

September 19th 1945

Dear Ones,

Things are popping along at a pretty good clip. Last night we played bridge - I played with Fish; he has the best card sense of any man I have met in many a moon - he can count cards and when he plays a hand there seem to be no slips. His bidding and his defensive play are weak right now, though; I am sure that if he concentrated and played with sharp players under good conditions he would soon be out of our class. I fell asleep after reading Verce of the Turtle and part of The Searching Wind from a collection of plays by Burns Mantle - another evening gone by with no letters written. Tonight we have Meet Me in St L which I have not seen. I am still hoping that a new Ordnance Officer is sent up here, in the eventuality that Thorpe does not come back: Thorpe has 95 points, his physical shape is only fair I guess and he is pretty much of a hypochondriac - odds are that some sympathetic medic may help him get home. I just don't know enough about Ordnance to answer the questions I am supposed to.

Everything is still buzzing over the MacArthur announcement - we are waiting for further State Department comment and for clarification from Tokyo. It is unfortunate that something so obviously encouraging to the Armed forces is equally obviously contrary to the broad outlines of our peace enforcement occupation policy. One rub is that most of us are still very indefinite as to exactly what the situation in Japan is - the Diet has met, the Emperor has spoken, small groups of criminals and suspects are rounded up, various statements have been made - some restrictive, some fairly easy - and we still have no idea as to how the masses and even the leaders of Japan are taking it all. Has there been any reaction - or is the transition being taken and accepted without any basic changes of attitude toward the divine state? This doubt makes the State Department stand on MacArthur's estimate seem quite justified.

The French elections are drawing near and De Gualle still seems to be balancing on the middle line - it is plain that his military background does not raise the threat of militarism in France, but it does make him shy away apparently from the Left; whether or not the electoral system France is to use is fair I cannot say. However there is in every instance where the Left is not in temporary control - Greece and France - an insistence in reworking the representative allotments; while in the Balkan countries where the Left has taken power, they in their turn refused to assure a fair democratic basis in the elections until outside pressure was enforced. The point is not that the Left is concerned but that those who are out want to get in. The case for the Left might be stronger in international eyes if they were consistently democratic. As for China - Chiang's promises sound very fine - I am still waiting for news of the settlement of outstanding questions with Red China. The basis for agreement should certainly be present now what with all the outside pressure, the Russian pact, the Chiang promises.

One of the questions in everybody's mind out here is what will happen to leaves and furloughs - the feeling is that all the pressure on discharges will mean that men with better than 2 years overseas but only 60 odd points might be stuck. Today I heard a rumor that a new furlough quota had come through and that will reassure a lot of the boys. Many of the men came overseas right after induction and may have as much as 2½ years overseas and still only 65 points. I think that a couple of boys in this section will be eligible - I am sure that I will not stand in their way; the odds are that even though they go home on the furlough policy with the understanding that they will return they will not be sent back. That is only fair - they can be assigned stateside while they sweat out their discharges.

I think that the proposals for a publicity-information bureau in the United Nations Organization are excellent; such a bureau could bring home to the world the details of what is going on, could humanize the stuffy business of international diplomacy, could keep international affairs right up in the limelight where they belong. It need not be a propaganda agency, but a channeling agency as part of the permanent Secretariat. In diplomatic language I imagine the Tangier decision was a strong crack at Franco - in effect he is told to get out of the area and leave it for eventual United Nations settlement. His answer should be good.

Baldwin wrote a column about the National Guard officers of General rank; I guess I have commented on the Guard before - basically it is a good democratic idea but the danger of

politics where politics do not belong is great. I guess the Army question is too well tied up with the immediate question of the draft and demobilization to expect the long range answer to the problem of training to be answered now.

I didn't hear about the "Veteran's Party" in New York until it had already passed from the scene - for which I am glad. The arguments of Deutsch in PM were well put - improper use and exploitation of the veterans in the political field is potential dynamite. Mrs Craig seemed to be bursting with enthusiasm as she plunged back into her Washington job; I would certainly like to meet and to know her. She is sharp and penetrating without being caustic, she is critical without grinding an ax - in fact, she seems to have many of the attributes for the ideally fair reporter. Her basis of criticism has always struck me as fair. But now I must turn to Pegler - there is not any need to go through his argument in defense of Bilbo's use of "Dago." ( WP didn't mention Bilbo's equally frequent "kike" I noticed.) And there is no point in commenting on his reverse-type defense of Bilbo by accusing New York politicians of the same tactics: bigotry, hatred, prejudice, politics at its worst etc, except to say that it is representative of the Pegler type argument for defense ( he of course is at his best (?) when he is attacking something or somebody) Any defense which bases itself on such a basis is intrinsically weak.

I think PM got a sly pleasure out of announcing the lease of the Morgan Estate on Long Island to the Russian government for their purchasing commission. It reminded me of the famous New Yorker cartoon which shows an old distinguished matriarch at one end of a long and magnificent dinner table saying to her husband, "Hasn't anyone thought of converting the Communists to our way of life?" Perhaps this is indicative of a new spirit in the Soviet - who can tell?!!

I have a few minutes before the movie and your letter of August 12th which took 36 days to get here. At that time you were sweating out the surrender acceptance. Daddy, you commented on the relationship of the American communists ( Duclos pressure on Browder ) to the "guiding force" in Moscow - I think that I have discussed this question before. Quite clearly the practical communist tends to look to Russia - it is the only professed Communist experiment currently in existence. However, there is a distinction which you fail to make - these men are not Russian communists; they are French communists or American radicals. They are interested in a communist experiment in France or America. There is no point in denying that to some of the extreme in their group this is identified with Russianism - but it need not be the general point. What I object to is your saying "danger that lurks in the communist ideology which seeks to stretch its tentacles beyond its own boundaries" - by your very use of the word boundaries, Daddy, you identify communism as Russianism and nothing more. Nothing could be less true or less fair - the majority of communists are extremely sensitive political theorists and thinkers - they see themselves as believers in a valid notion of economy, politics, and society, not as agents of a Russian super-state. Let communists and communism be judged for its absolute and comparative value within the framework of American reality; and recognize that just as the Argentinian liberal, the Greek patriot, the Irish free stater look to America for their models and inspirations for democracy without impugning their nationalism or loyalty, so the sincere communist looks to Russia for practical features of his ideology. For the purpose of the thoughtful American, the questions of communism as an internal menace and relations with Russia are two different issues; a third distinct question is Communism outside of Russia in Europe, Asia, perhaps South America - there is the obvious link between the three matters, yet it is no reason to confuse them and open the way for the red herrings of the red bogeyman.

I was encouraged by your report on Tudor Gardiner; is White getting ready to retire from the Senate?

OK for now -

All my love,

*Sammy*

Regards to Doris

*Excuse errors  
nothing to check.*