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AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL  
Lagos, Nigeria; April 9, 1943

Dear Folks:

At long last, your lovely Christmas presents have arrived. Nobody know exactly what happened to them or where they went, but an Army officer brought the box into the Accra Consulate and asked if I were known there. He said it had arrived by ship in Takoradi and turned over to the Army Port detail. Mac immediately sent it down by air.

I am really most grateful for the lovely things you sent. The pajamas will come in especially useful, since the ones you sent me a year ago are already breaking down under the strenuous beating they receive from the local washman. It was fine to have the razor blades, especially since I understand they are getting rather hard to get these days. I hope that my present supply will now be sufficient for the rest of my stay in Nigeria. Ties are always a most welcome gift; I have had little chance to buy any new ones since I left home three years ago, so you can imagine my stock is getting pretty seedy looking. This is especially true because I am always unintentionally wiping my sweaty chin against them. I have read lots of ads for the Old American Spicewood powder you sent, and I always thought they sounded awfully good, though rather expensive. Now I will have a chance to try it. I can't give any comment yet, as I haven't finished the can I now have open.

Talking about sufficient supplies for the rest of my stay made me think how hard it is to estimate how much I will need when I don't know either how long I will be here or where I will go next. I suppose that, wherever my next assignment is, I will get home leave on the way. We had a bit of bad news recently. For the duration, home leave is to be limited to 30 days in the U.S. Formerly you could always get authorization for 60 days, and in some cases 90 days was authorized for persons who had been serving in unhealthy climates. However, anything to help the war. It is a little hard to figure out how Philinda and I will be able to call on our respective families and have any time to get acquainted at that rate. Perhaps they will make an exception in my favor, in view of the fact that we have just been married. I would also like a brief tour in the Department, sort of to see how things work again.

Philinda and I have been worrying a bit about the question of groceries. The supplies that Mac brought with him, which seemed so adequate at the time, have, of course, been divided between us when he went to Accra, and the remainder is almost gone. We have been thinking about ordering some more things, but we hardly know what to do about it. I understand the Department can arrange to have canned goods and rationed articles shipped, but it takes some time. Further, the W.S.A. now control all the shipping, and their rates seem to be much higher than those formerly charged by the Barber Line. Insurance is also a tough question. It adds 20% to the cost, and we usually have no choice whether to take it out or not, because

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unless the order is paid for in advance, the company takes insurance for their own protection. On the other hand, we can't pay in advance as we have no idea how much it is going to cost.

You doubtless remember my writing about Andy Anderson, who was formerly here and with whom I worked in Accra for six weeks. Andy went home in November and had 30 days leave with his parents in Washington. Then he was temporarily assigned to the Department for consultation, where he remained until some time in March, when he was assigned to Lima, Peru. In a letter to Mr. Shantz, he indicated that he was reasonably well pleased with the assignment. He had asked for a South American post, although I had the idea that he would have preferred the East to the West Coast.

Mr. Shantz left last Tuesday morning for Leopoldville. He will stay there and in Brazzaville, which is just across the river, for a short while and then go on down to Loanda, Angola. After returning to Leopoldville, he will visit in Duala for a few days, and then return to Lagos. He expects to be here for a week or ten days and then go on up the Coast westwards from here. I do not think he will come back here again before going on to the States to report the results of his observations. As I said before, he doesn't expect ever to come back to Lagos permanently.

One of the by-products of his departure is that Lynch and I will have to buy the beach shack from him. It will cost us about \$150 apiece. I have tried to avoid tying money up in things like that, even though I were sure, as I am in this case, that there will be no difficulty in getting the money back when I leave. There are plenty of people who would like to have a part interest in that shack, but we are anxious to keep it entirely in the Consulate if possible. I would now feel entirely lost if I couldn't go out there practically every Sunday. Philinda and I both look forward to Sunday as the best day of the week, and we enjoy it more than anything else we do. It is both fun and refreshing. Most of our other social events may be fun, but they could hardly be called either healthful or refreshing.

Life here goes on much as usual. We are moderately busy in the office, mostly with routine. There are very few telegrams to do now, and Lagos appears to be going to sleep again. If it weren't for the doubt about whether I would be able to take Philinda to my next post, I would ask for a transfer as soon as the additional Vice Consul who has been assigned here arrives. I really doubt there will be enough work to keep us both busy. However, it should be possible to get away on our long delayed honeymoon up north, and that will be nice. Then, too, life is full of surprises, and we never know what is going to happen next. Things might pick up here, but I doubt it.

I hope you are all well, as we are. Health, enough food and a chance to enjoy life are pretty rare things in the world these days, and we sometimes feel that we are too happy, and that we should be a little ashamed of ourselves. However, we will take the good when it comes. Though we know evil too may come, there is no use worrying about it. Best wishes and good luck to you all.

Love,

