

25 October 1945

Dear Ones,

About ten more envelopes came in today - one from Uncle Lou and the rest from home covering October 5th through 8th. There are still big gaps and I don't think I am unjustified in thinking that there must be mail from places other than Portland on the way to me. We have a bridge game scheduled for tonight; I have found out that the CO spells his name Spalding - no, he is not the fourth; we have coralled Stout, the JAG (Judge Advocate General) to play with us.

I will count on these letters reaching Uncle Lou as well as Bolton street - there is hardly enough to write about to write two letters to Portland! I hope that he is finding the transition back to normal life an easy one; I am glad that he is concentrating on the office and letting community ventures go for a while until he has everything under control - and you can tell him that I am counting on a moderate reserve of good Scotch for my return: my thirst is limited in quantity, but it is very select as to liquors. In writing to me and in speaking of the possibility of my getting to Tutuila to see him, Juj referred to my distaste for the Bourbon which we have here by telling me to bring it with me for disposition at his end of the line! (My chances of getting to Sampa are slimmer than slim.) Anyhoo, right now a Brighton Avenue Pharmacy Vanilla Sundae or Soda would suit me to a T.

As was expected, the Court upheld the Chapman decision and Portland officially has a civic government once more; the article just said that Libby went back to the routine without comment - I still wonder what he gained or hoped to gain by his attitude. The real questions lie in clarifying the problems raised by the new nine-man group, and his obstinacy can hardly be construed as working in that direction. I know you will keep me informed as to the various candidates, their political strength, and what the inside dope on the election will be.

Even if her voice is against her, Mrs Craig is certainly a refreshing note in "aine attitudes. The report of her speech indicates that she hit upon the highlights which she stresses in her column. xcept for occasional sparks in the editorial column, she is the saving feature of the Prêss Herald editorial page for my money. I have the letter with the first news of Bill Parker - really swell; were I to sweat it out on Santo for another year I would still be more fortunate than he. (I have just gone through the letters that arrived today and sorted out the clippings. This batch had a surprisingly high percentage of letters, and as much as I enjoy clippings, it is the letters that count. As for the clippings, in view of the irregularity of mail, do not be hesitant to send me the full supply - they will help tide me over the long mail-less periods. As it is, with just small groups of clippings I can answer too many at once! and leave myself with nothing for the next day!) The irregularity of the mail has thrown my Terry and the Pirates all out of kilter.

I see that PM is hopping right onto the soldier bitch bandwagon about speeding up demobilization. I am convinced of several things: the first is that the War Department was not ready for the end of the war - it had no plan ready for eventual dispositions of men and equipment commensurate with the speed and efficiency which it must have known Congress and the Nation would demand. The second is that the higher ups in Washington recognize the need of quick demobilization and that their directives have made it clear that the future of the Army depends on effective and quick demobilization; these planners are counting and justifiably so on the draft and post-war conscription to replace the men who are doing essential army jobs such as police and occupation duty and the reshuffling of equipment. The third is that local commanders tend to slow down the process in an attempt to keep their commands or simply because they are charged with property and they are afraid to release anybody until the property is disposed of; these local commanders work on the basis that they cannot get replacements which at the present time is true. The fourth is that the lack of planning for disposal of equipment is one of the key headaches; the Army, with the Surplus Property Board breathing down its neck, is afraid to throw stuff away even though shipping it from present locations is manifestly

