

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE
 S-17 p1/8
 Stuttgart, Germany
 October 30, 1938

Dearest Niny and Aunt Vonie:

Your good letter arrived about two weeks ago, and I have delayed answering until I checked up on the price of milk. One has to be very careful how one figures prices around here because there are so many complicating factors. In the first place, there is the exchange rate. Tourists can buy marks for four to the dollar - in other words, 25¢ = 1 mark. (RM.) Then there is the problem of quality. Naturally, it wouldn't be fair to say that because a

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2
 high grade tailor made suit in America
 cost \$50 and a cheap shoddy suit in
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 cheaper here than in America. When
 I change dollars into marks, I only get
 2.5 marks per dollar - approximately
 40¢ a mark. Therefore I figure my costs
 at that rate, and so must everyone else
 who is not a tourist.

So, keeping this in mind, I would make
 the following observations, always remembering
 that there are exceptions. Oh yes, another
 generalization: scarcity here is not necessarily
 reflected by high prices, as would be the case
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3.

ness because it treats rich and poor exactly the same.

I have checked up on the price of milk and find it is 30 Pfennigs, or 12¢ a liter (practically the same as a quart) at the regular exchange rate. At the tourist rate it would be 73 1/4¢. However, it is the poorest milk you ever saw - literally skim milk, the kind that is sold very cheaply in America to restaurants for cooking, not for drinking purposes.

At the same time, the amount of cream is strictly limited - 1/2 pint three times a week per household.

Much the same situation prevails as to butter. It costs 64¢ a pound at the official rate, and the supply is limited. At present I believe each person is allowed 1/4 lb. per week, but at times you can get more. Every German has a butter card, and has to present it when buying butter. Foreigners are allowed to buy as much as they wish,

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but we prefer to import butter every week
 from Denmark, which we can do without
 paying import taxes. It costs 48¢ a lb., and
 is far superior in quality to the German
 butter, which is well mixed with substitutes.

There are a lot a jokes current about
 the quality of German clothes. Formerly,
 most of the material was imported from
 England, as Germany does not produce much
 wool. To cut down imports, however, they
 have been using a good deal of artificial
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5.

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(S-17)
(P 5/8)

Unlike food, however, the cost of clothing is very high, and since many of the best tailors were Jews, they tell me it is hard to get a good fit. However, I have not bought a suit here, so I don't know about this personally. I hope I can make my present suits last till Spring, when I hope to make a short trip to England and buy some new ones.

Eggs, too, are very scarce. I heard two American housewives discussing it last night, and one said that she had been able to get only five eggs all last week, which was tough because she likes to give her three children eggs

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for breakfast, and her husband likes them too. However, we can always buy omelettes in restaurants; they seem to be able to keep in a supply. At present, most of the eggs sold here are imported from Hungary and Yugoslavia. (S-17 p6/8)

As far as soap is concerned, there is plenty to be bought, altho a good Nazi once said to me, "One must admit that the soap is not all it used to be." I buy American Palm Olive soap thru an importer in Hamburg for 7¢ a cake - the regular American retail price, as I recall it.

Before I came to Germany, I asked Curt Schiffeler, what things it would be good to stock up on before I left. He

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Before I came to Germany, I asked Curt Schiffeler what things it would be good to stock up on before I left. He

said, "Don't take anything. You'll find everything over there better and cheaper." Right now the only things I can think of that are both better and cheaper are beer and wine. I think even an old Prohibitionist like yourself would enjoy the white wines from the Mosel district. They are delicate and excellent, and not strong. Outside of that, everything is more expensive for equivalent quality, and in many cases equivalent quality cannot be obtained at any price.

I really appreciate your sending my letters on to Aunt Maggie and Jennie. I would love to write to them directly, but I have so little time to myself that I spend most of it writing anyway, and if

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I never do anything else, I'll have nothing
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Since my last letter, I have had a
 trip to Heidelberg, which is not far from
 here. It is a lovely old city with a ruined
 castle perched on the hill high above
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 It used to be a very strategic location and
 the castle was destroyed by the French during
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 I had met some students previously, and they
 took me around and showed me the town.

Well, I must close, as I don't believe
 I can get three sheets in one of these
 tiny envelopes. I hope you are all well,
 (except for a light cold). I wish
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With loads of love,
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