

April 13 1945

Dear Ones,

I still feel rather shaken by today's news. Most of the others here took it with a shake of the head, they realize that we are going to miss Roosevelt but it doesn't go beyond that. It is proof to me that I am not limited to the confines of the activity of the New Hebrides - the thoughts of life in the states are foremost in my mind, they are what really concern me in my serious moments, and right now there is a big gap in the American scene. That is going to mean a reorientation of a lot of thinking and a lot of planning - the entire picture of leadership has changed; the passing of Roosevelt will fit crucially into the changing American scene. The news has left me feeling a little low and depressed; it is regret, not pessimism or discouragement.

I remember back at college in the various conference groups we always used to touch on the point that if Wilson had died at Pueblo instead of just becoming stricken with paralysis he might have become a national (rather international) martyr and the fight for the League might have been won. Now in the present day we have that situation paralleled - though God knows I would have wished it otherwise. I meant what I wrote in the letter this noon and I don't know how to express it otherwise - this time martyrdom may help but our true strength must come from a functioning democracy.

The specific questions that will arise are too numerous to try to compile - and there is one thing in particular that strikes me right off the bat: how correct Silver was in his plea for action and a statement of policy! And that is just one question of the many that were in the process of presidential consideration and decision. It is going to take a lot of careful and considerate action to make our readjustment smooth.

Somehow I feel as though there should be a lot to say - as I look back on the many things I have written I realize that I have worked on the assumption of Roosevelt's being the president through these war and peace years. I am waiting for your clippings to find out the national reaction to his death, the official stand of the critical organizations, the general tenor of the public feeling toward the war and peace.

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Everything is all right this morning - services last night were good. I started to read Train's "Autobiography of Ephraim Tutt." Most of the boys are looking for Truman's first steps and the serious reactions of the rest of the world and the political leaders within the country - time will tell. All day yesterday the radio carried by short wave tributes to Roosevelt and the various analyses of the position of Truman - Truman is certainly an unknown quantity at the present moment; all of us are agreed that he must be given a completely fair and non-partisan opportunity to prove his worth.

The weekend has nothing special on the docket - I have answered all my mail except for a card from Mrs Emery and that note from Dot - the death of the president is a pretty tough way to get material for letter writing. I guess that the sad events of the week a less pleasant note on your birthday, Mother.

OK for now - all my love to you -

Regards to Doris.

