

IN REPLY REFER TO

FKK No. 6



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Recd 5/25-42

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AMERICAN CONSULATE

Lagos, Nigeria
May 13, 1942

Dear Folks:

Since my letter #of May 2nd (no. 5), I have received the two parcels with clothes and toilet articles which you so kindly bought and sent me. I can see that you had to go to a lot of trouble in getting everything together, and I really am grateful to you for having done it. It makes me feel all warm around the heart to know that you are still thinking about me after so long a time and at so great a distance. I am glad to say that everything arrived in perfect condition. Not a single bottle was broken. I think that this, together with the other things I have in stock, will ~~just~~ ^{last} about last me till the end of my tour here. I still had three tubes of shaving cream left that I bought at home before I went to Italy, and some razor blades. Most of the other things were used up, although I managed to get a few things off the boats in Lisbon this summer.

I am especially pleased with those lovely light-weight pajamas which you sent. It was a real triumph to find them, and they are the best thing possible for this climate. Most people don't wear any night clothes because of the heat, but since I have to have a fan on anyway, I like to wear something to protect me from too rapid changes of temperature. The shorts were fine, too; it is a great relief to have enough so I can change as frequently as I want to.

MaSweeney's foodstuffs arrived on the same boat, much to our delight. At Mr. Jester's suggestion, he laid in quite a supply of canned goods before leaving the States. Since we are going to be sharing the apartment and since he had to go in the hole financially to buy all this stuff, he was glad to let me go halves with him in the ownership of the supplies. We now have all the standard American products: baked beans, peas, soups, pears, peaches, jello, hams, and even crab meat and cocktail cherries. I am naturally very happy to have an interest in all this stuff; I would have laid in a supply myself if I had been able to come home, or if I had seen the post report before I arrived, or if anyone had had a catalog here. As it is, I believe that we will have enough for a considerable period of time. Mac's supply of liquor was on board of a ship that sunk, as I mentioned before, and so we have reordered that plus some American beer. British beer here costs about \$32.00 a large bottle, which is really too much. They import some beer from the Belgian Congo which is much cheaper, but it is lousy and terrible for hang-overs. I hope that we will have good luck with this shipment.

Things have been pretty quiet during the last week. Mr.

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Jester has been laid up with a bad boil on his nose. He ran a fever for a while and we were afraid that he might be coming down with malaria, but he pulled through all right and is now back at his desk with a nose only slightly redder than usual. It is high time for him to be relieved, although from a personal point of view, I will be sorry to see him go. He has always been very nice to me. His successor is Harold Shantz, who is at present First Secretary of the Embassy at London. Mr. Shantz is a very high-ranking officer and is coming here as Consul General. This is a very clear sign that the Department appreciates the growing importance of Lagos under the war conditions. I met Mr. Shantz for a few moments while I was in London last November, and he was very pleasant. Mr. Jester served under him in Hong Kong several years ago and says that he is a very fine person and a good officer. He is said to have a very fine personality. We are very pleased at the prospect of having a good man here and hope that the high expectations will not be disappointed.

I was very much relieved to hear of his appointment, as I was afraid that Mr. Schnare might be sent here. After leaving Milan, Schnare had his two months home leave and was then assigned to Rangoon, Burma. He arrived there only shortly before the invasion, and I heard that he had fled up the Burma road en route to Chungking. However, it has been announced subsequently that he has been appointed Consul General at Calcutta, with the Japs still hot on his heels. From what I know of Schnare, I doubt very much whether he relishes this assignment very much. He wanted to move our Consulate out of Milan after the first week of air raids after Italy entered the war. I further doubt whether he is the man to do a good job in as important a place as Calcutta now is, but we can only hope for the best. I have not heard from any other of my Milan colleagues since leaving Lisbon. Nor have I heard from any of the Lisbon people since then. This may be due to the fact that I haven't written to them.

I am still anxiously awaiting a letter from you-all. I do hope that nothing is wrong. I haven't heard anything since Daddy's letter of March 4th, and I received a letter from Janie just about that time. I hope that, if you haven't already done so, ~~that~~ you will write soon and let me know how things are getting on at home. I enjoyed very much the two copies of the Advocate which you put in the parcel. It certainly seemed good to see the familiar type and read the familiar names. I recently received the first copy of the New Yorker to arrive since I left Milan. It contained an extract from the Advocate containing some gaff that Judge Bolton made. I got a big laugh out of it. I wonder what Walter is doing now?

I see that my time is about up. This is being written in the hope of getting on a plane which was due to ~~leave~~ arrive today and leave tomorrow, but which hadn't shown up yet late this afternoon. We therefore kept our pouch over for another day, giving me the chance to whip this off. I do hope that you are all well; I am. Please give my love to all our dear friends and relatives, and keep plenty for yourselves.

With love,

William

The pictures show the Consulate from down the street, and the entrance, with our speedy messenger just passing through.

