

IN REPLY REFER TO
FILE NO.



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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March 19, 1939

Dear Dad:-

Rec'd 4/1-39

I was beginning to worry about you, not having heard for over two weeks. Your letter of February 26 did not arrive until March 14, which seems to be a pretty long time in transit. I hope by this time your cold and sinus trouble are better. I don't know anything about the treatment of sinus trouble in Germany, as fortunately mine never got so bad that I had to go to a doctor. All I said was that one of our doctors attached to the Consulate gave me ephedrine drops which I used to open up the drainage of the sinuses whenever they closed and thus prevented the most painful aspects of sinus trouble. I am glad to report that I continue in good health, my cold which hung on so long not having returned, thank goodness.

I am not very accurately informed about the general level of wages in Germany at the present time, and it is even harder to describe it in terms that would be understandable in terms of purchasing power, which is, after all, the important consideration. I recently saw a table made up by an American comparing wages in all the major European countries, and it was his conclusion that workmen in Germany are paid considerably less than in France and England. This was worked out by estimating how long a man would have to work to buy a loaf of bread, a pair of shoes, a car, etc. Even so the comparison cannot be absolutely accurate, as you naturally have to take into consideration the quality of the items purchased.

In the last few weeks the turnover of clerks has been so rapid that I really do not know just how many we do have in the Consulate. All told there must be about 45. Not all of these are in the visa section, of course. I think they have about ten downstairs to do the accounting, commercial reports and political work. They are paid from \$50 to \$80 a month, which comes to RM. 200 to RM. 320 with the appreciation. American clerks also get a rent allowance, so the amounts are not so small as they appear at first sight. Two married couples are included on the rolls, so their combined income is pretty good. I have heard that the average pay for clerks in German offices is about RM. 225 monthly, but I am not sure about this. Our office is terribly crowded with so many people around, and over this week-end they are tearing out a wall between two rooms and making the doctors give up their big private room and moving the nurses in with them. Personally, I do not see how removing the wall is going to help much, but maybe it will. We will, however, have in addition the room now occupied by the nurses, which will

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be an improvement.

We had an official inspector with us during the last week, and naturally it has been rather interesting for all of us. I personally didn't have anything to do with it, as the inspector didn't say more than "Hello" to me all the time he was there. The main purpose of his visit was to straighten out the strained personal relations between Honaker and L'Heureux. He succeeded in effecting a reconciliation, at least for the present, and the two men have worked out a definition of their own duties. This will make it quite a bit easier for the rest of us, as it was not unusual to have conflicting orders coming in at the same time. L'Heureux will probably be transferred either at the first of July or in September, and the inspector asked him where he wanted to go. He may get either Paris, London or the Department, any of which would be a fine boost for him. News came through three days ago that Honaker had been promoted from class 3 to class 2, also an important thing, as he had not had a promotion for several years. As L'Heureux was promoted just last summer, he can't expect anything else for a couple of years yet at least. I certainly hope that everything will work out as expected, as L'Heureux is very anxious to get out of Germany. It would also be very agreeable to all of us if Honaker got transferred too.

We had a very interesting visitor in our office Friday. It was Grover Cleveland Bergdoll, the famous draft dodger who was arrested, sentenced to five years in the penitentiary, and escaped into Canada. Ever since the war he has been living in a small town in our district, and they had quite a time right after the war when an American army officer attempted to kidnap him and take him back. Bergdoll beat him off and the officer was arrested by the German police. The Consulate had a terrible time trying to get him out. Bergdoll is married to a very attractive German girl and has about five kids. He has gotten tired of Germany, and apparently is not especially in sympathy with the present regime, and he is willing to return to the U.S. and give himself up. I suppose he thinks that it is unlikely that he will actually have to serve any time now, since most people now think our entry into the war was a mistake. His wife and kids got immigration visas last week; in spite of everything they still have an income of about \$45,000 per year.

The only difficulty in his case is how he is going to enter the United States. The law provides that persons who lost American nationality in evading military service are ineligible ever to become citizens again, and the immigration law provides that persons ineligible to naturalization may not be granted visas. He says he could easily get into the U.S. illegally, but he wants to be sure he would not be deported after serving his sentence as a draft evader - a very reasonable point of view. We are taking the matter up with the Department, and the chances are a special agent will meet him in Europe and take him back to the States. I will let you know about the developments in the case as it goes along.

I am happy to report that since my last letter to have

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received my check book from the Park National Bank, and that everything is in order. I celebrated the receipt by sending in my check for a subscription to Foreign Affairs magazine and another for 10 more cartons of Spud cigarettes. I am now able to carry out my long promise to you to take over my share of our pledge to the church. The reason I wanted to wait until I had my own checking account was so I will be able to claim a deduction on this year's income tax, and I hope that you will not have any difficulty in fixing it up to have my check applied to your pledge. I am enclosing the check with this letter.

Now I am going to ask a favor from you. I need a few small articles which I can't get wholesale, and I wonder if you or Janie would buy them for me and ship them over? I will, of course, send you a check as soon as you let me know how much they cost. Here's the list:

- 2 large tubes of Palmolive Shave Cream
- 2 bottles of Mennen's Skin Bracer
- 5 or 6 packages of Gem razor blades
- 2 large bottles of Wildroot Hair Tonic.

Perhaps the hair tonic needs some explanation. The water here is very hard, and in the last few months my hair has been falling out at an alarming rate. I hope that if I stop putting water on it I will be able to check the decline, but to do this I need some good, non-greasy or oily substitute. Wildroot is the only thing I know of which fills the bill. I could probably find something over here just as good, but it might take a lot of experimentation which I would like to avoid if possible. As I expect to use it pretty regularly, get as large bottles as you can.

The events of the last few days make it appear that the people who condemned the Munich Agreement and the policy of appeasement were pretty near right. We might just as well face the fact that the Germans are going to run Europe in their own sweet way, especially Eastern Europe, and no one is going to stop them until they reach the Russian border. I think there will be war if they try to snatch the Russian Ukraine, or if the Italians start out to take Tunis by force. I must say that I am very disappointed in the Germans. They have showed no tact, patience, or honesty at all. I daresay that no one will ever believe Hitler's word again. I'm sure I wouldn't. The people here are not very excited about the new territory; in international affairs as in private life, anticipation is half the enjoyment, and the people were given no time to anticipate anything. Many of the older people who can remember back to before 1933 are a little worried, although they all say "Hitler has a lucky hand." As you know, I have always been a great opponent of war, but I really wonder sometimes if it wouldn't be worth-while to fight to prevent the Nazification of Europe - not for us, perhaps, but for the Europeans. However, if Germany dominates Europe, she will do everything possible to injure the trade and influence of the U.S. all over the world, and especially in South America, so we have a definite interest in this affair too. Best of luck. With love,

*5-26 p3/3
Some of the envelopes from 9 A.M. to 6 P.M., which is 3 P.M. to 4 P.M. EST.*

My home address is Schottstr. 50, Stuttgart. I am at the Consulate from 9 A.M. to 6 P.M., which is 3 A.M. to noon E.S.T.

William

