemed to him that there was a real desire and hope for excellent cooperation with them. Sometime later - a few days, in fact - he sent me through the regular meeting some publications that he had - that the Russians had distributed at the meeting. They were all in English with numerous pictures describing the work of the preliminary Russian expedition to the Antarctic, which had gone down in the fall of 1955, as did the American and other expeditions, to do the preliminary work necessary to get the bases going. He penned a little

scratchy note on one of the documents, that he thought I would be interested in seeing these. Several days later he called me and asked if I had read them, and I said I had. He said, "how did you like them--what did you think of their work down there?" And I said, well it looks as though they are doing -- going right ahead, doesn't it, Harry? He said, "Why don't you come down to my office? I'd like to talk a little bit more about these--what they are doing." So I went down to see him, and a few minutes later (as usual) his office piled with papers in every conceivable spot--hardly room to write on the desk--his secretary running in and out--people calling on the 'phone--Harry just seemed to be having an absolutely marvelous time with it all. One day he is in Paris and the next day in Los Angeles, and it seems to be the best thing possible for his health. A very extroverted fellow, a wonderful person to be around; full of ideas and just craving to use every minute of time and enjoy life and make some use of it. He said a few introductory words, made some comments about some of the other people at the conference, and without scarcely changing his tone said, "How would you like to go down and work for the Russians for a year?" I am sure my jaw dropped open a bit, and I leaned forward in my chair and I said 'Harry, you are not sending me to Siberia, are you?' He laughed - his typical machine gun sort of laugh - and said, "Why no. I think you would be wonderful down there." I said, 'How would you like to go, Harry?' He laughed at this and said, "I am going--I am going down to Little America." And I said, "Gee, grand, wonderful." So we batted it around a bit, and I finally realized that he was serious about it. He explained, then, in more detail what prompted his remark. It appears that the Americans had decided

there would be a real gain in the international character of the Antarctic Program if they set up what they would call International Weather Central at Little America. This would be something a little bit apart from the rest of the U.S. operations there. That is, they would invite other countries participating in the Antarctic Programs to send working representatives to this international central where they would work side-by-side through the year in the analysis of data from all over the Antarctic. And, in turn, they would distribute the results of their analyses to all the Antarctic Stations for their own use. When this proposal was discussed at one of the meetings in Brussels, several countries almost at once suggested that they would like to take part. It sounded like a very variable arrangement. It turned out that the Russians said that they would like to send a man, and I am sorry to say that this sort of rocked the Americans a bit, and they said, "Well, let's -- we are, of course, troubled by some -- there is a limit to how many we can take, but we will certainly do what we can to take all those who are able to send people. But before we say yes, we would like to check on our staffing and find out how things stand." This was done, and some of our people were a little bit concerned about the proposal. Why? You really wonder now. But the upshot of it was that it was agreed by some of the offices higher up that we would be happy to have a Russian meteorologist at Little America, and in the same vein we would be very pleased if one of our men could go to Mearnie(?). So this was suggested to the Russians and they apparently accepted without a moment's hesitation; so that's how it came about. Of course, once the Russians had extended the invitation, then the next job was to find some chap who would be willing to go.

When Dr. Wexler suggested this to me, the first thing which came to my mind was the language problem, and I am sure this was in many respects the most important snag and it bothered me even after I had accepted the invitation to go--this thing troubled me a great deal. I have never had difficulty in communicating with people in my own language, and I think as long as you can talk and they are willing to listen some, it's possible to get along. But without this facility of expressing yourself to those with whom you are very intimately related, the possibilities of real psychological trouble seem to be right in the forefront. I expressed this concern to several of our men, and they -- no one seemed to feel the same way that I did about it -- possibly because they weren't so directly concerned. But anyway, they said there will be someone there who speaks English; they will certainly have probably several people. But I was confident that you just couldn't work that way. You couldn't expect these people to carry your burdens in English all the time. And if you couldn't understand what was going on around you, you certainly would feel lost, and always there is this possibility of creeping suspicion, and certainly this seemed to be a very good possibility considering our feelings towards the Russians, and the many prejudices which both we and they no doubt have about each other. So this really worried me a great deal. "Well," they said, "We'll fix that up. We'll give you special courses. You had better start right now." So amongst other things, I had to get started on the course. So I began two hours ~~AM~~ of instruction a day and all the reading and studying I could possibly do. Also, there wasn't much time because the Russians had said their ships would probably leave Leningrad sometime in October. It was already August. Then came, of course, once I had agreed the problem of

