

April 6 1945

Dear Ones,

Last night we had our Spanish review test and I found out how much I do not know. We played a little poker and then I went to bed. Tonight we have services and afterward I hope to catch up a little on my mail - I should write to Uncle Harold and Aunt Mel if to nobody else. The only mail in the past couple of days was the letter from Dr. Hoadley, the Master of Leverett House, which I will try to remember to enclose for you to see; the fact that he took a moment off to drop me a short personal note made me feel very good. (Please save it)

The news of the first steps in the Russian break with Japan is good. (You ask me how I react to the suggestion of the PM "Dear Joe" editor that soldiers use his column to air their complaints against civilians in an attempt to establish a basis for bridging the gap between the soldier and the civilian. I think I wrote to you at the time that I wrote to Neil, that I do not feel that in the vast majority of cases the gap will be a very serious problem since it has been created by changes that are normal: the point being that people are always changing in the normal course of events and the people whom they live with aren't conscious particularly of the transition since they are in daily contact - war has taken away that contact and our return will be like coming home from a year at college and finding out how much a younger brother or sister has sprouted up in the elapsed time. The point is that with the necessary love and understanding and appreciation of the problem, the adjustment will be quickly made - I am sure that I wrote to you in this vein in connection with a Bill Cunningham column. On the specific question of soldier gripes over civilian conduct - that issue may be overemphasized because every soldier is a civilian at heart and might admit that he might do the same thing himself!) But getting back to Russia - I do not share Cunningham's optimism that Russia and Japan will be at war by mid-Summer, though it would be swell! The possibility of a Jap attack on Russia presumes desperation, but I don't think that even the Japs are desperate enough to risk the threat of Russian might. Could be, though, and I am all for it! Pearl Harbor Port Arthur -- hmmski!!!

Although it does not take a forthright stand, the Alumni Bulletin pretty well lines itself up behind Conant on the question of military training. It stresses the following points: the remedy for educational lacks should come through civilian channels such as better secondary schools, more stress on physical exercise, vocational schools; the idea of military discipline is contrary to our democratic spirit; and that conditions will be different when the motivation of national war effort is gone. When the question of military necessity arises, the Bulletin presents the arguments that we cannot now estimate our needs, that we are inferring that we can't trust the peacetime judgment of the US to make a correct decision, and lastly that actually a years training is little better than nothing at all. I cannot speak as a professional educator or as a professional politician or as a professional military man, but as a person who has been on the receiving end, I do not feel that the Conant stand is right. There is nothing in these arguments which alters the advantages of the program as I have known them - you can't measure the educational results in terms of knowledge or facts. From my previous letters you know that I think a program of military training can be devised which will avoid any danger of government control of education, which will deal only with the military, which will allow for adequate free time (being the army might be an eight hour a day affair, as it was in peacetime) and which will have healthy results in moving people around, intermingling social groups, and keeping a backlog of men who have elementary military requirements for an alert nation. The argument about when it should be adopted does not hold any water - if the advantages of the bill are admitted and its necessity is understood, then it might just as well be passed now as later.



to have thirty days at home - this undoubtedly would mean shipping whole divisions back to the States for about 6 months of furloughs and reequipping and the like - Ok. Under 18 months the units should be staged as quickly and as completely as possible and sent out here, all their overseas time accruing. I just hope that the question doesn't get all tangled up in home politics, with Mothers Clubs screaming for their sons; the only determining factor is military necessity for a quick end of the war.

I especially enjoyed the articles covering the Boston Newspapers and Bill Cunningham - Mr Cunningham certainly came out a poor second in the exchange! I think that Stewart managed to maintain a very good reportorial attitude and his editorializing was limited. As I wrote to Aunt Anne, I think that all these studies of Boston and the Boston scene will be very healthy - the anti-Discrimination Bill and the strength which it has rallied to it are good signs. All in all, I think that we are slowly awakening to the realization that we are ready now to do something, to act, to work to achieve the goals which we have so longed professed to be burs. The days of cautious negativism and fear of change are definitely numbered and we are approaching a crucial test of our democracy system and our democratic thinking.

OK for now - I have to shave and shower and otherwise get ready.

Love,

*Sunny*

Regards to Doris