Dear Folks:

Today we went to Munich and Rosenheim. The object was to examine prospects for civilian jobs, but as it turned out the right man to see was not there. It seems the right man to see is never there.

Brady and I took one car, the stream-lined Adler of Capt. Delrio, and the Major and Captan Delrio drove down in his the Major’s sleek, long, black Mercedes. In spite of the ice on the autobahn, the Major drove and (who led the way) kept up a hefty 60 to 70 miles per hour, dangerous because of ice and M.P.'s, and mainly for the latter. After toring apprehensively a mile or two behind him we all roared into Munich in good time. At the edge of Munich the Major stopped the car, got himself majestically in the back seat, while his chauffeur alighted from the back seat and took the wheel.

Military Government of Bavaria is a huge headquarters. Already the job is indescribably complicated, as intricate and huge as the
mammoth buildings which house it. If Frankfurt is a "little Pentagon," then OMG-B (Office of Mdl. Gov. for Bavaria) is a "little little Pentagon." The labyrinth of halls, odd corridors and extensions, with numerous elevators (none of which run), and the ghastly and final embodiment of the situation where the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing, or even what its own fingers are doing. In short, to allow myself the clarification of a cliché, a mess.

As I said, the man to see was not there. The man whom we saw about the man to see informed us of his absence, and pointed out to us the man not to see. The man not to see was, of course, a 2nd Lt., and one who looked as if he had gone sour on the world. We didn't see him.

After a mediocre lunch in the Enlisted Men's Mess (in OMG-B, in fact everywhere in the Army except with Major Noine, an Enlisted Man is treated like an Enlisted Man, in other words, like dirt) the Major and Debro returned to Ingolstadt, Brady and I left Munich.
The business of the trip was of short duration with the Military Government, Rosenheim, G-235. We picked up in addition 12 bottles of Cognac from a Cheese factory. (It is an artificial Cognac made from a by-product of cheese mfg. It doesn't taste bad, and anyhow, what could be healthier than one derived from milk?) and came back.

The Rosenheim-Innsbruck trip is beautiful. Rosenheim lies at the base of the Bavarian-Austrian Alps, and gigantically behind it stretches this breathtaking mountain backdrop. Today, however, the usual heavy foginess prevailed, and scenery was out. Of course it is cold in the mountains, but I had no idea it would be so cold as to render our auto-heat inoperative. It was, and my teeth chattered, or would have chattered at any given time had I said the word.

Returning thru Munich we detoured to a hospital on the outskirts to see Bob Brady. Last week he caught a cold in his face, and one half of his face muscles are paralyzed. It takes about a week to go away, and in the meantime he is fretting in the hospital because there's nothing to do but sit.
A typical Brady, who isn’t happy unless he’s busy. And so home from Munich.

On the stretch from Munich to Ingolstadt our chauffer opened his heart to us. I had earlier suspected from his accent that he was a dreadfully thick, deliberate sort (you’d be surprised how tricky your son is at spotting accents. Quite a fascinating little game.) He enjoyed, or more appropriately remarked, suffered, a remarkable life in the last 4 yrs. From 42-43 he was on the Russian Front. From the futile siege of Leningrad to the disastrous collapse of the 6th Army at Stalingrad. He was one of the few who escaped from the enclosure at the latter, due, as he explained, to a flat tire on the truck taking him to the front. At any rate he was packed home for recuperation. His entire stay in the army has been in foreign units, as an attached man, which has probably given him his present modus vivendi with Americans. In Russia he served with the SS Division Viking, a conglomeration of Northern, Baltic peoples; with the crack Spanish SS Blue Legion; with different Italian units. The Spaniards and the Italians were chronically unhappy in Russia, where the winter temperature was always deeply minus, "They’d just huddle around the fires,
not worth a damn," he opined. Then, apropos,
he remarked further that our Negroes must be
dreadfully uncomfortable in the German cold.
"I've seen a lot of them lately. They look
very uncomfortable, and seem to turn an
ashy gray color." Leated beside him, and
ashy gray from cold myself, I told him
that the niggers weren't the only ones who
didn't like the climate.

Anyhow, to continue, in '43 he was
assigned as demolitions expert to a Balkan
division in Serbia. And as luck would have
it, with a Cossack division! "Oh, were they
wild!" They completely terrorized the Balkan
populations, stealing, plundering, raping, killing at
will. Knowing the Russians, I believe him. Said
there were 30 Germans in two divisions of the wild
vandals. When the armistice was signed, on May
8, it was announced that all German soldiers
who made the border by mistake would be let
there. They raced like mad, but were "detained" at the
border. Really a clever Partisan ruse to get scattered units
rounded up. In the P.W. cage a Partisan Officer
of Tito's talked to them, offered them their freedom
if they would fight for the Partisans against 6.
the Chetniks and remaining SS troops, or if they would
join the crusade against the English and capitalism.
36 out of 600 joined. A few days later he and
three others escaped and made it into British
occupied Austria. They finally wound up in an
American P.W. cage, and he was discharged. "Prefer
under the Americans," he said. "Much better than
working for Russians in Siberia."

Joe, Bob

P.S. Got your
Reader's Digest today mother. Thanks.

Things that happened today:

1. DONAU KURIER newspaper came out with an edition which
   my person
   said "Tuesday, 25 Jan '46." (Editor's Note: Today, the
   25th of January 1946, is Friday.) Rumbe said the
   damn paper was always three days behind.

2. A local woman came in and wanted to get back
   ration tickets given her store for clothes bought in
   June. The MPs stole the ration tickets as "evidence"
   against me in the GRUNDL case, never gave them
   back. Major Novins told the woman to "ask for a
   pass to the U.S.," where she could contact the
   M.P.s once redeployed.

Love, Bob