getting the Russians to accept me and to make all the necessary travel arrangements. So messages were sent immediately to the head of the Academy of Sciences in the Soviet Union, and the chairman of their National Committee for the IGY. I went ahead with my passport arrangements and took them over to the Soviet Embassy for visas since it was assumed that I would join the Russian expedition in the Soviet Union, and travel with them. This would have been useful because it would have given me the best possible practice in the language and a period of time to become acquainted with them before we actually started our wintering alone. Well, you know how these things go: Both our own State Department and the Soviet Embassy were their usual haughty selves, and things didn't move very quickly. I finally got my passport and took it over to the Soviet Embassy where they put the appropriate letters -- where they said well, they would see what could be done. It was now well into August and we had had no replies to our telegrams to Moscow, so I began to wonder whether the thing would really come off. Then, September came - it's wonderful days - and I felt rather sad at the prospect of leaving this lovely region and going off into a completely unknown situation. But I wasn't prepared to change my mind, although as the time passed I began to feel almost some relief. It really began to look as though nothing would come of it. I talked a number of times with Dr. Wexler about it. Meanwhile, he had been appointed chief scientist for the Antarctic Programs, that is, not only weather but all the other phases of the IGY. So he said, "Well, if you don't go to Hearnie(?), I would like to have you come down with me and then stay over during the winter as chief scientist at Little America. In other words, you would be the chief scientist for the U.S. Programs as my deputy." Well, this was a very

possibility that the assignment with the Russians might come through, but I had almost given up when a message came. Certainly one reason why I had become so sure nothing would happen was because the date which they had set for the sailing of the vessel from Moscow had actually passed. We were now well into -- well, we were now in the latter part of October. Sometime in early November, the date I have, we received a message that I should be -- I should meet the Russian trip _____ (meaning cooperation) and join their expedition in Cape Town about the 18th of December. Meanwhile, the Russian Embassy had - under some prodding - given back my passport, and said that well, since I wasn't going to Russia, I didn't need any visa. When I said, "Oh, yes, but how do I know how I am coming back. I might have to come back through the Soviet Union." "Oh, well, in that case," they said, "we can easily arrange it." So I went around busily and got all the other visas I might possibly need. It's an interesting job going around getting visas. Sometimes you meet very pleasant people, and it always gives you kind of a sense of anticipation. You really feel that when you go into some of these embassies that you are, in fact, on foreign soil. There is an atmosphere, and the accents are different, and the flags, and the pictures on the wall make you feel that you have really, in spirit, left the United States. I enjoyed particularly talking with the Australian girls. Well, I got this all cleared up and had my shots which are never particularly pleasant and always seem to come when you are just getting ready for a little party and celebration for your departure. I remember in Paris, some years ago, when I had to take shots for a trip to India, the doctor said, "Well, now, you mustn't drink any wine for twenty four hours after this shot." That proved to be very difficult in Paris. I think I managed.

