

April 16th 1945

Dear Ones,

It is a rainy Monday - the weekend was predominated by the radio reports on the world-wide reactions to the death of the President; we certainly had complete coverage - we heard from every commentator and personality worth hearing on every phase of the life of the President, right down to the description of the final rites. This morning I bought a money order which I shall enclose in this note. There is not much special - Att got word that his leave to New Zealand has come through; he has some 26 months overseas, and he can look forward to a pleasant two weeks.

I have your clippings sorted out and about half of them deal with Yalta or allied matters. And the first question is of multiple voting - if I recall correctly since the flurry created by the discussion Stettinius announced that we would not press for three seats. When I write to you, I try not only to express my ideas for my own clarification but also to convey to you the way that I feel and why I feel that way in attempt to elicit from you either agreement or comment or criticism on what I have written; apparently the note which I have tried to bring out over and over again concerning the new world cooperation has not struck home yet. "The US's seeking three votes is disturbing. Confidence is such a fragile thing." "The fact that it was kept secret was a shocking blow .. and gave much cogent argument to the isolationists" - those are comments from your letters, and like Lou Raybin, I think that the matter is being "blown up out of all proportion" and not being considered in the proper light. Far be it from me to discount the importance of working out the mechanics of the world peace settlement - but the approach to the whole question which you have taken and which the clippings which you sent took seems to me to be wrong. This is primarily a matter of the big three, of balancing power. People talk in terms of the "Russian republics" votes balancing the British Empire and in turn the nations of Latin America within our orbit - there is the basic assumption that differences of opinion and disagreement are going to predominate, rather than the willingness to agree and to compromise before issues reach the voting stage. I may seem to you to be over optimistic - I am not: there are myriad dangers - in the settlements of internal Europe, in the nature of the constitutions of European nations, in the construction of the world economic structure, in the control of world trade, in the readjustment of world productivity to achieve a balanced world economy with minimum deprivations. But, if you are going to work on the assumption that argument and refusal to compromise and agree on crucial items will lead to a forced vote and the imposition of enforced policy on a violently unwilling major nations then you are building on a mud flat. Certainly confidence is a fragile thing, but it is not built up by preparing the ground work for future splits. What I am getting at is this and it may seem minor - I think all the comment on the voting system is healthy in that it creates intelligent interest; what bothers me is that there is lurking behind some of these critics the forecast of predestined failure. This specific dispute was built up by the press - or perhaps I just did not hear the official statements of other governments. In any event, there was a little plug in Coronet for optimism which hit the same points which I have tried to cover - and I am still looking for that air of careful consideration combined with an optimistic confidence in our attitudes. There are many ways of going at these many questions - that is the one which I favor.

I think it is well that the San Francisco conferences were not cancelled; the decision to send Molotov as the Russian representative was an encouraging note. What I would like to see now is intelligent discussion in the American press of the issues which are not yet in dispute - Palestine, mandates or trusteeship, armament control - why is it that we start to think about something only when it reaches the stage of being an obvious problem? With the spark of FDR gone, it is more important than ever that the public is alert to the problems which not only have arisen but ~~which~~ will arise. In this respect the programs like those of Vandenberg and Hoover are excellent beginnings, but they must be taken out of formal legal drafts and put in terms that encourage popular consideration.



That sort of clears the deck for this noontime; I read Train's "Tutt" until almost 1:30 this morning and so I am a little "pooped" today, and from what people have told me I guess that I look it! I'll have to catch up on it tonight - no poker - and I should prepare some Spanish; what I should do with the latter is read over my various sections every day and in that way I could painlessly absorb the vocabulary without sitting down and learning it word by word out of context.

OK for now - nothing special; I manage to keep a little busy, if not interested.

All my love,

Regards to Doris

Sumner