

12 October 1945

Dear Ones,

Columbus day is about over and I can't think of a thing I discovered today. It is good to be off guard - the movie tonight is Up in Arms which I have seen twice: but that theatre lobby routine is worth seeing again. We may be in for a busy weekend - rumor has it that a ship is coming in to start making a dent in our excess stocks, for which I am very glad. No mail except for a Readers Digest and a New Palestine. This letter will consist of whatever odds and ends pop into my head.

The refusal of the Congressional committee to act on the unemployment compensation legislation and the quidness of certain elements of the press to cry that we are subsidizing malingerers, or nullifying free enterprise, or what have you, makes me wonder what those people think of the average American and the average American worker. It seems to me that, while you must recognize that there is in any society of our day and age a fringe of parasites, if you deny the sense of responsibility and obligation in the great bulk of the American labor segments then you deny a good part of the basic assumption of democracy, namely the ability of the individual to recognize his needs and wants in relation to the common condition and to guide his course to come close to satisfying them both, you deny the integrity and sincerity and the intelligence of the average person upon whom our entire structure is built. There should be no confusion - the desire for leisure time, ample wage scales, to live a freer and better life, is no denial of the importance of work and earning what one receives by the community standard. To argue abuse of unemployment compensation as the main argument against these specific proposals is hardly to strike a note of confidence on the backbone of our nation.

Fish got his orders today - he will go down to New Cal and work in the PX section of Headquarters. Another roommate has come and is about to go! This also nicks one man from our ranks of bridge players. Bob Howes, Phil Brown and I are still the standbys. Bob Howes is a Captain in the AGD, the personnel officer and currently acting Adjutant; he is from New England, someplace around Boston. He is quiet, an extremely capable fellow, and a hard worker. He always seems calm - and he strikes people who don't know him as being slightly sure of himself and a little dull and uninteresting. He is plain in appearance - a poorly formed mouth and chin - in all, he sort of symbolizes confident New England stolidity. I like Bob a lot. His fellow and assistant AG officer is Phil (Puddin') Brown, who is his exact opposite, Pud is flamboyant and full of extremes of enthusiasm - he calls everybody "Puddin'" hence his own nickname; he is the liveliest of the bridge players - he keeps shaking his head and wise-cracking. I think he gets more pleasure out of seeing a hand passed out when he has nothing and the other three of us have the honor values split so that none can bid than he does out of a bid and make slam. Pud is a young but balding ex-real estate man from Miami.

Excitement today over the latest war department estimates of troop strengths for March of 1946. We will have to wait for extensive clarification and directives and I have my fingers crossed for a recomputation of points and for a new policy on officers. We shall see. I should write to Jerry Brown so that I will catch up on my mail but I probably won't. When the mail does come in all probability it will be a deluge again. I have figured it out that I average about two hours a day in writing letters. Well, that is about all I can glean from my brain today - unlike Keats I do not find myself teeming with things to say today.

*It is now noon of the 13th - it has been a fairly busy morning, we are moving heavy stuff from the depot to be staged at the docks. At least we are getting rid of it.*

*All my love*

*Sumner*

*I did well at bridge last night - made a grand slam among other things.*