

September 3rd

Dear Ones,

Here is a perfect example of why morale is low in Santo - it is V-J day in the States, it is also Labor Day, the newcasts carry the word of a universal holiday. The Navy here on Santo is not on duty BUT the Army goes on apparently indifferent to it all. Not that it makes a lot of difference to me - I have certain things to be done anyway; but the affect on the men is striking - it is a talking point.

Last night I skimmed through Douglass's "Disputed Passage"; it did not strike me as being especially noteworthy or interesting so I did not read it carefully. I couldn't concentrate on his paragraphs on Chinese philosophy and medical attitudes - they seemed to grow repetitious and obvious. The mail yesterday brought some clippings from home and letters from Aunt Anne and from Willie, as well as a New Palestine. Right now I am thinking most about my dentist appointment tomorrow - I can already feel the discomfort as he goes to work on those awkward cavities in my front teeth. What fun. Don Harms and I are witnessing a strange process - Don handles ammunition now as well as his Chemical Warfare job. Major Thorpe has suddenly reversed his attitude that resulted in his doing everything himself and now he is doing nothing! He is using his weak eyes as an out - he has drops put in which he says deny him the use of his eyes. I think that a desire to get out of the service is behind it all. He makes a constant point of stressing his delicate eyes and apparently his delicate temperament. I think it ties in with his habit of always having an excuse for everything; it does not increase my esteem for him especially.

The education problem presented in Stanley Frank's article in the SATVEPOST and discussed in different phases by Carmichael of Tufts and other educators seems to be coming to a head. I do not think that Frank's percentage figures are entirely valid since there is a large segment of the Army - I am a member of it - which still lists "undergraduate" in the blank space provided for "civilian Occupation" on the questionnaires. However my limited experience on Santo is that the GI Bill is not ringing up very many sales. Frank hits the nail on the head when he blames this on restlessness and the overwhelming concentration on just getting home and out of the Army. Even a more generous GI Bill would not attract proportionally more. The men I know don't think that they can spend the time or lose the money that the educational process involves. The answer quite clearly goes back to the issues touched off in the Buck report - the issues of general education and of new civic and national attitudes toward education. The base of our educational system must be broadened and deepened. The de-emphasis on secondary and primary education must be removed; there must be a new concentration on effective educational matter and method to reach the young citizen during his formative years. The role of education as a constructive element rather than an economic burden on the community must be recognized. The Army experience and the Army figures on our educational achievement should be warning enough that something must be done. An informed, intelligent, thoughtful populace is our first and basic social requirement.

My impression from the various clippings is that UNRRA is one the big question mark in the picture of international cooperation. The failings of that organization seem to fall not only on its administrators but on the failure of full support from the member nations because of political complications; that was true throughout Europe and the Balkans and there is no reason to think that it will not be repeated in Asia. The answer it seems to me is the closer cooperation and control through organized United Nations Channels. In a similar line, the end of Lend-Lease seemed to have been unexpected by the nations of Europe; I don't want to get into a discussion of War Debts or anything of the sort here, but it appears manifest to me that L-L will be replaced by a peacetime loan program; both our export economy and the rebuilding of the world's areas require it. (I use the words "seem" and "appear" and words like that excessively - I guess they reflect my feeling of isolation here on Santo, that I feel out of the mainstream of events, like a spectator.)

I am very happy that Lou Raybin has decided to marry; I think that you are right in guessing that he presented his parents with a fait accompli and that previously they had not been completely in his confidence. That is not surprising. Just between us, I received the impres-

sion from talking with Juj, that Aunt Ida and Uncle Harris never were able to penetrate to Sonny's confidence, even after his return from Italy. I can't help but feel that from a point of view of personalities, Lou's marriage overshadows the Morris nuptial plans - of course, I know Sonny much more (~~the~~ hesitated to say "better") than I do any of the Morris clan, but this announcement clearly is much more than the result of a routine love affair. I should write to Lou again and see if I can evoke a response.

On the topic of my getting out - here is the way I look at it: no plan has been announced for officers so we can only go on what has been outlined for enlisted personnel. I have 46 points now; in 8 months (May 1946) I will have some 62 points on a cumulative basis. At that time I will have two years overseas and I will be ready to come home on any basis. If I am not on my way home then, I think I will have a legitimate squack (that is provided that the Army systems work and all these fellows over here now with higher point totals or more time overseas get home in the meantime.) The most optimistic hope I have is to be out of the service by December of 1946. (By that time you should be an expert driver, Mother!!)

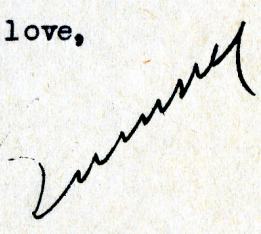
It is hard to evaluate the Japanese attitude - there is so much face-saving involved that it is almost impossible to grasp the true reactions. MacArthur's surrender ceremony should make it clear however that we are not leaving the door open for any but our own decisions. It remains to be seen how well we can mold the system we have allowed to remain to our own uses. The Cortesi reports of anti-Democratic violence in Argentina seem to make more obvious the eventual fate of the Peron-dominated government. At least we can be sure that Braden knows the problem with which he is dealing in his new State Department post. The Howard Mumford Jones article in the TIMES concerning the failure of American novelists to capture the essence of American values hit the spot a couple of times; the books which really state the American way in concise and convincing form are few and far between. I wonder if it is not a reflection of a fault in our current attitudes, our failure to evolve a truly representative American picture - the melting pot did not really melt; in politics, in education, in every social endeavor, we see the gaps and the incompleteness of our cultural and social maturity, our coming of age. Perhaps the fault lies not with the writers but with the society they are trying to portray.

The new Saga of the Pilgrims must make interesting reading in New England. I sometimes wish that my background in American history and civilization were firmer than it is. I certainly feel that when I return one of my side projects will be to read up on my American history. Did you note that ~~both~~ Quisling and Petain used identical arguments as the saviours of their nations during their treason trials? It is not surprising. I guess that the Laval trial will be short and snappy; I still wonder at the explanation that Franco forced Laval to leave Spain of his own accord - the pressure must have been terrific; I just hope that we didn't bargain anything away for him. The French plan of granting a bonus to American soldiers was a neat good-will gesture.

That sort of covers things for this noontime -

All my love,

Regards to Doris.

A handwritten signature, likely "Mumford Jones", written in dark ink. It is slanted and cursive, positioned to the right of the typed signature "All my love,".