

JUDMS5_BernsteinS_05171943tr

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[Odd pages are numbered in the top right corner]

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Dear Ones,

Yesterday I dashed off wholesale postcards to Boston. I also wrote letters to Uncle Louis and to Sonny. I spent the day as I wanted to - with no tension or strain. I didn't even shave - I just relaxed. I did what work I had to do and slept well. I did manage to get a haircut and read section 4 of the Times. I also noted the new bridge rules which would seem to discourage your weak responses to opening bids, Daddy- but I'm in no position or condition to discuss the intricacies of the great game of bridge. I guess one reason I feel o.k. is that I was not called on in drill and the instructor- Lieut Cannada, didn't gig me this time; but tomorrow is another day to prepare for - I'll

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worry about it when it comes around. We have covered the problem of me & OCS in all its aspects; we are agreed on a diligent yet relaxed approach. We are not creating a pressure by demanding nothing more than my best effort which should be more than good enough. The only problem remaining then is my impersonal judgment of the OCS setup here as a letter writing material. When we have another break I will outline these sentiments.

(First, however, I received the iron. Thank you. I need no scratch paper. I use this just because it's convenient) Now, about OCS, even after only 2 weeks I can't help but feel that the whole system has been worked out with amazing inefficiency. The fact that the class that started today is

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to be twice as long as this one of ours corroborates this. And yet the basis of the set up remain the same. Let me explain. We are here 13 weeks. We have 8 weeks which cover the entire information - general and specific - which any officer must be up on. The last 5 are spent in technical ordnance work. This is manifestly inadequate for the requirements. For example, we covered chemical warfare - which will probably dominate future war programs - in exactly 2 days. we got 3 on first aid. All this with no field demonstrations except 4 hours of chemical. As for the last 5 weeks, take the artillery specialist course - it allows you time to learn only 5 guns. And when you leave here you are supposed to be able to cope with

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any ordnance problem. Now, I will admit that 13 extra weeks will put a finish on this surface approach & give more of a physical toughening. But what I believe is that the overall OCS system is wrong. They are right, in the first place, in that every officer needs to be grounded in certain things like custom, first aid, [illegible], chemical warfare, infantry drill and what have you. But it is wrong to have each service have its own system & approach to these. All officer candidates in all branches of the service should get the same basing in those disciplines, customs, and subjects which form the required background. This would also end a great deal of the inequality of standards among the O.C.S. schools in the various branches; needless

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to say, each of the OCS's has a reputation for toughness which leads some to look down on the graduates of the others. For example - QM has the reputation of being the easiest; Ordnance rates as much tougher. Anyway - 6 to 8 weeks would cover the instruction and indoctrination fundamental to becoming an officer - take 10 weeks if necessary. Then, for another 18 weeks or so, the schools could go off into their specialist tangents. For example, take Ordnance. A few weeks could orient general topics like company administration, [*illegible deletion*] and supply to Ordnance application. In other words the specialization imposed on the general foundation - not a hodgepodge as we have now. Then of course would really come the technical detail.

Since I have written this in 66 installments it is probably a hodge-podge itself. I hope I have got the idea across to some degree. I've got to get to bed. Love, Sumner