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For A. J. Phillip Hitchfield



01 August 2000

British Embassy
Beijing

Mr and Mrs Keith Smith
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Dear Keith,

CHINA TOUR 2000

I hope you both had a comfortable return journey to the UK with all your charges. May I say what a delight it was to have a chance to meet you when you were in Beijing last week and to chat about the vicissitudes of touring China with a symphony orchestra. Getting round three cities with a group of 80 plus is a great achievement.

I was also - needless to say - most impressed by the performance on Saturday night at the Beijing 21st Century Theatre. It certainly seemed to capture the imagination of the Chinese audience. If your concerts in Xi'an and Qingdao were as successful, I am sure you will have contributed enormously to the reputation of the Youth Orchestra and to Chinese awareness of British ability in the musical arts. In particular in Qingdao I am sure you can only have reinforced the growing links between your two cities, and to provide a firm foundation for the future.

I was sorry to hear that so many of your players will be moving on this year. I am sure, however, that the orchestra will continue to grow stronger in the future. I hope that one day in another part of the world I may find that the Southampton Youth Orchestra is again on tour overseas.

*yours sincerely
Christopher Segar*

Christopher Segar
Commercial Counsellor

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