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MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

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November 16, 1938

Dear Dad:-

I certainly hope that your cold is better by this time. Have you tried taking any shots in the arm for it yet? I have heard that in some cases they work out rather well, although you have to try them to find out. There's no way of knowing ahead of time. I have been very well since getting over my last cold a couple of weeks ago, and I hope that I will not be bothered again this winter. However, the weather so far has been all in my favor, as we have had a really marvelous fall. It has been unusually dry, and with the exception of two or three days, the temperature has been mild. I do not think that I have ever before experienced such fine weather so late in the season. If you go to Arkansas, you must send me a card from Stuttgart, Ark. It ought to make quite a hit here.

Thank you very much for getting the supplies off for me - at least, I hope they have been sent, for of course they have not yet arrived. I hope you made a good pick in the hats; as I said before, I could have bought one here just as well, although of course the American hats are better quality. You were right about the razor blades; I have never used anything but Gems, and it never occurred to me to tell you what kind. I hope the box will arrive soon, as I am all out of shampoo and down to the last drop of ink.

I have finally decided that I cannot get along without a checking account over here, as I have no way to make payment for the things I buy from the importer in Hamburg and other occasional purchases. Therefore, I adopted the suggestion of Treble, the Immigration Inspector, and I asked for the necessary papers to start a checking account in the National City Bank of New York, London Branch. While the cards have arrived, I have not had time to fill them out, as we have been so busy in the last few days. I will keep the account in dollars, of course, for with all our alleged currency difficulties, we still have one of the most secure currencies in the world.

While I haven't heard all the details yet, such as whether Billy Ashbrook was re-elected or not, I can't say that I was particularly pleased with the outcome of the election. It seems too bad that Sawyer, the best man to be run for governor for several years, should have

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to be defeated, while a horses neck like Davey could spend four years in the State House. I don't know very much about Taft; if he's anything like his father, he won't be any house afire. Bulklly had six years in the Senate without ever having made much of a name for himself. I was somewhat surprised to see him painted as such a New Dealer, as he certainly has been against many things the President wanted, such as the farm legislation and the earlier forms of the wage and hours bill. Personally, I would much rather have had him go back to the Senate, as I have always heard in Ohio that Charles Taft was the one who had all the brains in the family. I hope by the time you get this, you will have written all about the local contests; I am still betting that Billy got back.

We have been having plenty of excitement and lots of hard work since I last wrote you. On Thursday, just after the synagogues were burned and the shops smashed, I was so angry that I could have written a long and fiery description of the whole business, but now I am just sick and disgusted with the whole business.. The burnings, etc. took place simultaneously all over Germany, and were about as spontaneous as a politician's smile. For anybody who has seen present day Germany, it is simply fantastic to assert that any act of violence could occur without the instigation of the government; the people are afraid to lift a finger unless someone tells them they may. But the people, properly speaking, had nothing to do with these sad events. The whole business was organized and carried out with all the brutal thoroughness of an army maneuver.

Here in Stuttgart, I was down town Wednesday evening until midnight, and everything was quiet and perfectly normal. They tell me that about four o'clock in the morning, men from the SA and SS left party headquarters, went to the Jewish synagogue, and deliberately proceeded to pour kerosene around and set it on fire. The fire brigade soon appeared, roped off the street, and took precautions to see that the flames did not spread to any of the nearby Aryan buildings. No effort was made to extinguish the fire. When I went past there at noon the next day, and building was just a hollow shell; flames were still visible inside, where I think they had ^{quite} been a bon fire out of the pews and anything that hadn't been completely destroyed the night before.

During the nineteenth century paving stones, pried up out of the streets, were a favorite weapon for street fighters, and were excellent for breaking windows.

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Although this outburst is claimed to have been spontaneous, of course no one would think of damaging the streets here now, and most of them are asphalt anyway. ~~Inside~~ ^{stead} they import stones from God knows where, and throw them through the windows of the Jewish shops. There were a bare handful of Jewish shops in Stuttgart anyway, as the Jewish population has never been large, and practically all the shops have been forced out of business previously.

At noon time, Spalding and I walked out to survey the damage, and as we were less than a block from the Consulate, I remarked that they had overlooked one store, as this little shop I knew to be Jewish was still in good order, and open for business. The streets were full of people, just walking around, but none of them seemed to be particularly annoyed at the existence of this little business, which incidentally, was the local agent for Kayser silk stockings and women's lingerie. Just one hour later we returned, and found the place a mass of ruins. Not only were the windows broken, but all the inside had been simply torn to pieces. The drawers were pulled out and the goods strewed all over the floor, where it was trampled under foot and mixed with broken glass from the show cases and an elaborate chandelier which had been pulled down. One of the wreckers was still there, seeing that no one went in. He was dressed in the shirt, tie, breeches and boots of the SA, but with a civilian coat on instead of a uniform. And yet we are expected to believe that the outraged citizenry perpetrated these acts!

