

1 November 1945

Dear Ones -

November - the ~~be~~eventh month - 1945 is certainly rushing by! So far no mail yesterday or today except for the latest Esquire. It is a damp wet day; it rained hard all during the night and until 7 this morning - fortunately we finished our shipment last night around 8. The Bridge game is just about gone - Pud Brown left for the states on the same ship that took our cargo. Pud had some 27 months overseas and he went home on Leave; in order to get that leave, he had to sign up to stay in the Army until June of '47 - whether he will be able to get out of it or not, I do not know - but he was getting to the point that he felt that he had to get home any way he could; he has been extremely nervous and and on edge, irritable lately. It is a pretty sad commentary on the way Officer discharge policies are being handled that an officer with three years service and better than two overseas can't get home except by ransoming another year and a half of his life to the Army.

I have been thinking about your suggestion, Daddy, that I plan to spend next summer ( if I am home and released by then) in complete relaxation rather than at summer school; your idea is to afford me the greatest opportunity for complete relaxation and enjoyment. The more I think of it the more I am sure that the thing I want most ~~is~~ to end this lethargic, do-nothing life which I now lead and substitute for it an active program at school that will re-awaken me. I am busy here, I have things to do - on paper; as far as my interests and my personal interpretations of profitable and important activity are concerned I am doing nothing. I think that after a week or two of rest at home I will be raring to go.

Last night after I came back from the loading detail, Bob Howes came into the tent; I put down my reading and we talked for about a half an hour - it started off with our discussing the bridge prospects and ended with our talking about the general problem of passing time out here. What struck me - and I thought of his stand when we had discussed the post-war social adjustment of the Negro - was his admission that he did next to no reading. His explanation was that in order to keep from needing glasses he had cut out all extra-reading when he left ~~high~~ school and went to business school, and that he had never regained the habit; he said that he reads slowly at best and that if he sits down with TIME or Newsweek he is bored and ready to give it up after one page. Apparently glancing at Newspaper headlines is the limit of his perusal of the public press. I don't have to tell you that that little talk helped fill in a lot of blank spaces in my analysis of Bob; it certainly alters my conception of his intelligence. Even taking his small town, New England background into consideration ( his home is in Middleboro, Massachusetts and he plans to return there,) I find it hard to consider a man well balanced intellectually if he does not even have the urge to do minimum reading to keep himself informed and alert. Bob's intelligence is severely limited by the scope of his interests or perhaps of his mind. He is an officer and he is respected for his efficiency as the Adjutant here; and yet he has lived in a world of war and turmoil for better than five years and he has not felt pressed to at least examine its general trends or to understand the directions in which it is heading....

You will pardon, I trust, the split infinitive in that last sentence! General Marshall's cries of alarm at the "demobilization disintegration" of the Army should have the effect not of stopping demobilization but of increasing the pace of drafting replacements and of forcing Congressional action on the permanent post-war military source of manpower. Even on rainy days, the noon hour seems to be saturated with drowsiness - it is all I can do to keep from putting my head down on the typewriter and snoozing - maybe I can't even do that!

No mail - looks like another busy day tomorrow -  
I did hear from Neil.

Regards to Pris.

all my love,  
Summer