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American Consulate
Accra, Gold Coast
August 2, 1942

Dear Folks;

The last two weeks have been very busy ones indeed for me. As you will see from the heading, the possibility mentioned in my last letter came to pass. Andy sent us another telegram on July 14th urgently requesting assistance, and I left on the morning of the 16th for Accra. Since then I have been much too busy to write letters or even get a hair cut, which I badly need.

Andy certainly didn't exaggerate the volume of business which he is called upon to handle here. Since I have been here, we have had to do quite a lot of work for the Army, and I have spent almost all my time with a cipher board. Fortunately for Andy, the usual routine work of passports and visas, which occupies so much time normally, is very light here. He had about one month's back correspondence on hand when I arrived in these subjects, and I was able to get it pretty well cleaned up in a week in spite of the fact that I had very little time to devote to it. I hope that the volume is going to decline slightly in the next week or so, and that I will be able to go back to Lagos about the middle of the month. I think you might just as well continue to send letters to Lagos, as they can be forwarded to me here with only slight delay in the event that I am not able to return as soon as I expect.

The Department has promised to send a clerk or non-career vice consul here from the group arriving from the Far East as soon as they get to Lourenço Marques. They are also assigning a consul and a clerk to Lagos. I would not stay here in any event after the arrival of the second officer, and it may be that Mr. Shantz will instruct me to return to Lagos before that. McSweeney might like to come up here to have a chance to see a little bit of West Africa outside of the city of Lagos. Of course, Andy does not want me to go until the new man arrives, as he naturally does not like to spend his time explaining the office systems to so many different people. However, I consider it quite a sacrifice to have come here in the first place, as the living accommodations are not good and all my personal effects, including my new car, are in Lagos. I don't know what we will do with another officer there. We certainly don't need one. My suggestion would be that he would be assigned immediately to Accra and that Andy should be given home leave and a transfer as soon as the new consul is broken in to the town. The only alternative would be to ask the Department to transfer the Consulate General with supervisory jurisdiction from Lagos to Accra, and have Mr. Shantz come up here to live. This is more logical and in accord with

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the relative importance of the two places. As I mentioned before, Accra is the headquarters for all civil and military activities on the West Coast of Africa. You probably saw in the paper that the British are sending as Resident Minister, Lord Swinton, to coordinate the war effort in West Africa. He is making his headquarters at Accra and the West African Governors' Conference, which formerly sat in Lagos, has now become the Secretariat of the Resident Minister and is located here. So are the headquarters for Pan American Africa, the U S Army Air Transport Command, and the British Army. The R.A.F. is said to be about to move here from Freetown, and even the Coordinator of Shipping has made his office here so as to be close to the Army, although Accra itself can hardly be called a port - or perhaps I should say, it is a port, but it has no harbor. In other words, if Mr. Shantz is going to keep in touch with the big figures in the war effort on this coast, he is going to have to spend the better part of his time here anyway, and it would be more logical for him to plan to stay here and leave one consul in charge at Lagos with one Vice Consul and one American clerk. They would need two Vice Consuls and one clerk in addition to the Consul General at Accra.

All these arrangements, although very logical, are rather difficult to carry out. In the first place, the Department has just made Lagos the Consulate General for British West Africa, and Mr. Shantz has a lovely house and all the necessary equipment there. It would be most difficult to secure a house for him here, and the present quarters are just about right for one Vice Consul; it is a bit crowded with me here. It is therefore largely a question of physical difficulties, plus the reluctance of the Department to undo something they have just finished doing.

In his letter of June 15th Daddy wanted to know about Mr. Shantz, the new Consul General. He arrived in Lagos on June 8th and took over charge of the office June 16th. He is quite a bit older than Mr. Jester and of course of much higher rank. Mr. Jester is Class six and Mr. Shantz is class 3. He is 48 years old but looks and acts older. He seems to be very nice and I am sure that I will not have any trouble with him. He is quite a contrast to Jester. Jester was small and full of pep. He was always dashing off in all directions at once, and his administration of the Consulate was more characterized by activity than good judgment. Mr. Shantz, on the other hand, seems to be very slow to act and takes plenty of time to make up his mind. When he does decide to do something, his judgment is always sound - or has been so far. I have a lot of confidence in him and think it was very wise of the Department to send him to West Africa.

I have had a letter from Philinda saying that Bud Francis saw her on his way back to Africa and that they had a pleasant evening together. I haven't seen Bud since his return, and have just written him a note to say that I am here. The PAA personnel manager has kindly agreed to hold it until Bud comes in and then give it

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to him. Being in Accra, I will have a better chance to see him than I would in Lagos, since he will be at least staying over night here between flights. I fear Bud and all the other PAA boys will soon be "enfolded" into the Army. This will mean a pretty substantial reduction in pay for most of them, but the pilots will doubtless come out better than the ground staffs. Opinion differs as to whether this step will improve the efficiency of the operations. The Army thinks so and PAA does not. It remains to be seen.

I hope you have seen the letter I addressed to Janie at home in June, as I put in it all the news about myself that happened between my letters to you of May 13 and July 13. In case you didn't see it, I mentioned making a week end trip to Accra May 30 - June 1. I brought up some confidential material for Andy which had been in Lagos awaiting the arrival of Andy's safe. Accra does not impress me very favorably, although Andy likes it much better than Lagos. It is certainly true that the climate here is much cooler than in Lagos. The rainy season is much shorter, too. On the other hand, during the dry season (November-April) the place is practically a desert. It is necessary to sleep under a sheet here at this time, and some people even use light blankets. There is almost always a strong breeze blowing in gusts, and it is perfect for picking up the papers off your desk and blowing them onto the floor or out of the window. Every piece of paper has to be firmly weighted down, and even now the wind in curling up the paper in the machine, which partly explains its rumpled condition. This letter will be transmitted by the Army by air mail, and posted in the U S. I would be interested to know where it is post marked when you get it.

I am sorry to hear that merchandise for the store is so difficult to get, although I am not surprised, since I have been reading about the situation in TIME. I hope it will be possible to hang on some how. If things get really short, the merchants ought to agree to still open shorter hours, and then you would not miss the boys quite so much if they have to go into war industry, which I certainly hope will not be necessary. Please give them my very best regards. I often think about all of you - much more often than I can find time to write.

Philinda said in her last letter that she is to have a pay increase from \$100 to \$125 in the middle of August. If she keeps up at this rate, she will soon be making more than I am. The divorce will be finished in a little while, and I have already given her letters to use in connection with her application for a passport to come to Africa. I am not too optimistic that it will be granted, or that she will be able to get air transportation if a passport is granted. I don't want her to come by sea at the present rate of sinkings. If she can't come over, I will try to get home as soon as possible after the first of the year, and we will be married then. The sooner the better, say I.

Well, I guess that's all for now. Much love to all of you. Don't forget to show this letter to Betty.