uneconomical (the fact that the Navy does throw the stuff away makes the situation ridiculously incomprehensible to the average GI like me.) And the fifth is that shipping is a very real bottleneck. In general, the key is that the Army does not work at civilian paces or by civilian standards - there is a lack of responsibility and imagination where it would be helpful; there seems to be a lack of initiative except in doing those things which to the civilian-soldier appear to be exactly the opposite of the best course. The story in PM of the Legion split with Bradley is hardly encouraging. If the issues on the specific questions of GI loans were presently fairly, the answers would be obvious; there is only one criterion and that is the best interests of the discharged veteran. To try to disassociate the problem from those of price controls, rent and real estate regulation, is impossible and it seems to me that Bradley and the Veterans' Administration ^{ARE} 100% right in insisting that some corrective action be taken to bring coordination between the FHA, the VA, and the OPA. Miss Donahue's raising the point that the Legion is disgruntled over Bradley's refusal to play politics with them is not too hard to believe. Pearson continues to be an effective prodder of the Army routine - his column seems to be a daily symbol of civilian feeling toward the workings of the Army system. The result of this war may well be the breaking up of the semi-feudal, caste systems which run through the regular Army and Navy machines; the policy of protecting each other may be ended if civilian pressure can be kept high enough to assure that the ^{THEMSELVES} Military groups work for the national, civilian welfare, not primarily as a little world all by ~~themselves~~. The current Army is not adjusted to constructive criticism - that is the current civilian task.

I will save the clippings on the strike because I feel that more will be coming and I can go over them together and get a complete picture of the statements of the various factions involved.

It is now 7 in the morning of the 26th; the bridge game was only mediocre - we played only three rubbers and they were slow and rather uninteresting. Today is bright and sunny - and still cool at this early hour - should fine for planes carrying mail. We shall see. Thanks for sending me the bits of Harvardiana circulated by the Harvard Fund. I hope that it won't be too many Octobers before I back in Harvard Hall, and Mem Hall, and all the rest. Among the clippings were a number covering Palestine; the trouble at the various ports caused by the threat of illegal entries is helping to heighten the interest in the plea for the end of the White paper. Proper publicity can assure that the actions of Palestinian groups in defiance of British regulations are justified under the standards for which we have been fighting; and of course there will be Arab propaganda to discount on that score. The reports make it clear that the British recognize the duplicity of their situation - the promise to the Jews on one hand, their support of the Arab League on the other - they are in no position to criticize anybody. I thought that the open letter of Wise and Silver, and the letter to the Times by Steinberg, were two of the most powerful statements of the Jewish-Zionist cause I have ever read. As long as Zionists retain such fervor, as long as political and moral pressure is brought to bear on the British Cabinet, there is no reason to become wholly despondent as to the success of Political Zionism. Time may affect its arguments of the moment one way or the other, but nothing can alter its basic and powerful justifications.

I am all for the idea of getting a new radio-record player; why not make my money order the first part of the "radio fund?" I have already mentioned that I would like you to continue your generosity in sending clippings; yes, a lot of my letters do come plastered with stamps and I can see where they have been returned for additional postage before leaving Portland. "Maybe you ought to leave a deposit with Mrs Donahue to cover my postage requirements! I think the idea of a trip to New York is a wonderful one - do make it a period of complete relaxation and enjoyment for yourselves, and save the family get-togethers for the tail end of the visit. I will be looking for the Center Bulletin - I take it that publication has been resumed with the Fall Season. I am glad to note in your letters a recognition of the fact that I am liable to be overseas for another 3-6 months - it is best that we do our thinking and planning on that basis to avoid disappointment. I am glad that Marjorie Wine's spouse is getting on the boat - I need reassurances like that every now and then that new personnel is being sent overseas - it is tough on the fellows who get caught in the net at this late stage of the game but there is still a job to be done and compared with the men who have been over here for months and years already they have no complaint.

The Advocate summary of the atomic experiments certainly made the contributions of the Jewish scientists impressive; I did not know that so many of the experimentors or that Laurence of the Times were Jewish. It is a constant source of pride to me that such a numerically small group as the Jewish community throughout the world has contributed and done so much in so many fields of human endeavor. When anti-Semitism is studied in any reasonable light, it becomes perhaps the grossest and most un-humanitarian notion in the world today, for it is a denial not only of religious freedom and of the rights of a specific group, but also of disproportionate role which Jews have played and presumably will continue to play in the progress of the world. In fact, the contribution of the Jews is perhaps one of the best arguments for the era of freedom and liberty.

OK for this morning -

All my love,

Regards to Doris.

Summary