

January 9, 1945

Dearest Hiro,

On Monday the 8th, I received three letters from you, written on Nov. 10, which you mailed on the 23d; the ones you wrote on 11/28/29, and 12/1, mailed on the 4th; and the one written on 12/4, mailed on the 7th. It was such a relief to hear from you after a month and a half without any word from you. We can understand now why you couldn't write, when you were moving around so much— but for each day we don't hear from you, a million and one awful thoughts come into our minds, and it certainly keeps one on edge. We are so proud of your group and the excellent record you've all made, for we read about it in the papers, and glad that you got the long-needed rest. One of the girl's I know received a letter from her boy friend there, and he said he was near the French Riviera, and the Alps while on rest, what could be nicer. I am wondering if that's where you last wrote from, for the description sounds vefy much like it. It must be quite some experience to be seeing all those famous spots, but we know that the circumstances alter the cases, and it isn't all in fun. Still I can imagine what a luxury it must be to have a rest period, when you can again eat decent food, wear clothes, shave, keep warm, visit people, and go shopping! The prices you quoted are terrific, and it seems a shame that things are so exorbitant. I suppose wherever American soldiers go, the itching palms in evidence— as for sending me perfume or other luxuries please don't think of it— for I'd much rather you spent the money for other things for yourself, or just to save it for a rainy day. You asked about how much we have saved in bonds— up to date it is \$1125.00 worth, which is a good nest egg, for the children's education. We also have over \$1000.00 in our savings account now too. Do you remember the day we used to wish we had a \$100.00 in savings— and now I feel almost wealthy with so much saved for a rainy day. I hope that we'll have enough saved to build a home and see the world someday too. With the GI bill of rights in effect, we could borrow money for the future home, couldn't we? And what a house we'll have. Even Peter has a part in planning it already— he wants several play-rooms, he says, where he can store his toys and junk. Then pretty soon Jane will want to have the same— so it looks like nothing less than a 4 bedroom house will do for the Higuchi's!

We are all well— thank God for that. So far last year we all enjoyed good health— and hope that 1945 will be the same. We hope that you won't get the flu or some such illness— but know how much you'd like that rest you mentioned. So please take good care of yourself. The pictures you sent we've good— Peter was so thrilled to see you again. The Hamanaka boy looks like a nice kid— Jiro said that they heard from Yamato in Italy the other day— he's doing testing, and other similar work— sort of back to school teacher days— he felt that maybe you thought he was not a good soldier and he felt badly he couldn't stay with you and the gang— and sent me his regards. That was certainly nice of him— I am planning to send his wife some of those pictures you sent me of him earlier—

About the allotment— the increase will come in handy, but we are getting along all right on what you've been sending plus my salary— so hope you won't deprive yourself of some extra comforts dear. When I read of the terrible prices you have to pay for things there, and the poverty and need of the people, we feel very selfish and undeserving of the good comforts we still have here. Things that are so commonplace to us like soap, bread, meat and butter— we now realize how much we should be thankful for them. We can still feed our children good food, plenty of milk, citrus fruits, etc— and how starved and hungry the children of Europe must be— I am wondering if you could send me the address of that Italian lady who is having the baby— do you think I could send her something directly— or is the mail service to Rome still discontinued from America. I don't want to burden you with extra packages, so wonder if it wouldn't be better to mail them directly to her—

The days seem to fly by so quickly. Each day we hope and pray will be the end of this awful mess. The radio commentator said the other day, that America will just begin

to realize the grimness of war this year as much more retrenchment and curtailing will have to be done. The Presiden't speech calling for national mobilization sounds as if boys and men will be continuously drafted to replace you folks, and we all now realize that we must expect this to be a long, hard war. I hope that it won't be so, but we really should as a nation become more sobered and sacrifice more for all of you. I don't think a lot of people realize that yet— and it will soon hit them square between the eyes. During Xmas week we were sobered by the fact that the German counter-offensive had started— those few days were hard days— we felt little of the Xmas cheer this year, knowing what you were all going through. However, the news these past few days is better, and we hope that all is well with you and the boys. Your group has such a good reputation— but the casualties encountered are hard to take. I know what a job you have before you, and what good you're doing for the boys. Everyone is proud of you. As I told you previously, the Hawaii Times had two large pictures of you recently conducting services— one a service just before going into battle, the other a memorial service for 82 casualties of the 2nd Battalion. The write up accompanying it was very dramatic— then on Friday Jan. 5th the Star Bulletin had your picture (the awful one of you taken when you were a civilian with glasses on, made you look like Mr. Moto), but with a very graphic account of a service you had conducted for the boys in the 7th Army. So many people have commented to me about it, and they ask that you know they are praying for you, and proud of the good work you're doing for the boys.

I last wrote you on ~~Friday~~ Thursday Jan. 4th. Bill Norwood sent me the proffs of the two pictures I mentioned above— it was so nice of him. They had the AP write ups attached to them. Peter was so thrilled to see you "in action". I cleaned out the playroom that day— it is still piled up with junk. Martin is getting me a book case to put some of your books in. I still have them in boxes on the floor which takes up lots of space. Late that afternoon, Mrs. Ikinaga of Waipahu, George's mother, came over and brought us three cartons of fresh eggs, to thank us for arranging with Alice to send George that box of eats some time ago. It seems although it was mailed a long time ago by Alice, it only reached him just before Xmas, due to your moving around so much. How is he— do you see him?

