

May 13th 1945

Dear Ones,

It is now later in the afternoon of a quiet Sunday. I have written to Uncle Lou and to Irene Lerner (Mike's gal) and to Mielchi. Today's mail yielded a note from Dot Fried. It is now noon of the 14th - somehow I lost my urge to write and we closed the office early. Volleyball was mediocre and in the evening I saw "Princess and the Pirate" which was very spotty but which I enjoyed wholeheartedly. Today it is back in the rut again.

After reading the Silver speech of March 21st, I realize that more than ever the time for bickering is over. No matter what the validity of the intra-Zionist disputes they can not be indulged when the entire program is at stake. I agree with Silver when he says that refugeeism may defeat Zionism - although my personal point of view is that properly handled "refugeeism" is perhaps our strongest talking point to the rest of the world, it is the justification for the political program which is the heart of the Silver approach. What Silver is driving at is that "refugeeism" is a negative approach since it is a cover for the Palestine State idea and will be attacked by its opponents as such. He also has no hope that humanitarian claims stand a chance in comparison with national claims - with that I cannot agree. Be that as it may, he is right if we deemphasize the Palestine State idea to the point where a good argument for Liberia will be offered as a way out. (My feeling is that the two approaches - refugeeism and the guaranteed majority homeland - must be coordinated and made complementary; there should be equal stress, the former cannot be used to the point of ignoring the latter. Refugeeism is a potential wedge for the anti-Zionist.) In other words, the results of San Francisco which we hope to achieve must be two-fold: the positive and indisputable guarantee of a Jewish majority autonomous commonwealth in Palestine and the solution of the refugee problem through Palestine. In truth both problems have to be solved at once - and the point is that we must align ourselves unanimously behind the simply stated program of unlimited immigration into Palestine and the guarantee of the majority state. And Silver certainly seems to be the man with the proper approach and conception of the necessities to be the leader we are seeking. His real attack is on the pussyfooting inactivity of dispute and disagreement which has hobbled the entire Zionist program - more power to him when he steps forward as a vigorous leader: we know our goals and he offers us the strength of leadership to find the proper method of achieving them.

I see that the Senate stepped on the Missouri Valley plan just as Truman was reappointing Lilienthal; it will be interesting to see the stand which Truman takes on that project which he as only recently endorsed as a complement to the TWA. Apparently the question of the freedom of the press and what it actually is is the current philosophical-political discussion at home; on the question of Harcourt, Brace and the White book, the firm's answer to the objections to the publication of the controversial novel was logical enough. It seems to me that in this modern era with the importance of advertising and wide ranges of newspaper and book markets the old idea of the free press which had every editor and manager a Plato reposing on the heights and looking down impartially on our troubled scene is gone for good. The key today is not so much freedom of the press in the old sense as it is honesty in the press; it must be free in the sense that anybody can start a paper and print what he pleases (within limits of the libel laws, of course) and cannot be coerced into printing anything he does not want to print and may print something which someone in power does not want printed - but honesty is the more critical criterion: whether it is known who owns the paper, how his beliefs may influence the presentation of the news and commentary; whether the paper gives the true reasons for its policy or whether it cloaks private interest in public cloth; in other words, whether the reader knows the background of what he is reading and can approach the printed page knowing the slant and the beliefs which dominate its coverage.

I know little of the life or works of Joyce - I will save the review of his life which

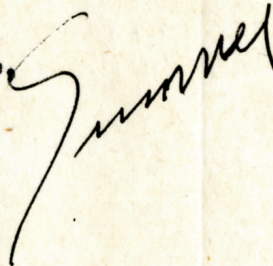


you sent and will be looking forward to the commentary which I assume will follow. I do recall from the snatches of his work~~s~~ which I have perused that he is an inveterate punster. There was no mail this morning. I still have all the clippings concerning San Francisco to look over again.

That sort of clears the deck for this noontime - there is nothing special on the docket for this evening; we will probably end up playing poker. Art should be back one of these days. I do miss having someone in the tent to talk to and to have around. He probably will be able to use a slow boat trip back from New Zealand to rest up from the activity of his stay there. I used to think that it would be too bad to be out this far and not get to visit New Zealand and Australia - but you can rest assured that unless I get sent there on duty, I wouldn't think of a visit if it were at the expense of a quicker return home: at least I feel that way now.

OK for now -

All my love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sumner".

Regards to Doris.