Apparently the wine was bad for the bugs. Well, once the thing was really settled I remember again that feeling that I have on nearly every trip: "Why, in the hell am I leaving this pleasant place?" I am keen to go -- the idea is absolutely exciting -- but always there is this reluctance to leave. I have travelled so much that I always seem to be saying good bye to people. Of course, there is the counter part, you can always say hello to the true friends that you meet, but some how it seems a bit harder to say good bye. I remember how much more pleasant some of the places--the old, familiar places seemed to be--the 823, the Hot Shoppe Cafeteria on H Street, and how absolutely lovely the girls looked there--with fresh dresses and snappy-looking shoes and pretty hose. The theaters, the wonderful music, the gallery on Sunday evening, the gorgeous coloring in the trees, the absolute delicious smell of Jackson Park in the fresh morning air in the fall. I always sit there in the noon day sun and watch the squirrels play, looking across at the fountain to the White House, hearing the faint roar of traffic, the smell of the smoke from a few of the fortunate who have open fire places in their apartments. These things take on a sharpness which they never have except under such circumstances. Well, I wasn't making very good progress with my Russian, and further more my instructor - an old Colonel of the White Russian Army - filled me with fear and trepidation about what these people were like. I have never heard a man who expressed the bitterness and cynicism that this man held. It really was frightening in a way to think that a human being could be so offended, so hurt, so damaged by an alien ideology by his own people; that his life should be completely centered around this feeling of absolute hatred against the Communists.

I never told him what my parliament objective was, but he certainly gave me plenty of warning as to what I should do if I went to the Soviet Union. I haven't seen him since I have been back; I intend to do so, but it won't be easy for him to understand my reactions now....I don't think. On the other hand he may be inwardly highly gratified to know that his fellow-countrymen are not all spoiled by the disease which seems to have infected some of them. Yes, those were grand days. Days of sometimes, it seemed, worthless--time-wasting--piddling chores of trying to set everything in order for a year and a half. Then, of course, to think of the possibility that you might not come back, but things should be done now. It was a rather unique situation to be in, and particularly so because of my own rather unusual personal circumstances--not the happiest ones. I met with their secret joys which unfortunately must remain so. There were many who wanted to have parties, but I don't like big parties certainly, and I enjoyed the warm intimate little groups that were sweet enough to have me before I went away. Yes, I used to watch the Friday afternoon traffic--everyone busy going to their own special corners of the globe to enjoy the end of the season with their special friends. I didn't really feel sorry for myself, but there was a sense of loneliness for someone apart from the every day group. But that's always, I think, colored my departures, so I didn't really worry about it. The last evening I spent with my very good friends, the Johnsons, quietly. And in the early morning they took me to the airport--it was cold and I can still see Dave rubbing his nose, trying to fend off a sneeze as they closed the door on the aircraft. Betty threw me a kiss, and that was the last I saw of them for more than a year. It was a gorgeous morning. We flew northward to New York, and I thought how sweet the land looked.

There were lots of fascinating things to see in the hour and a half flight. We flew across Philadelphia--one of my first flights in the daytime across that not very attractive city but, still, the world is particularly lovely from the air. So fresh in its appearance, so different. I never tire - in all the hundreds of thousands of miles that I have flown - watching the earth beneath me. And even if you can't see it, the clouds themselves are just always a wonder delight. And even if it's dark and you can't see the clouds the mere fact that you are flying is something very special--it never fails to make you feel a little bit like a God. I once flew virtually ^{non-stop} ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ between Montreal and Delhi, India, in 48 hours (in the air) and I was still reluctant to leave the aircraft when it landed in Delhi. I noticed that this problem of passing through so many time belts--you see, I must have been nearly 12 hours off from my schedule, and it took a certain number of days for my physiology to adjust to this new schedule. I was sleeping in the daytime, wakeful at night, and things seemed to be topsy-turvy. I know many of us have experienced this same thing. Oh, yes, New York looked quite exciting. I had several things to do. One of them was - at the suggestion of Paul Kramer of the IGY - to see someone about the possibility of writing a book when I came back. So I stopped in to see John Beard--we had a brief but encouraging conversation. I told him that I didn't know what I could do, that I had never done any serious writing. "Well," he said, "see how things go. If you can get anything out, I will be glad to try to publish it. Articles would certainly help while you are down there." Then I went to see ^{Carroll} ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Stagg, an agent for writers, and he thought it sounded like a perfectly thrilling experience--it certainly should provide material for a book. So this made me feel a little more important.