On Friday the 5th, I cleaned house, mended clothes. I received a Xmas card from the Clarence Glicks— I had sent Doris a hibiscus pin a long time ago to thank her for entertaining you— they sent you their regards. On Saturday the 6th, I went shopping in Waipahu— saw Mrs. Tsugawa at the store— and also met Mrs. Yogi, who lost her son in France— did you know the boy? It always makes me feel so badly to see these bereaved mothers— for while there is life there is hope, but with their boys dead, the grim realization that they never will return hits them hard. I stopped at the Iguchi's on the way and brought them some lettuce I found in Waipahu— visited the Suzuki's and Ikeda's. Peter received the wrench book on animals you sent on Dec. 1st. Of course he can't understand it, but he got a big kick out of my reading the French to him, and he will take it to show and tell. In the evening Peter and I went to the camp show and saw "Mrs. Parkington"— being the end of his vacation, we sort of ended it with a bang by taking in the show. They have very comfortable seats now built in the camp show place—

On Sunday I resumed Sunday School. Then Martin came over, and I took him and Peter to the Hironaka's for their 20th wedding luau. It was a humdinger luau— the real McCoy, poi, pig, fish, lomi-lomi, coconut, pineapple, raw fish, squid, chicken luau, etc. A very fine Hawaiian orchestra played and some hula dancing was done by the guests. It was a very nice affair, and I only wish you might have been there. They must have had about 300 people there in the yard— Martin was very conspicuous with his many decorations— poor kid wherever he goes, people can't help but notice them, and he has to wear them— orders. Anyways I was quite impressed by the fact that there were several haole soldiers there, and they all came up to Martin to shake hands with him, and to thank him for a job well-done. It was gratifying to know how other GI's felt— and made Martin feel embarrassed but happy. I thought to myself what a queer world this is, when on the mainland that Oregon Legionaire group struck out the names of the 16 nisseif soldiers from its towns honor-roll; and here in Hawaii haole soldiers

will take it upon themselves to come up and thank a returned AJA for his contribution. It all goes to show that they know what we're fighting for, whereas that Legionarie group doesn't. Anyways the fly in the ointment was our pal Masa Katagiri. He was there in all his pomp and glory, bragging about the Emergency Morale committee and how they had been the group to sponsor the 100th, and etc. I thought to myself, how could any decent human being have the gall to talk like that to a wounded returned veteran claiming self-glory for sending boys into battle! It doesn't make sense. Martin was sore as heck, but too polite to say anything, but he said that someday when one of those guys opens his mouth again, he's going to give him a piece of his mind, and I can't say I'd blame him. Mineo K. is back you know. He's getting married to Louise Sasai Maehara's sister, Nubu, this month. They will take over the work at Nuuamu Church. Seido has gone to Kapaa, Kauai. Masa drinks a lot too— he's my idea of a heel. Anyways, Martin enjoyed it immensely, and said it was the first luau in four years— (kept thinking to myself all the time— how you would enjoy the food, and how we must have a luau for you when you return, but then, I know that you'll have endless invitations to luaus then. Martin had to leave for his camp right after— in the evening, I picked up Margaret and Takayo and we went to Church. George Coale spoke. Kats presided. Kats had just come back from a three day conference at Mid Pacific for young people. I understand that it was some conference— some Baptist revivalist influence somehow got into the conference and they held testimonials, and had some of the young people in ~~near~~ hysterics but— by confessions, testimonials, crying, etc. Paul Waterhouse's gang was among the group who led the testimonials. They even told bunny off— and said his kind of religion was the bunk. Can you imagine that! Quite a number of our young people attended, but all boys. Incidentally, the Miho's ~~have~~ are going to have a baby in July— guess the Church people must think that it is traditional for its ministers to have early families! I understand, Kat's mother has applied to go to the mainland to join his father in the internment center; she is very unhappy with Katsuro and his wife. You know what a big blow he is, it seems they are very inconsiderate of her— This war is bringing so many hardships to people in all ways, isn't it.

