

29 November 1945

Dear Ones,

First to acknowledge the packages that came today - about four from home: assorted cookies and handkerchiefs and vitamin pills and wadded book review sections and toast - they showed wonderfully pleasing variety of choice. One of them brought Doris's gift - one of these weekends I will just have to take time out from work and write certain letters which are overdue. Tonight I have to go up to the brig and interview the accused whom I am defending on Monday PM. I have read the charge sheet and the statements collected by the investigating officer and it looks pretty rough I can tell - the poor joker faces a dishonorable discharge, five years, and full forfeiture of pay and allowances - and to think that he ran the risk the very week his orders to send him home were cut!! Well, I'll see what he has to say tonight but I am not too hopeful; by his own statement to the provost marshal he has admitted enough to hang himself. A great case - my only hope is that he will admit that he was but one of a group which was committing these robberies and that we can lessen the severity of the court's decision by implicating others. Things are very busy - we maintain a good pace all day and half the night; the pile of paper work is only slightly diminished. Your packages reminded me and I will start taking the vitamin pills tomorrow again! The packages took exactly two months to get here incidentally.

The various reports on the atomic bomb discussions would indicate the lack of unity in American thought and in many instances what appears to me to be a lack of thought. The lack of agreement in the public discussions is the key reason that the US is not able to hit upon some official and coordinated State Department policy; we still have not the grasp of a community point of view, of the proper identification of interests, the recognition that individual values have worth only within the frame of the overall functioning of the community. What is worse is that Congressional leadership does not fill this gap - if I seem to come back to this over and over again it is because I feel it is so basically critical in our democracy. The stature of our elected representatives, the workings of our political parties and machines and the predominant attitudes of press and public, all require constant and constructive attention. Just as a firm role of government in the life of a nation need not mean regimentation, so the stress on individualism and private venture need not mean public chaos. To recognize certain fields of endeavor as being the public concern, for public administration, for the good of the commonwealth, is not to deny private enterprise. Only a crisis seems to force the American people into a state of community thinking - truly there must be some way to impress our country that in the atomic age, in the age of quick change and dramatic developments we live in a world of constantly developing crises which we can not ignore or neglect. Specifically, I was bothered by the failure of the amendment to the Atom control bill which would have provided for civilian, full-time administrators who have no ties to the big enterprise interests. It may take the actual threat of world confusion and Russian strength to galvanize into actions - I just wish that our leadership would get to work and take preventive steps to avoid the necessity of eventual emergencies.

I am going to keep that application for membership in the Ordnance Association until I get out of the service and then I will see how I feel. I am not fully in agreement with Mrs Craig on the question of the pay raises for Federal employees - I will agree that the timing was a little bad; however, since - and how true this often is in every sense of the word - the business of running the government is not productive (in the sense of General Motors, I mean) her argument that it is a blow at the wage-price policy is not wholly valid. I have come to the point where I feel that government must offer attractive positions to young men of administrative ability - and it must be done soon. On the whole I think that Mrs Craig's attitude toward labor and the current problems is fair and straightforward; but even she reflects the pessimism toward the current conference and the inability of Labor to stick together on the basic questions of the agenda. Specifically, I think that the union (UAW) handling of the delicate Detroit situation has shown good leadership; it is a responsible organization and is good proof that the government should effect changes in law to demand such union responsibility. Not in the Mellon spirit, however.

OK for now; All my love,

Regards to Doris.

*Sumner*

It is hard to interpret the current US position toward China from the information which we have at hand here. There seems to be no argument that Hurley was all for Chiang all the way; that he differed markedly from Stillwell in the question of the Yen-an faction, that he favored Chinese unity but that he based it on the submission of the Communists to Chiang's demands. For the reason the appointment of Marshall can be interpreted as a reversal of form, a denial of the Hurley stand - yet by appointing such an outstanding American we make it clear that we have a deep interest in peace in China and that our intervention will be non-partisan. Surely there is reason to feel that the Koumintang government is not deserving of our full support - we cannot undo the aid which we gave wartime China, and we cannot shirk the job of disarming and handling the Jap soldiers, but we can scrupulously avoid further aid to the Nationalist factions. We also must make that position clear - that is one half the job. If we adopt an active policy of intervention through diplomatic channels for peace and fair settlement of differences with the result of the elimination of the unfavorable elements of both factions, then we are on the right track...