I then visited an old - not an old person, but a very dear friend and we had a marvelous evening. The next day I went rather early to -- oh, no, I went to LaGuardia Field to see some of my old colleagues. I had worked at LaGuardia Field in the early days of the War and because of my association with aviation, I knew many, many of the people in aviation in New York. They all were very generous in their praise in what they thought I would be doing. How they thought it would be very helpful--it certainly would be an exciting experience for any one. Some of them said they would certainly hate to have such an assignment--they thought it was terrible. In fact, one person asked me if I was taking a gun with me. So, this gives you an idea of how wrong really has been the picture which the American press - either deliberately or by misinformation themselves - have painted of these people, because certainly nothing like that ever was needed. If I had thought I needed a gun I am quite sure I never would have gone. I don't count myself as a spy, a hero -- but it does make you feel a bit sad that these attitudes seemed so wide-spread, and certainly still are for that matter. And that's one reason why I would like to see something come out about my experience--something which will be widely read, to help -- well, I think the only word to use is to help correct the mistaken opinion and the prejudices which apparently are very wide-spread in the United States about the Russians as individuals. I am not speaking at all about the system--I know very little about it and from what little I know it certainly doesn't attract me. I love my own privacy too much to live in a communal group. In fact, I often think that I am anti-social. I find life the sweetest when it is shared with just those particular individuals that you choose and not with all the ~~community~~ community. I find it is difficult to know more than a few people well, and

to know people just casually isn't really very satisfying, I don't think. There is the saying that familiarity breeds contempt -- and it certainly does in many instances -- but in those instances when it doesn't breed contempt but growing and growing respect and delight, these are the people that you should really cling to and not waste your time in trying to know everybody a little bit. It becomes a more, and more firm conviction of mine -- I remember years ago the President of Western Reserve a Dr. Twing. Dr. Twing was apparently a man of great ability. He was also said to know - I don't remember exactly - but it seems to me 50,000 people, and I think it was Dr. Twing who said that life is measured by the number and importance of its ~~contacts~~ ^{contacts}. Well, I presume he meant human contacts. This sounds like a good definition and I often wonder if its true--and certainly it isn't true as far as I'm concerned, I don't want to know 50,000 people. If I can know five very, very well, five that I really love and who--with whom I can really communicate, I'd be much happier than if I knew 50,000 by name but didn't really know what they were like.

The time in New York went very quickly, just overnight. I had my camera bag and felt very much like a tourist, something I had never before carried in my life, never owned a camera before. I always seemed to feel that the impressions I could gather through my eyes and brain and nose and ears and hands were considerably better than anything you could put on photographic film. I often regretted this when I came back. People would show off their color slides and everyone would be thrilled. I suppose my view was selfish because I never did anything seriously to communicate these impressions, they somewhere had sunk into my own personality.

Here I was, stuck with a camera bag, a very beautiful outfit, but I felt a bit awkward with it and annoyed, really.

I went to the new East Side Airways Terminal around 39th Street or 37th Street in New York, an attractive place in a modern sense, a little bit gaudy; it was about 2:30, I believe, and I don't think I'd had any lunch for some reason, there was too much to do I guess. So I had something to eat there at the little snack bar. I tried to take some photographs inside--just about my first attempts and they were pretty terrible, really nothing came out on them. It had begun to rain so I had my topcoat on and finally boarded the limousine for the drive out to the airport. It was one of those transport carrier cab systems and I remarked to myself how well the engine seemed to be tuned up--the ~~mark~~ sort of satisfaction that comes from seeing a good solid operation where people know what they are doing and they do it when it should be done. The driver was one of these men who obviously loved to drive and knew just how to handle this equipment. When you know you are going away on a rather special sort of assignment for a long time you pay much more attention to what you see as you pass.

