

April 7th, 1945

Dear Ones,

Not much special news - Friday evening at Services one of the officers announced that he had taken a picture of the chapel and sent the negative to his wife; he offered to have her send prints to anyone we desired in the States, so I put down your name - when it does arrive, I wish you would tell me and also that you would thank her - I think their name is Mensch. Yesterday was quiet and I am now pretty well caught up on my mail; the dance last night was the usual thing and I did not stay very long. This noon I am going out to the CB's to have dinner with the Stein chap of whom I wrote to you.

The other night I got out all the clippings and broke them down into various topics - I'll bet I have the newsprint equivalent of three Sunday Timeses! They certainly do give me a good picture of what is going on at home and how the more serious commentators view the various situations - and what with Perry and the Pirates and the bridge columns I get a fairly good balance. (And you can't do that with V-mail!)

In the Bnai Brith monthly there is a discussion of Parochial schools and it struck me that the basic question is the same one which you raised in your letter on the problem of who shall be authorized to strike of medals for the Scouts, Daddy. For I think that Dr Grossman who takes the negative is absolutely right in pointing out that it is a retreat from democracy, that it is an argument for separatist schools for all social groups, and that it attacks the very basis of the public school system. In this vein, I read "Guide for the Bedevilled" last night - I don't recall but I am sure that you have read it; Hecht pulls no punches, he digs right into his subject, and never stops slashing until his victim is mercilessly cut to pieces. His basic point is the identification of anti-semitism with the frustrated ego in the average anti-semite and the identification of what the Jew stands for as that for which democracy stands. From this he ranges out and cuts his way through Voltaire and everybody else right to some Professor Kennedy of Yale. It is a book of fierce pride. It is not the usual treatment of anti-semitism by a long shot, for he has no apologies and he calls every spade just that. Maybe it is too strong a fare for the average person - I don't think so - his argumentation certainly leaves little opening for the cautious and fearful and negative. One point struck me particularly - on the question of divided loyalty: Hecht points out that less than anybody else the Jews should fear the charge of divided loyalty, because the spirit of American democracy is synonymous with underlying tenets of Judaism. The Jew's loyalty to his Judaism should strengthen his faith in America and in democracy, not weaken it - while you can't say the same for the Greek or Italian in America whose consideration is national. How Hecht wants men who are not afraid! how he wants the world to learn the lesson that is the Jew, to recognize that the spirit - which he calls the ego - that has kept the Jew alive and great is the greatness which democracy seeks in every man! how he wants the rest of the world to stop kidding itself by treating anti-semitism as a problem apart and recognize in it a key perhaps to entire world attitudes! He strikes home again and again - his psychological analysis of the German as the frustrated personality who turns to murder and must be treated as a murderer is not quickly forgotten. I like the book - it lays anti-semitism open in its barest forms, in its most complex forms, and it finds the answers not in a limited field of the relationship of the world to one social group but in the entire context of what we are fighting for, freedom for the expression of the democratic spirit, a constructive and progressive spirit based on the basic glory of man and his work for good.

One of the Pearson columns raises the question of how men shall be shipped from Europe to the Pacific theatres - whether or not there should be a period of leave in the States for them or not. Of course what we out here want is speed - get them here as fast as possible and get this thing over with pronto. My viewpoint is this - make it a matter of time: if a man has been in Europe for over 18 months he should get a chance