

2 October 1945

Dear Ones,

Some back mail came in and I got a note from you, some back TIMES, and a letter from Bill Snower who has at last made corporal; Bill commented that he thought the breaking up of OSS was very unwise, that the organization is efficient and effective and should have been taken over in tact as the Army G-2 rather than split between the State and War departments. Bill has been in OSS for some time, and I am inclined to feel that his opinion is based on more than just loyalty to his group. Last night's movie - Our Vines - is really a topper; it is one of those American panorama type pictures that has stirring simplicity. The bridge was good last night too, the best we have played for some time; after two and a half hours and six rubbers, the biggest loss was a quarter, the big winner netted thirty five cents - I was the other winner with a nickel!

You know in going through these clippings I find the same columns coming through twice - do you buy two Boston Herald's every day? I think that Max Werner hit the nail pretty well on the head in predicting De Gualle's dilemma in the eventuality of a Leftist swing in the French vote. One of the Lyon's columns tells the story of a young atomic scientist who was refused a chance at Ordnance OCS for declaring current weapons obsolete; they must have changed the standards for admittance to Aberdeen since my day - I couldn't even spell Ordnance, let alone know anything about it, back in 1943. (And except for the spelling part, things haven't changed much in two and a half years!!) I cannot concentrate enough on the details of our current economic picture to criticize with any intelligence the various articles which deal with long analyses and which have more figures than words - I have to study things like that, and I recall that I got a C in Ec A. It is clear that the big battle of the post-war economy is shaping up only vaguely in Congress because there seems to be a lack of grasp of the total nature of the task we face in the Legislature. There seems to be a tendency to discuss each matter by itself instead of in relation to the entire world structure into which our nation must effectively fit.

David Lawrence refers to the MacArthur-State Department controversy as unnecessary. He sides with the General as the determinant as to "how many troops he will need to maintain order and enforce our program." What I question is whether MacArthur or the State Department itself knows what our long range program is closely enough to make accurate predictions and I agree with the State Department that MacArthur is merely their agent and that because of that and because of his high position he should refrain from playing cards from their hand. I don't think that the State Department was necessarily surprised at the figure of 200,000 - it was just that MacArthur "skipped channels" in stating his analysis of the Japanese situation. I see that Pearson still manages to get his play-by-play reports of secret caucuses; it will be interesting to watch what the Republicans in Congress adopt as a positive opposition policy. My impression is that with the exception of the die-hard "agiggers" there is little enthusiastic unity in the Republican fold.

(I'm not even making a dent in my stack of envelopes.) Hank Greenberg really pulled a Frank Merriwell in winning the pennant for the Tigers - talk about your story book finishes! I guess that football has the spotlight now - I am looking for the Alumni Bulletins especially this year so that I can keep informed on Harvard's football fortunes. It will be 1946 before I see my next Harvard game, I guess - that's a long time from 1942. It will be interesting to see the results of the New Petrillo tack against record-playing radio stations. The union's questions of jurisdiction seem pretty tangled. I see that PM is still hot after the native Nationalist and Fascist groups and that the Scripps-Howard expose on Reynolds is getting wide publicity. I don't think that these groups stand much of a chance as long as they are continually held up to the light of public examination. I am going to have to dig through my Chicago Round Tables for discussions on the question of post-war continuation of economic stabilization controls - between labor's pleas for higher wages and the general attack on the OPA by the entrepreneurs it seems to me that there is a striking lack of consistency with any well coordinated plan for the readjustment period. Truman's ability to hold the line he outlined in his speech to Congress will be critical.



One thing it seems to me is clear: the efforts of Wallace and Truman to inspire confidence and to evolve with Schwellenbach a workable post-war basis may be upset by the outbreak of strikes and lockouts. The attempt of the Auto Workers may well be upset by wildcat and disorganized labor irresponsibility - it is a dangerous contagion. However there is no reason why these disputes, these requests for higher wages, need mean strife; in fact the strike threat and the lockout threat should prove valuable balances to assure arbitration. To be effective the arbitration must come from below - were it made compulsory a great deal of the usefulness of arbitration would be lost.

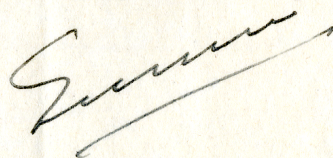
I heard a rumor today that Marshall and Somervell are scheduled for retirement this month; I'd like to get my name on that list. As I read over all the clippings I realize that in peacetime, without the fast pace of war news, the newspapers depend a great deal on rehashing, editorializing, and repetitious filler material. Even the TIMES editorials will hit upon the same questions day after day; sometimes the methods of approach are almost identical. Perhaps that is why the comic strips are the most widely read part of the average paper.

It is good to read that Bradley is planning the overall revision of the Veterans Administration; you can see some of the results of the Baruch survey. The decentralization scheme should help to place responsibility and improve the administrative set-up. I think your comment on PM's coverage of the Ford strike situation is entirely justified, Daddy. There is a lack of proportion in the coverage given to the feature stories and to the news of the current disputes. It looks as though Pearl Harbor will be in the limelight for a long time with the appointment of the new Congressional Committee - it is interesting that Forrestal still claims that certain elements of the Pearl Harbor story must remain secret for national security even now; somehow that doesn't sound quite right, but King and his cohorts may convince the Congressmen that they are right. The Argentine picture does not seem to be clearing as yet - I wonder if we will have to wait for an inter-American conference to start hemisphere pressure on her. The Sinclair deal for the Abyssinian oil has all the earmarks of a Near Eastern melodrama - what with all the stories of Standard's pre-war efforts to gain the concessions.

OK for now - we got in orders on a lot of our spare parts - apparently they will go to Japan but we have a gigantic job of remarking if not repacking to do first. Nothing like keeping busy.

All my love,

Regards to Doris

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sumner", written in dark ink.