

IN REPLY REFER TO

FILE NO.



## AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Dear People,

How dreadfully quickly time flies. I can't tell whether it has been a week or a day since I wrote to you last. As far as I can remember nothing of moment has occurred. We went to the boat on Friday, and had the usual very nice time, thank you, and saw the usual quota of refugees and government employees off, including one Czech girl that we had heard about a lot from various people, and whom Mrs. Parry knew and spoke to in that impossible language of hers. She is married to an American Doctor, and had never, apparently, left home before, because she had to be propped up morally to an enormous extent, which of course we all did, but unsuccessfully. The last we saw of her she was weeping as she remembered Zion, which is a long way away from Washington D.D. Mrs. Parry then set in, telling me about how nice Prague was in its heyday, what lovely shops and countryside around, and what sweet people (and she's right about that, if they are all more or less like she is) and in general seconding the girl's motion. What an enormous shake-up a large portion of Europe's population is getting, one way or another. People that would have stayed in the same place all their lives quite happily, are willingly or unwillingly being shifted about. Ah well. I shall be just as glad to get home soon, just so we don't have to stay there more than a year or two. I am horribly afraid we are bitten by the bug that makes you want to move on after relatively short stays. It would be a much better thing to want to stay in the same place all the time, but I am sure that neither of us could bear it for too many years. Perhaps it will come with the years, although I haven't noticed it creeping up in myself yet, nor in my friend Jones. I suppose some day it might come up and hit us, and we would then never wiggie from Peopia, Ill., or some such spot. Speaking of long stays, I was pleased to read about Pop's thirty-fifth anniversary with the Bell System, and so were all our friends, who were dragged off to read all about it in the 195 Broadway magazine. Pop, you are just as handsome as ever, if not more so! Everyone said so, especially after I had pointed the fact out to them. I see you have managed to keep your figure in spite of Helen's cooking, a veritable feat.

We are still awaiting the cable from the State Department telling us what is their decision, or is it iss decision re the repatriation of the Jones Family. I hope it will come through soon, because I don't like the looks of this arming of merchant vessels business. We were talking to one of the stewards on the Expoline boat Friday, and he said that as soon as guns came on, he was going off, so he said we were not to look for him anymore on those boats. We wish we could take one of those nice safe Clippers. Ah well, one way or another one is in perpetual danger, so I suppose there is no point in thinking about one particular perilous phase of modern life.

We took the Parrys to a nice movie last night, intitled "That Uncertain Feeling", in which Burgess Meredith did very well as a screwball. We had lunch at their house, all three of us (i. e. including Krieg) and an enormous meal it was. Fried Frankfurters, potatoes, applesauce, and fruit salad, but for some reason or other we were simply stuffed after it, and the men just gave up and went to sleep all over the place. So Mrs. Parry and I took advantage of the occasion to try on some of the clothes she makes herself, all very lovely, and then to go out and shop for records of Portuguese music. We went to two or three places down on Rossio, until finally we struck a place where they realized that what we really wanted to do was listen to records like mad. So we went into a back room and had them drag out their entire supply. It was lovely. I finally succumbed to one of them, entitled Tirolero, which perhaps I have mentioned as being an extremely engaging ditty quite popular right now. I wonder if it has come to the attention of American orchestras yet. Anyway, you may be hearing it any one of these days, on my

phonograph at home.

4-21 p1

Speaking of Mrs. Parry, she is sailing on the 31st of October, and I wish you could get in touch with her if she is staying any time in New York. I'll have to ask her.

You know, fundamentally I have nothing whatsoever to say, I am just rambling on. We are here in what we call the club on Sundays, and the Consulate on weekdays. All the typewriters there are here invite correspondence, so everyone, including our friend Flip the Austeylian is pounding away.

Some more of Bill's consular district (the Milan one) have come to town. My, my, what a district that was. Composed entirely of Opera singers. All mad, as far as we have been able to judge. Two specimens came in to our Pensao a few days ago. The lady is American, and having been away from home for nearly four years, speaks with a thick accent, and finds Americans so quaint. Her husband is a fairly sane Cuban singer. We all got together in the bar of our Pensao a few days ago, and had a fine time just talking. This lady has a remarkable attitude toward maps. Lie down on your side and look at a map, and you will see how she looks at geography. We were discussing the whereabouts of Bill's

new post, Lagos. Well, said she, it's this way. You know where Italy is. Well, right above that is Spain, and above that is Portugal, and if you go far enough above that you hit America. Which puts Nigeria to the west of Portugal, if you see what she means, but she refuses to countenance the mention of East and west, because she doesn't understand that system of directions. That caused a slight jar on the pleasantness of the evening, because we couldn't get her system right at first. We were all trying to think it out madly, and Krieg innocently said "She means West is North, and South is West." Deary me, that was an error. "What!" the lady cried, "You can't refer to me as SHE. My name is Mrs. Carrasco!" The thing about it is that on the surface she looks perfectly same, just a little nervous. So Flip came to our rescue, and started talking madly about his experiences during the exodus from Paris. The lady stared at him for some time then said "Flip, I never liked Australians before, but now I do. You are the only GENTLEMAN present." It was a hilarious evening! All in that vein. I am sorry to say she has never really warmed up to us since then, although I personally never thought we were at all rude. Anyway, everyone we have met coming from Milan has been an Opera singer, and all have been out of the ordinary. You should have met one fellow, named John Gualiani, who came all the way to Lisbon, then suddenly remembered he had forgotten to buy a ticket on the Export lines, and didn't have enough money anyway. He had an ingratiating personality, and managed to borrow it all in the space of two or three days, here and there. None of his creditors is very sure of getting ~~it back~~ back his loan, sad to say. All these singers were heartbroken to leave Milan, because while they hadn't gotten there yet, they were sure that they had some one on the inside of the Scala who would get them an engagement there within a few months.

Enough of this idle chatter, or this letter will weigh more than five grams. We'll be seeing you soon.

Love,

*me*