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To: O.C. A.F.S. G.H.Q. M.E.F.

From: O.C. 567 A.F.S., A.C.C. - C.M.F. 6 Nov. '43

Dear Fred:

Yours of the 22nd Oct. just arrived after much wandering about I expect.

Your mention of the Termoli affair reminds me of the fact that I am much annoyed with Red Murray for not getting in his official report on it. I will send it to you as soon as possible. Dick Dickson was the Sergeant in charge of the group and did fine work as well as having one hell of a close call getting out of the town last of all when its capture was imminent.

The manpower situation seems to be under control what with Meeker and three others (Lindsay, Follansbee and Craven, formerly F.F.) arrived. A few of the sick are drifting back and six men just left our jaundice ward. Old Jack Hobbs has been ordered into hospital for a few days by the Brig. of.... Corps., having wandered about in a very yellow condition for several weeks. He is really over the thing now and will not be in for long. Manning will cover his platoon in the interim.

Doug Atwood adds in a note I received today that he would definitely like to get in on a 2-year leave scheme.

I am going to retire to hospital in the next day or so. Suggest you confer with C. I. Pierce, our legal expert and Adjutant, on most affairs. He is in on the picture better than Charlie Snead at the moment.

.....

We will try to help Jeffress get moved to Bari in a week or two. That is the place for him, at least for a while. He helps us greatly and I have sent him Newell Jenkins as an assistant.

Best

ART

~~O.C. 567 A.F.S. A.C.C.~~

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TO: MAJOR HOEING HQ AFS GHQ MEF

FROM: OC 567 AFS, ACC - CMF

6 Nov. '43

Dear Fred:

The Col. has been here since last night and is heading back to Naples tomorrow. We have agreed that Charlie Sneed should be acting OC while I go sick for a few weeks. The way things are set up now it should work out. If Bert Payne shows up in the meantime we can put him to good use; I might even say we need him.

I am trying to wangle a bed in a hospital here in Italy. If none are available I will probably fly to Cairo and get admitted there.

Charlie Pierce will communicate with you regularly on the state of the nation (need I add in parenthesis, 567 Coy.) Things are going well and the front is pushing on a bit.

Best,

ART

O. C. 567 A. F. S., A.C.C.

P. S. Very pleased to receive word of Manning's award.

TO: Major Hoeing - HQ, AFS, GHQ, MEF

FROM: O.C. 567 AFS ACC - CMF

4 November 1943

Dear Fred:

Have just returned from another tour of the four Platoons and the boys are continuing to do a splendid job.

Down Campobasso way Red's and Doug's boys are working with theandDivision respectively. Conditions are bad - wet, narrow roads, night driving, and the weather miserably cold. Up here in front of Termoli some of Jack Hobbs' boys are doing outstanding work under as bad conditions as I have ever seen. There are one or two companies of infantry across the River Trigno and nightly our cars are going up to and recently fording the river to pick up casualties which stretcher bearers formerly had to carry a couple of miles. The country is exposed to Jerry's fire and everything has to be done at night. I should imagine the fellows are getting up within one-half mile of his lines where the ground is dry enough to permit it. We have not been able to get chains as yet; though we hope to soon. They will be a great asset in the terrible mud the fellows are plowing through. Denny Hunt and his section have done a particularly fine job up there. He is a grand fellow as well -- an older man but most congenial and shows lots of initiative. Bernie Woods, Preble, Chan Keller, Charlie Edwards, and Ralph Beck are a few of those who are doing the RAP work up to and over the river.

Your letter on the two-year leave business sounds grand. I signalled you today that all men see interested except for Joe Clarkin. "Dat stuff iz OK, Atee, for dem 21 year old kids, but not for me. Tell Freddie I wanta stay."

More specifically: Manning Field is interested with the reservation he can get his job back upon returning. Doug Atwood is more or less non-committal but is mildly interested. Houghty Metcalf would love to go if he has his Draft Board clearance. I have not been able to explain the set-up to Orton or Lovejoy, but will as soon as possible tell them of your proposal in their cases. Meeker has not joined us as yet. The second unit men we have contacted are Joe Clarkin, not interested, Bill Warden interested in it six months after the end of his two years (next summer), and Howe who does not know just what he wants to do.