Yesterday, Monday, I had a very busy day. Had my Waipahu High club, Ewa club, then an Ewa council meeting at Winnie Bowmans till 5:00. Barely got home to change and eat, then picked up Jiro, and we went to Waipahu to the social club, where they had a meeting to discuss the possibility of setting up a teen-age canteen in Waipahu. It came on the request of some 200 high school students who feel that there is little or no recreational life for them in that town. With the Community House now the USO, there isn't any gathering place, and it is a sorry situation. I can't see why somebody can't do something about it— after all charity begins at home so they say. Well anyways, the meeting last night was quite a revelation. About a half dozen of the high school kids came. My boss, Miss Shaw, spoke on the canteen movement— and it was decided that the kids would form a committee and choose from those present an adult advisory committee. It was the nearest thing to a community council I've ever seen in Waipahu, and thought to myself, how often you longed for such a group. Keith Tester sort of pushed it I think. He and Mrs. Tester were there, Mrs. Friskine, Mrs. Kerns, Mr. Mikami, Rev. Santa Ana, Mrs. Wightman, Father Vierra, an Army chaplain, Alec Myer, Cranky Watanabe, Major Okada, Shigemi, and a contingent from our Church. Kats was temporary chairman of the meeting. There were many others there too, but can't remember all their names. Mr. Yamane was there too. Keith was so glad to learn I had some mail from you, as when he visited a few days ago, I told him I was worried as I hadn't heard from you for such a long time. They thought it would be possible to have such a canteen in the former language school. Mr. Mikami who is on the Board of Directors of the school, felt that the rest of the Board would consent readily to turn it over for that purpose. The school building has been sitting idle for a year now— its a shame somethings can't be done with it.

We heard yesterday from Alice and Hank too. Alice said she had received the batch of Xmas cards you sent her to mail out; also your request for abalone. She has sent to Chicago for some and will mail it to you. The letter was written on Dec. 28th; Sho's draft deferment expired on Dec. 30th so we are wondering what has become of him. They all had Xmas dinner at Hank's. Hank has Paul Zaima's wife, Tets, staying with them now too, as Paul left for overseas the end of November.

Do you ever see George Ziima. Hank says he hadn't heard from you for months, but heard indirectly through Buster Suzuki and George Ziima that you were o.k. Babe is having some difficulty in Long Island, as she is sharing the house with a couple, and the wife won't do any of the housework, so Babe has to do all of it, etc. Both Alice and Hank were dubious about going back to L.A., although Hank and Sho both feel in the spring they will go back to look over the situation, and the house. Hank might be drafted too- in which event they will all have to make adjustments. They have all joined Mr. Rich's church. I think you attended it when you were there, didn't you? Hank says that most of the nissei are hesitant about going back to the coast. They are pretty well-established where they are by now, and are in fairly good jobs. They don't want to go back and face a hostile community, or to sell fruits, work as gardeners, etc again. There was an article in the paper the other day, it said some 15,000 vital jobs as farmers, etc were open to nissei in California, but so far no one has come back to them. They are using German war prisoners in some of the farms in Calif, and they would rather have the nissei. It will be a decision each individual nissei will have to make by himself- and many changes will occur. Alice said that some of our neighbors in L.A. wrote her that they hoped she would come back- which shows that many of their friends stuck by them through thick and thin. They are the same ones who used to go out to Santa Anita and take out food to them those first awful days. Mr. Kobayashi plans to return to his Lancaster farm in the spring if all goes well-- so a few of them definitely plan on returning.

Today I had to go to the Y for my weekly staff meeting by 8:30. Had lunch at the Y, then to Waipahu to pick up the kids. I didn't have my elementary school club today, so went to the Ewa store and bought Peter a pair of shoes. He now wears 13 1/2; a half size more, will be size 1, adult size. He rarely wears shoes, only when we go to town! I received Xmas cards from Lois Parsons in Md; she sent you her regards; Bud Mukaye's mother at Amache (he's in the Philippines you know); and from Yae and Gen Nakamura. I had wondered about Yae all these years, and was glad to hear from her in Chicago. Gen is working with Al Nozaki, in his architectural line- so is using his talents. I think the Kusayanagi Sr's. are still at Manzanar camp.

Tonight I went to the Lions club dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Suzuki. They are always so nice to take me to Ladies Nights. It was the annual feast for the blind, and they had a very interesting demonstration of the work done for the blind, with one of the blind girls speaking and demonstrating. The usual horseplay was in evidence. John Beck presided tonight. Many of the members came up to me to comment about the article they had read in the Star Bulliten about you, and sent their regards, Jimmy Kushima, Han Sam Yee, and others. Jimmy said he had sent a feather lei to Earl Finch in Hattiesburg. Some of the boys there had written Jimmy saying they had \$68.00 saved to buy Mr. Finch a lei, but Jimmy told them to keep the money, and he sent him one gratis.

Tomorrow I will be busy with the Y again. Mrs. Suzuki is giving me a massage in the morning. At night I will go to the Church to a forum on "Our Responsibility to the Returning Veteran". Lorne Bell of the Y is going to be the speaker. The Y is sponsoring it. And so on it goes, one day as busy as the next-- all hastening to the day when you'll be home with us dear.

Peter is quite a checker player now. Says he wants to be tricky like you and beat you when you come back. He plays two people's hands by himself and is quite a whizz. He's got Obachan playing it with him at nights now! Jane is trying to take a step now- she jabbars all the time, baby talk-- and is such a darling. She says "dada" for daddy-- and "mama" quite well. Most of the time she's saying "ugh". And what an appetite she has-- just like the old man!

This is all for now, dear-- it is almost 11 p.m. so I think I'll go to bed. Sweet dreams, dear-- please take care of yourself-- it can't last forever can it. We're thinking of you and praying for you every minute of the day-- and we have so much to make up for when you come back.

All my love,

Shirley

P.S. Can't send the takuwan- we can't send any food out of the Terr. Its an order.