

4 October 1945

Bear Ones,

Last night the bridge players went to the movie so I took the opportunity of sorting out some of my clippings before they returned and started to play. This noontime and tonight before chow, I slept - for some reason I felt tired - so this is my letter writing opportunity; I think that the movie schedule is terrible.

The Times article on the troubles of being a college president was clever and interesting; surely the position is one of the most desired "political" jobs in our civilization. The combination of a complex, unwieldy administration, the educational and cultural decisions, and the necessity of balancing the various alumni, faculty, and endowment group must make for a lively routine. Right now, just from reading the Nevins' review and from noting that it has 577 pages I will bet a cookie that Schlesinger's "Age of Jackson" becomes a standard college text and stands a good chance of winning a Pulitzer prize. As usual, the Times' crossword puzzle has me stumped.

It does not seem to me that the current investigation of the Roosevelt loan is throwing much light on the details; and I am inclined to doubt as to whether anything further than what is known now is revealed. Since no one is very interested in Hartford or in Elliott, it must be disappointing to the FDR-baiters to find that no new evidence or even confirmation of a positive role of FDR in the transaction has been uncovered. The Taft amendments to the full-employment bill failed on their first hurdle; I think the reason is that it is realized that Taft is seeking to kill rather than to repair the bill; where the amendment forces are on the safest ground is in their insistence that it is clarified that the the government is not promising a job to everyone just like that - but that can be accomplished without touching the basic "national insurance" which the bill is. I know very little of the mechanics of international trade outside of the essential notions of needing money or credit to buy on world markets; but it seems to me that the current position of Britain and the US in interrelation need not be unhealthy if it is worked out on the solid basis of the current Truman position and the current British statements of men like Keynes. The American Anglophobes and anti-internationalists are way off base in calling for no loans to Britain and such nonsense; we ended lend lease, but we cannot end all loan policies. Britain clearly must have the credit for restoring her normal production and import-export levels in open world trade or she will return to the protective barriers of limited and closed trade channels. Not to work out an international rehabilitation program for Britain would be counter to any long range interpretations of the World interest and of the best interests of the US in that world. My meager knowledge of economics has left me with one definite idea; the notions which prevail in small scale, personal economics do not hold true in international finance and commerce, where the impetus of trade and the payment of interest rather than the repayment of the original loan is the primary element. In other words, we are interested in loaning credits to England not for the repayment of them with interest primarily but for the return we will realize in the trade and prosperity which will result from revived commerce.

I think that PM is right in insisting that the sedition trials not be dropped. The crime is the same, the basic question no less important for the fact that actual hostilities are over. As if in answer to the question I asked in yesterday's note Mallon lists in another column the "unorganized 40 million" as those with whom the CIO is unpopular. This group has a strength of about 4 to 1 over union members. And Mallon explains why there will be unpopularity - higher wages for labor unions will cut into the lives of all the rest of the nation. Now let's see, am I wrong in concluding then that Mallon would oppose all general wage increases? If one group gets them and not another, then the others suffer and in is unfair. I imagine that Mallon's reasoning would lead him to believe that a wage increase that included everybody would be useless since no one would gain relatively. I think that Mallon is wrong - wage increases improve the national economy, and all elements of that economy are better off when there is more money in circulation, more trade, and as a result general prosperity. The ideal situation would be to raise wages without raising prices proportionally - there is no reason why this is not economically



feasible since greater markets and production and property turnover would substitute for higher prices. I do not think that Mallon's economic reasoning is sound, or economically progressive. I still enjoy Pearson - whether he writes of surplus property disposal or surplus personnel disposal his barbs must hit home in Washington; if he could restrain his urge to predict every now and then, his column would be the strongest out of the capital.

PM is after the toothpastes and powders, now, huh? Maybe I had better go back to using plain salt until I hear from Albert Deutsch as to what is the best dentrifice to trust with my sensitive enamels. If the PM report that Acheson was ready to resign if the State Department was not given a clearly defined control over the occupation policy in Japan is true, then it is probably just as well that there was a showdown and that Acheson and the State Department won out. The Acheson program for control of Japan sounds good - after all, the criterions of hard or soft peace are hardly definite: the important thing is that we have effective controls - and that means the overthrow of the Japanese system, not coddling it in an attempt to remold it on the same skeleton form. The proposed internal revolt must come off - I like the directness, the firmness, and the honesty of Acheson's stand in this matter. It should define and make easier MacArthur's task, as well. We are coming closer to having a standard by which to judge; occupation is not easy, but its problems and its gradualism or its ease and speed are related to its mechanics not to its basic programs. MacArthur's moves against the financial systems and the controlled press are better indications of what we want. Despite the thorny Balkan problems our handling so far seems to be showing good judgment: sending Dulles to study the question not only gives a source of information but a time allowance for further study and consideration. Russia seems to be ready to play a stalling game of not committing herself in the Balkans until she sees how the elections and the plebiscites go. The first British statements on India indicate that progress will be made but that it will not be spectacular and that as always it will depend on at least a minimum of Indian cooperations; perhaps the tone of the New Government will help to foster that spirit of Indian trust.

The appointment of Burton seems justified on any count - I do feel that Truman probably balanced politics with the other factors involved in the decision. It served to renew the stories of the Burton-Brewster history; those two Bowdoin men certainly have hit the jackpot. I wonder if Cunningham's prediction that the two still have new heights to reach will be borne out in the next ten years. The arguments over the Jewish war veterans have come up again; in public I will not oppose the JWV - between you and me and the lamppost I do not feel that the organization is justified. The fact that there may be Catholic War Veterans groups doesn't alter the facts at all. There is nothing in our identity as Jews which ties in with our identity as war veterans; the reasoning which supports the JWV is definitely segregationist in a case where separate identity has no justification. It is not like a charity, it is not like a fraternal order dedicated to a social program, it is not like a planned community social activity. However, I do not feel that there is enough positive harm in the JWV to make it worth a fuss.

I see that Mrs Bolton came back from Arabia duly impressed by the "terrific" Ibn Saud; and there are still elements in America which are strong for the Arab claims in the Near East. It is well that the current European reports are being publicized to counteract this type of argument. The news of the State Department stand on Spain is good - it seems as though Acheson will balance Dunn as an influence on Byrnes. Certainly the Spanish Republican position is growing more favorable all the time. There are indications at every turn that the US is taking the valued initiative in world settlements - we apparently ironed the way to a first solution on the immediate questions concerning Italy and Yugoslavia. Our support for United Nations' action is the necessary impetus to keep British and Russian interests under a cooperative rather than a conflicting basis. Realpolitik can work for cooperative peace as well as balance-power politics. On the issues which could not be settled we have been able to schedule eventual solution at the next plenary sessions. In the face of all the problems (and they multiply every day) we have the promise of being able to handle them effectively and fairly.

That about covers things for tonight -

All my love, 