As you suggest there are many complications involved in the business. The position in our Coy. is that the sudden departure of Houghty, Manning, and Doug would leave us pretty well strapped. However you say that Bert is coming back to us -- we are all delighted to hear the news and he could cover one of the Platoons. Houghty could be replaced by an acting sergeant. If therefore Doug waited awhile it would be feasible to let Manning and Houghty go.

My hospitalization raises another point. I have got to go into hospital sometime soon and get my stomach cleared up - one to two months the M.O. tells me. I thought at first that Bert could more or less replace me, though I imagine it would be wise to put him in as Transport Officer and make Charlie Snead acting O.C. I hope to talk to you or the Colonel about this before I go.

The Draft Board clearance is something that we could only do our best on; and then we would send men off on leave with a complete understanding of what chance they were taking.

The finances are a problem but I feel a man should continue on his regular pay.

Your mentioning that men should sign on for the duration upon returning from leave does not seem fair to me. They should be put back on the regular contract basis I feel. I think more and more that shifting contracts of all men to a 4 or 5 months notice basis would be far better than leaving the six months one in effect, thus eliminating the great hurdle to be crossed every half year. It would as well leave us on a better basis for future planning of replacements. At this time we could almost replace every contract in the coy to a 4 months notice basis without suffering too much. A contract reading: "I agree to serve one year overseas with the AFS and such time as I see fit with the understanding that after my year is completed I may depart at any time upon four months notice," would be a swell thing to initiate right now and have every man in the AFS sign. (Wording to take cognizance, of course, of the fact that some men have already done their one year.)

As for men who refuse a leave at the end of their two years, I agree that at set intervals they should subsequently be offered the privilege again.

Also the question of what you mean by two years service would have to be defined. Do you mean two years from the date of sailing from America or from the date of arrival in ME? It should be the same for all men, whether their present contract calls for a year's service in the ME or a year's service from the date of sailing.

Best,

Signed: Arthur Howe
CC - 567 AFS ACC

Archives of the American Field Service
and AFS Intercultural Programs

TO: Major F. Hoeing, Adj. AFS GHQ AFS GHQ MEF
FROM: HQ, 567 AFS ACC CMF

Dear Fred:

I know well that the AFS has troubles enough currently without raising foreseeable ones of months ahead, but I think the prospective situation in the manpower line is such that it merits considerable advance consideration by the companies, by GHQ and by New York

In brief the story appears to be that from the end of December to the beginning of April - particularly from Feb. 7 to March 21 a hundred odd persons from this company have expiring enlistments. It is too early either to have any accurate angle on how many will go and it is also too early to put out feelers of intention; but with some kind of an ear to the ground gleaned from letters, conversations, etc. it appears that a large majority plan on going home. If 485 AFS Coy is setup about the same, and I think it is, it is quite possible that 150 odd people will be going home February through March, and it would be very wise for New York to plan sending at least one big unit of 100 over during that period plus a few smaller ones.

The units expiring seem to be: units 29 and 30, 31, 32/37 and the reenlistees from unit 26. I have made some rough lists; as your personnel files have the griff on units, GHQ can get the more accurate picture if they wish.

Units 29 and 30 Dec.31
(Names omitted)

Unit 32 Feb.5
(Names omitted)

Unit 37 March 21
(Names omitted)

Unit 16 and thereabouts
end of Dec.
(Names omitted)

Reenlistees with time up in March 1-21
(Names omitted)

Making a total of 98 - call it 100

These lists are not 100% accurate, but are presented just to raise the point in a general way. These thoughts arise with regard to them, however, 1) 485 Coy largely made up of units 32 and 37 is in the same way. 2) At present it looks as if a substantial number will be going home. 3) Some kind of liaison and understanding with New York should probably be worked out in advance with a view to dealing with the situation.

Probably you have thought of all this, and not only that but have it well under control; if so these remarks are surplusage; in any event it does no harm to have as many people round and about thinking about it as possible.

Though our company roll at present is fat, 30 odd jaundice cases including myself have reduced us to our customary lean and hungry look.

With very best regards

Signed: Charlie Pierce