

June 29th 1944

Dear Ones -

Good mail day - ~~none~~ a letter from home, one from the office; TIME acknowledged the new subscription; Phillips Brooks House sent me a copy of the Harvard Service News - I must be on their mailing list. And Letters from Frank Allen (in the Galapagos) and Bill Snower (still studying Swedish at Minnesota) which I have answered. I am enclosing a clipping from the Service News about a play at the Cambridge Summer Theatre - isn't Robert Ferry one of the old Civic Theatre crowd? Nothing special happened today; saw a preview of some orientation films this PM - including the well publicized "Negro Soldier." It is an intelligent presentation which is a step in the right direction but does not even broach the questions which are such flaming issues today; the Army still can not do that and expect the right response. The picture does not gloss over the problems - it just does not bring them up. ~~THE ARMY IS NOT IN A MILITARY POSITION TO RISK A SHOWDOWN ON THIS PROBLEM - IT IS A DEMOCRATIC PROBLEM WHICH MUST BE SOLVED GRADUALLY BY THE CONTINUING BREAKDOWN OF SEGREGATION. AND I THINK THAT THE ARMY IS HELPING TO PAVE THE WAY FOR THIS PROGRESS BY PICTURES LIKE THESE, EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE NOT POSITIVE ATTACKS ON THE BASICALLY UNDEMOCRATIC SITUATION INVOLVED. IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT ON THE HOME FRONT, AS WILLKIE SUBTLY POINTS OUT, POLITICS IS SO DEEPLY INVOLVED HERE THAT PUBLIC ACTION IS STYMIED. CERTAINLY THE PROBLEMS OF PREJUDICE CAN NOT BE SOLVED OVERNIGHT, BY ONE DECISIVE ACTION; BUT I FEEL THAT CONSTRUCTIVE POST-WAR POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP WILL CARRY US OVER THE HUMP TOWARD THE LOGICAL, DEMOCRATIC SOLUTION.~~

The orientation talk went over OK last night; I still have to find out how responsive the group is, whether or not I can draw them out in discussion. Next week we have a film on Russia; maybe I can encourage some discussion on that still controversial topic. I am almost through the first of Mann's trilogy on Joseph; it is very tough reading because it is a study of Eastern religions. I think I will read something light before diving into the next volume - just to change the pace. OK on the Press Herald - by the time this reaches you it will have expired - I still haven't received any overseas. I am still waiting for word that you received the anniversary bond I sent from 7769. Our work on the tent is coming along fine. Closet all built - now we are painting. The movie tonight is a real old one, so I'll skip it.

I have been reading over the collected materials from newspapers and magazines available - particularly PM - on the Ward Sewell Avery business. What I read most carefully was the report of William Davis to Senator Byrd. First Davis makes clear that the effective operation of Wards is essential to the war effort. It explains the necessity of jurisdiction by some agency in decision of labor disputes in the "structure of wartime industrial relations." Strikes and lockouts must be controlled. The problem was that the Ward contract had expired; Wards refused to treat with the union claiming it no longer represented the majority. WLB stepped in and decided quite logically that the answer was to extend the old contract thirty days, to hold a new election. This Wards refused to

saying the law forbade its bargaining with a non-majority union - although at that time there was no proof that the election of two years previous did not reflect still the workers feelings and ~~and~~ a new election (which required the time extension and hence bargaining under the old contract arrangements for at most 30 days) would be the only proof. Wards defied the WLB order and the rest is history; the government took over. The press howled; yet ~~now~~ last year when John L Lewis refused to treat with the WLB and the mines were seized the press congratulated the President. In each case it was seizure for failure to deal with the War Labor Board. It reveals a double set of values. I feel that labor and capital must be treated and judged on the same standards. I am not in a position to say ~~whether~~ that I wholeheartedly approve of the use of executive order to meet War emergency; but I do feel that the President has NOT used it dictatorially, that he has used it only as a last resort under wartime demands, that he has been consistent in its use. What bothers me most is that the issues are being presented to the people in a distorted light.

June 30

Mr Dewey & Leaches are the Republican State!
Max about that later.

Ray Summer.