I was impressed by all the new construction, the tremendous changes that seemed to be going on since I lived in New York. It seemed to me that the city was going through one of its greatest building booms in years, whole blocks seemed to be new, to be under construction, wonderfully shiny glass slabs were rising all over the city. It was rather exciting to me, I always have had a keen interest in construction, am inclined to think I know a little bit about it and certainly I love to see creativeness in such an obvious way, something that is solid and well done.

Idlewild is one of the most unpleasant airports in the world probably--garish and crowded and confusing and ugly with its long, interminably long, temporary buildings, the little efforts that the airlines make to dress up the fronts of their counters and the big maps on the wall helped only a little bit. One thing they have are lots of telephones so I made some final calls, checked my baggage in. I was taking Pan American flight 304, I believe, leaving at 3:30, arriving in London very early the next morning. Remember, of course, there is 5 hours' difference in time.

I had flown the Atlantic many times before and this was not a new experience but one to which I looked forward. The airplane has always been a source of constant admiration and I thought the big Stratocruisers were just about as good as any of them. Also, I had a berth, not my first but still a delightful prospect. It was a rainy, grey, December 12th day.

The atmosphere inside of the aircraft is always a rather special one. It always reminds me a little bit of the theatre just before the curtain is about to rise. There is a sense of anticipation of real drama just ahead. Even in the daytime this is true and it is doubly true for some reason or other at night. The whole atmosphere in a busy airport at night is just something out of this world to me. This is even more so when the ~~xx~~ weather is troublesome, the mysterious affects of fog and rain and the reflection of the lights blanketing the curtains of the night that seem to give an added effect were coming into play at the time we got on board the aircraft. Did I say 3:30? It ~~xxx~~ must have been 4:30, or maybe it was 4 o'clock. I have always been partial to the rear of the aircraft for two reasons. One, you can see what's going on ahead of you and sometimes it is quite interesting to watch

the activities of the passengers and, two, it is in my opinion the safest place in the airplane even though in rough weather it's not as comfortable. But if you look at pictures of aircraft which have had a little trouble, in fact have had a lot of trouble and wind up on the ground in the wrong place, you usually see the tail is intact. Well, that's probably a silly comment but also it's oftentimes near the buffet on an overseas aircraft and this is frequently very handy because they usually serve from the back to the ~~z~~ front. That's so the passengers not being served won't know they're not being served except, of course, unless they've ~~got~~ got a good nose like I have.

I had a seat with a young diamond merchant, buyer, a young Belgian--Belgian ancestry but living in New York, an American citizen, very well to do young man, a disarmingly pleasant young fellow. Well, he wasn't as young as all that, he had a 12 or 13 year old son and naturally a wife, but he was a very ~~ix~~ interesting man to talk with, I suppose because he was dealing in something that has a special aura of romance and because I knew absolutely nothing about diamonds--never owned one, never bought one. He told me quite a lot in the several hours that we were together about the business. He was going over to London to attend some kind of a meeting of international dealers in diamonds, I suppose talking about price controls, quality and that sort of thing.

The government had paid a substantial figure for my berth so I said good night to him and called the stewardess to put me to bed, always a very interesting process and I just don't think of anything more wonderful than sleeping in a ~~m~~ comfortable bed in an aircraft flying at some 20,000 feet across the Atlantic. We had a good

tailwind. I think at times the pilot said we were getting the help of about 120 to 130 knots. We were doing well over 400 miles an hour groundspeed. Always just an absolutely thrilling sensation but one that gives you the quiet sort of thrill, so pleasant. We would be in London I think about 6:30 in the morning so---or 7 o'clock---so she said she'd call me at 5, that was 5 London time, for breakfast. That came much too quickly and we had breakfast and were quite refreshed, looking forward to seeing London again after too long an absence. I had been to London a number of times and one period spent about three months there in the Spring when I came to know the grand old city and to love it as one of the great communities of the world. I suppose I still think of Paris as the greatest city but London has its own charms, charms which it takes a little longer to learn and aren't nearly so obvious. It isn't beautiful the way Paris is but it has ~~the~~ its tradition and it has its ~~x~~ lovely spots and a sense of history which you just can't get away from. ~~xx~~ Also it has a special place for me because of my English ancestry although my father never gave it any time.

