

December 9th 1945

Dear Aunt Anne, Uncle Joe, Joan, and Bob,

I have just spent a pretty hectic 20 days and we have loaded out two ships that just about cleaned out the excess Ordnance stocks from this island paradise. This is the first opportunity I have had to catch up on my long overdue mail. Tomorrow I am going up to Guadalcanal - what for? I don't know. One guess is that the South Pacific Ordnance officer who was here a month or so ago took heed of my request that I be given a short vacation after 18 months here. So I may just be going up for the ride. The second guess is that I am scheduled to go up there after I leave here and they want me to take a look around. In any case, I am looking forward to the trip and the airplane ride. It will be a change

Thanks for the note on Kumin - it has been some months since the Acontius was in port and as nearly as I can tell it is not on schedule to return here. In fact, unless I am mistaken it has been some six months since the ship was last in. If it does show up I will look him up. The other day the CVE (baby flattop) Kwajalein was in and in talking with the Executive officer I discovered that there were several Harvard men in the officer complement of the carrier, but as it turned out they were all on duty and I did not get a chance to meet them .. mail is still my only link to those phases of home. (Right now it is pouring here and it is uncomfortably warm - it is probably freezing and perhaps snowing on Marshal street ~~Washington~~)

The current Zionist problem seems to be a part of the general picture of confusion within the US State Department. First we had the London failure, and then the tendency for the US to ape British policy in the Near East, our inability to make clearcut and consistent decisions in Java and China. We have our first encouraging sign in the scheduled meeting of Byrnes, Bevin, and Molotov in Moscow for the discussion of the bomb - this time we cannot have a negative result. There must be a clarification of the American stand. We must end the implication that we have committed ourselves to the support of Britain as against Russia, that we are afraid to initiate separate policy and stick to it. As for Palestine, the Byrnes-Truman reversal to drop the immediate immigration plea and support the delaying Bevin tactics is inexplicable from the facts which I have received. I cannot understand the justification for bilateral action. Palestine is our responsibility but only in the sense that it is a world issue and certainly not in the sense that it is the problem of Britain, the mandate power under the League. To my mind, proper American action would have required our telling Britain: either that we favor immigration or do not favor immigration of 100,000 Jews into Palestine immediately; either that we favor or oppose the preparation of the groundwork for a political framework to guarantee first full minority rights and the later evolution of the full political implications of a homeland and majority rule; or whatever action we favor, such as a UNO commission or what have you. But to accept the British burden on a bilateral basis is a puzzler and terribly indicative of weakness. And for the Jews of the world, it is disheartening to say the least....

The discharge picture has not brightened in the least - as of January first officers still require four years service or 70 points. I have no discharge prospects at the present rate until way into mid-summer despite the War Department promise that all two year men would be out in mid-winter, despite my overseas service. The boys who are getting the raw deal are us poor jokers overseas with middle point scores - what with the start of discharge by service, which amounts to the abandonment of the point system, we might just as well never have come overseas - an officer in the states who entered the Army the same day as I did, was commissioned at the same time (etc.) but never came overseas will get out at the same time as I (if not sooner) under current regulations. Oh well, just tear off the top of your nearest serviceman and send it to your congressman Congress must enact draft-selective service legislation or we will find ourselves forced to give up our overseas commitments or to keep current soldiers in. I'm getting regusteder and regusteder..

OK on that cheefful note I'll close for today! My love to all the clan --

Love,

Sumner