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24 August 1945  
Ingolstadt, Germany

Dear Folks:

Thought I would write you a few details about my two German friends. (Oberbürgermeister) (Town Council Secretary) - highest police officer but not messenger boy. Runte and Sonner. The two are from separate poles, as far as origin, social classes, mentality, talents, and education and approaches to life are concerned. Today they are inseparable and Sonner, Runte's man Friday, is always on hand to prompt his boss.

Runte, a slender, dark man, very good looking, came from a good family in the Rhineland. His hometown is Leverkusen, a suburb of Düsseldorf as it were. (On both of our Essen trips we drove thru' Leverkusen, whereupon Runte pointed out the house where he was born, and the Gymnasium (High School + 2 yrs. College, like Eton) where he studied.) His father had a printing or publishing business or something similar, which he inherited as a pretty young man. Born in 1909, he got <sup>this</sup> good chunk of business <sup>in</sup> 1929. Of course he lost everything in the Crash and the Depression, whereupon he took to free-

(2) lance journalism. In 1933 he landed a job as Foreign Correspondent ~~for~~ some Munich paper, and still refers to himself as a "journalist." His Balkan trip lasted thru' the year, was from Budapest to Constantinople, and was followed up by a further trip to England. His rather considerable knowledge of English he acquired on this trip. (We converse only in German.)

Following his journalism work, he worked as Foreign receptionist for I. G. Farben-industrie (The World's greatest Dye and Chemical Cartel.) In this position his job was to receive and entertain visiting officials and agents from Foreign lands. A typical assignment was his entertainment of 250 doctors from South America. As pièce de résistance he arranged a tour of the Rhine and the Industrial Area of Germany, featuring; a Rhine-steamer, and wholesale renting of hotels (one of the latter he pointed out to me in Limburg

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as we drove to Essen.) His other jobs were always of a similar nature, salesman or advertising work. His last job, at a large steel company, was Head of Sales Dept. His salaries were mammoth, and the whole thing reads like an <sup>incredible</sup> success story. His business experience, in the <sup>highest</sup> ~~largest~~ circles of European Industry, has shaped a very efficient end-product; smooth, quick-thinking, and with a large over-all ~~selection~~ knowledge of facts from which to form his judgements.

Politically he is sound. Incredibly enough, he has never joined the Nazi Party, nor even any of the affiliated organizations. As a radio commentator on Radio Cologne (which I forgot to mention, in 1935, 36 he had an hour program on Radio Cologne, a program of witty commentary on news and stuff, sort of a gossip column) he never joined up, until finally, he and the fellow who was on his program with him became the only 2 broadcasters in Nazi Germany who were not with the Nazi "Artists League", Kultur Kammmer. He quit this job, rather than join.

His philosophy for present-day Germany is very realistic, and, as parroted by Bonner, the only realistic one I have encountered in Germany.

(4) He describes himself as "ANTI-POLITICAL," and by political he implies the typical European activities along this line. For you see, German (and Continental politics) politics is not the game it is for us, in our safe framework of law and Constitutionality. European Politics is more sinister than the "back room" kind, about the worst feature of which is smoke; European politics is one of coup d'Etats, of violence, of a division of spoils that doesn't mean a few offices, but rather the lives & fortunes of the people. His Philosophy he sums up in a few words: "Germany is a ~~defeated~~ defeated country. It has lost two wars, and is now confronted with the basic problem of survival. This problem we must first solve by working: cleaning up the destruction of this war, and building our Country up once more. Once this is done, can politics be ~~re~~introduced, but not in the old form. Our only right now, ~~is~~ is the right to work."

If this ~~is~~ idea sounds simple, it sounds so because it has the simplicity inherent in truth. There are not a dozen Germans in town who believe this! They don't know about the war being lost, they don't know the Americans come as conquerors, they want to play politics with a lousy population that is permeated with Nazi sentiment. 75% of them want to revive NATIONAL Socialism under a dozen new names.

Well, that's the picture, and that's the man. Brady and Keller and I ~~are~~ are going for the week-end "A&F's LAND," to the country.

Love, Bob.