I do feel a very intimate bond with the ~~&~~ English and also a ~~xx~~ great ~~x~~ respect for them. In my opinion they are the most mature group in the world. They really know what freedom is and what it's worth, how to keep it and they know what (word inaudible) is, they are just mature politically and I think they know how to deal with other countries better than we do. They have been in this international business so long they place a lot of pride in the way they do these things. Sometimes many people think they are a bit stuck up and I guess they are but some of them have--- there are reasons for these and I think pride in perfection is a justifiable thing.

So, it was fun to be back in London again, rainy and foggy as it always seems to be although I do remember some wonderful bright days there. I only had less than 12 hours and I knew how quickly it would go. What to do? The telephone to see if friends were still available, around the city to see my old haunts. In day-time they seem different when there is so little time and without the anticipation of meetings in the evening. It wasn't quite as exciting as I had hoped. Some friends I couldn't reach, others were now out of the city too far to get in touch with. So the day passed, just a little bit drearily for me and I went back to the airport rather earlier than I had expected. We ~~at~~ were due off at 5 so one has to leave not later than 3:30 to check in and get everything squared away, you don't like to miss a 12,000 mile flight, they don't come every day, so I was in plenty of time for my bus which was rather unusual for me and get back to the airport where we started this annoying but sometimes interesting business of checking through. ~~through~~ The London airport is somewhat better than New York, Idlewild, they haven't finished the permanent buildings but they have done up the temporary ones in a rather fresh way with that little touch of England which is indefinable, sometimes a bit dowdy but still it has its points and, of course, always good tea and biscuits for you do most anything.

The customs people were always a bother to me. I hate the idea of them and probably deliberately annoy them but this time they were quite decent about it and I felt inwardly grateful and put up another mark for the British. They have a system there that the passengers don't walk to the aircraft, they are all taken in buses which you climb into laboriously and mount up to the top deck of the bus and ride for a few seconds and get out again. But it has its good points, it keeps you out of the rain, which is pretty common; it keeps you from getting on the wrong airplane or

wandering into the propellers or doing something else rather foolish.

So there was this plane marked "DC6B", looking pretty grey, yet competent, good old Donald Douglas has certainly done his share to make the world safe for aviation, or vice versa. It was ~~modern~~ a virtually new aircraft, clean and fresh and very attractive. As you know most of these companies have their own ideas of how to decorate the aircraft, some of them not very original, but this aircraft was quite pleasant.

I was interested to see the crew, the stewardesses and the steward, x fresh South African types, bronzed and blond and I suppose a goodly mixture of Dutch. Pretty soon the familiar blop-blop-bang-and-roar of the starting ~~idea~~ went down the line and all four were going, doors slammed shut, the stewardess' cheery good-bye and we began to move off to the starting position. The third leg on what was a rather long trip but oh the joy ~~is~~ of being back in the air again and to see a great city at night from the air is one of the most glorious rewards of modern civilization. I think cities are dreadful when you are in them but above them at night is something rare. London has its ~~own~~ own special appeal. It is very, very different from any city in the world that I remember. It's not bright and glittering like New York or most of the ~~most~~ American cities but it's absolutely lovely and soft, amber and blue-white lights along the main routes and the shadowy parts of the great city which seem scarcely visible from the air at times but knowing it well you can pick out, visualize in your ~~mind~~ mind the fascinating things that are going on below and the fascinating things that have gone on in that great city over the centuries.

(End of Tape 1)