This same day news began to come in of mass arrests. Desperate women began calling the Consulate to ask if we couldn't do something. One man was examined for a visa at 11 o'clock in the morning and told to come at two to receive the completed document. In the meantime, he went to visit a friend, and while there, the police raided the house. He was taken to prison with the rest of the people. His wife was left alone with two small children, with no money, and no place to stay, as no hotel in Stuttgart will receive Jews any more. All over Germany hundreds of husbands, fathers and brothers have been arrested, and from all parts of our district frantic women have turned to us for help. All we can do is give a written statement as to how the case stands with us. We always stick strictly to the truth; while we loathe and despise the people who are perpetrating this outrage against humanity, we dare not risk a single false statement, as this might prevent anything we wrote from helping.

The Jews in Stuttgart, however, got off easily

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compared to many others. As far as I know, there was no personal violence in Stuttgart. In other towns, however, Jews were subjected to the most fearful beatings. Once again, this is based on personal knowledge and not hearsay. I have seen more black eyes, bruised lips, cut heads and bumps in the last few days than I have seen in my life before. I would have seen many more, but most of them are in jail and could not come. One man, who sported a noble array of bruises, said that he and his wife were both thrown down stairs while a gang of hoodlums broke up every stick of furniture and smashed every glass and disk in the apartment. He walked around all night Friday night, as he did not dare to try to stay in any hotel for fear the police would pick him up. It seems that the local party leaders were left considerable leeway in what measures to take, and in Stuttgart, as usual, they were more lenient than elsewhere.

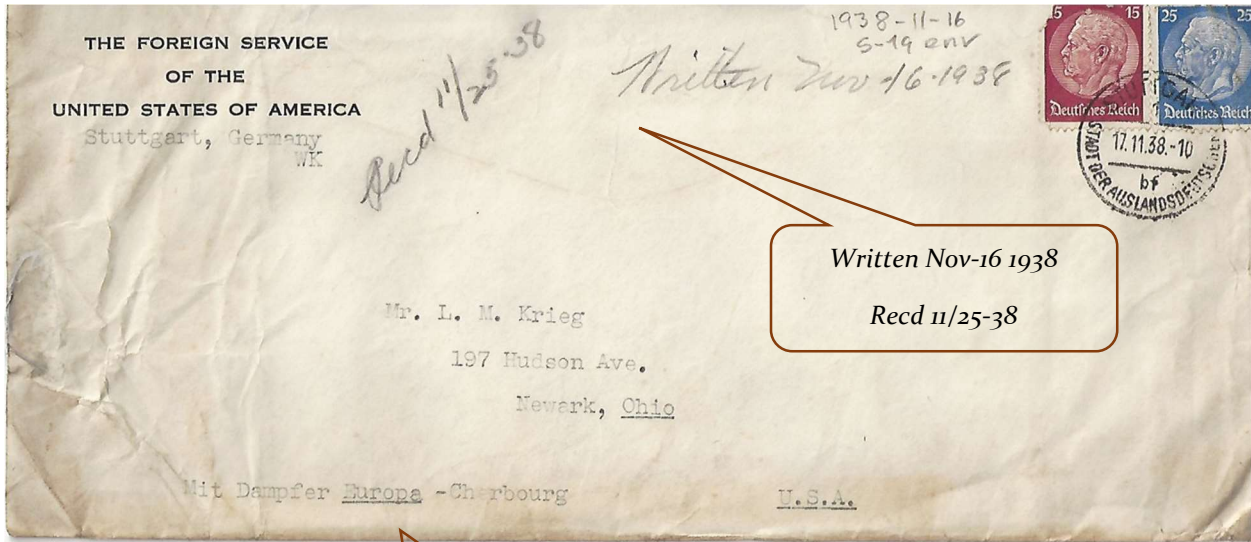
You have no idea what a sight greeted our eyes Saturday and Monday mornings at the Consulate. Monday we had invited about 70 or 80 people, and besides them there must have been 200 or 300 more. It was virtually impossible to move across the waiting room from one set of offices to another; there wasn't even standing room, and there were many people standing on the steps outside, who couldn't even get inside the door, much less talk to any of the officers. We simply ran ourselves to death, and still we could hardly scratch the surface of the mob. The whole day was a night mare, and Tuesday was just about as bad, although we got organized a little better. Today is a German holiday, and while the day off was cancelled, and the office was open, there weren't many people there and we could busy ourselves trying to answer the hundreds of telegrams which have come in in the last three days. We have even had one phone call from Nashville, Tenn.!

If I went into the details of cases, I could write a small book, but I am much too tired to do any more tonight. I can only say that I am proud that my forefathers left this country; I should be ashamed to have any connection with these 20th century barbarians. I know that many Germans are sick and disgusted, but all are powerless; they can only wince and hang their heads, as they walk by on the other side. If there is a God, there will surely be a day of retribution.

I haven't had a letter from Janie since school started. You might inquire when she intended to write. Please give my love to Dorothy, Betty and Janie; best regards to Mrs. E.
With love, William

P.S. Thank Sarah for the letter and magazines.

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Mit Dampfer Europa -
Cherbourg