

July 31st, 1940

Dear Is,

Your letter was a very pleasant surprise. I had given up hope of hearing from you but do realize you're very busy and that it is pretty damned hot to be writing letters. Hope you are feeling great, though.

As I read your long letter it made me think back to the swell lunch "hours" we spent together near the end of the year. I hope that we shall be able to be together much more next year. It seems strange to say next year when really it's only a month or so off. Since I have been home, my spirit has been rising. I didn't realize how much the fraternity and school meant to me until I had left it and now I am rarin' to get back and get to work. And I mean work! You'd be surprised how much I think of the fraternity; of my glaring mistakes of last year; trying to think of new plans; and also thinking about the grads, particularly Ray and Morty as to their thoughts and intentions, and on the other hand of you, Ben, and a couple of others who changed my outlook so.

Regarding Max: I have been corresponding steadily with Max and I expect him to come to my house for a few days when he returns from the beach where he is spending the summer. If he comes here, and he swears that he will, I shall go to his home for a few days before returning to Philadelphia. He told me in his first letter that he considered me a very good friend and that he wanted very much to stay so, but that he thought that fraternity was definitely out. So, I have not been trying to "rush" him in my letters, but merely binding our relationship. If he comes here and I go to his house, and I shall "put on the pressure" and will enjoy a talk with him and his father together. You know he respects his father's opinions above anything (which is only natural) and at the present time his father is not in favor of a fraternity for Max in view of all that happened last winter. However, I hope to change his mind and Max's too if I stay at his house. However, I shall do my darndest is to get Max into Phi B. D. and think that I might be able to do it.

Please explain: "You have been brought up to count your pennies, and not to pay too much for your whistle." I believe that you mean I like to get things, but do not want to give too much in return, or something to that effect. Is that right? If that's what you mean, you have been right but now you are wrong. At least I think and hope so! The greatest thrill I could ever hope for would be to lead the boys in the House to a super-successful rushing season climaxed by a complete understanding with all of the grads.

You hit the nail on the head (and hard!) when you said that I would be inclined to loaf, seek excuses, etc. That has been me all over. I admit it and I'm not trying to apologize for it but one of the reasons for it was that I was not fighting for anything that I really wanted with my heart and soul. Yes, I really wanted Max to join Phi B. D. but it was purely selfish -- I wanted him for a roommate and pal. However, I believe that I have "seen the light" and that you

will find me slightly changed and I feel confident that I shall change more and more as we go along plugging.

My mother was curious about the "heavy" letter that I received from "a lawyer in Philly." When I do not come home for lunch, I have my mother bring my mail to me at the station. It's really funny: every letter I get from somebody at school makes me that much more anxious to return to school to take care of a lot, a whole lot, of unfinished work. Getting back to my mother, she is curious and asked me what any lawyer could ever write me about that would take so many pages. I told her "fraternity" and she said quote (pretty nearly quote), "Hmmm, fraternity is alright, but why the hell doesn't he tell you to study and get some good marks?"

As you can easily imagine, my school marks did not go over very big with either of my folks or myself. That flunk in English was the first flunk I ever had and to make it even worse, none of my other marks were anything to write home about. I know now why have been getting the marks that I have. Is not because I'm dumb. I know because I did get all Bs the first semester I was in school but it all goes back your description of me: easy-going. I didn't break my neck in English and did only what I had to, not even that sometimes, in my other classes, hence the Cs and lower. However, I have made up my mind to "wake up" all around and let my new spirit carry into the classrooms too. You know it made me feel little ashamed to realize that the House as a whole stands an excellent chance of winning the scholarship cup, and that I, supposedly their leader, was the poorest student, according to marks, in the House. If I can ever really do all that I expect to and hope to this next semester, I'd really be a good man, but I'll do as much as I can and maybe I'll feel proud of myself, and more important, maybe my father mother will begin to feel proud of me. Gosh, I hope all this "I" that you are reading is not boring you. I don't want it to.

The fellows wrote and told me that they met with Ray and Morty. Aaron Rose said it that he was surprised and pleased with the attitude shown by the two grads. I only hope I can say the same after a week or two of working with them. I write the fellows very often and most of them write me pretty often. I have been after the two Bernies, Borine and Brenner, all summer to go up and see you and am glad that they finally are. I'm sure they will benefit greatly from a few lunch sessions with you and I know also that you really enjoy them yourself as there is plenty you could accomplish with these two boys.

I have been pretty busy today and will for the next few days, closing the books for the month, making financial statements, etc. We have over 100 charge accounts at the gas station said there is really quite a bit of bookkeeping and I have no assistants. Although I have been doing all right with the books at the station and learning a lot about accounting and bookkeeping, I have decided not to continue studying accounting in school. Instead I have decided to major in marketing which includes wholesaling, retailing, salesmanship, and advertising. I don't know whether or not this change will make me like studying any more than before, but I helps so. My main trouble in school has been my attitude in

classrooms, not that I don't study enough. The profs I had bored me stiff so I did everything in class but listen to them. I did all the homework, but with no enthusiasm--instead as a thing that had to be done.

I received a letter from Artie Weiss who was clerking at a hotel in Far Rockaway, New York. Among other things he mentioned that he had become friendly with a fellow from Cornell. He learned from this fall that one of the things which was hurting Sigma was a trivial but nevertheless important thing: as soon as school opens, all the freshmen naturally get invitations to come to the various fraternity houses. All of the fraternities sent beautifully engraved invitations but Sigma sent theirs on a penny postcard. This seems so unimportant, yet amounts to a big thing in many freshmen eyes. Artie thought that someone should let Sigma know about one freshman's ideas but said he didn't know how to tell them. I don't either but thought that you might be able to let them or someone connected with Sigma know if he thought it important.

Among my many "ideas" that I've been thinking about in my idle time is something which I wrote a couple of fellows about for their opinions and receive two answers one "very good" and one "not so good." I would appreciate your ideas on the thought. I believe that the present plan of a six or so week "hazing pledge period" is a lot of bunk. I believe that if those six weeks were spent solely on making close friends of the pledges, by constant companionship, going on dates together, maybe a banquet or two, instead of "bullying" them by making them say "Sir" and "Mr." and a lot of foolish errands which the brothers stay up nights thinking of. In this period a pledge could be taught about fraternity and its meaning. As it goes now, the pledges become very close to each other, the brothers very close to each other, with a decided wall in between. It was this wall which caused the pledges of last year to abandon Phi B. D. and form their own club. I realize that my plan probably sounds better on paper than it could work but I really think it could work. So as not to make complete "sissies" of the pledges, I do favor from four to seven days of a "hell week" in the very last week of pledging. A "hell week" for this short time would be fun on both sides and to my mind, would be a fitting climax to a pledge period. I know when I was a pledge I resented having some little runt wallop me around and make me do silly things and not be able to do anything about it. Now some fraternity men would say that I couldn't take it and that such a period would teach me to take it, but I doubt it. What do you think?

Well, in 46 days I'll be in Philadelphia and glad of it. I have never looked forward to anything like I am to this fall. The prospect of being able to do so much if I work hard and listen to those who know better than I really does thrill me. And I appreciate the fact that I have such capable and enthusiastic men who are willing to and eager to help me, and by helping me, help many others. I shall try to be with you as soon as I get to Philly and will be eagerly looking forward to some "pre-battle words of wisdom and advice" from you. And I shouldn't forget Ben either. He really proved himself to be a marvelous friend and I don't forget friends easily although sometimes I'm pretty mean to those who I take a disliking to!

Give Ben my very best regards and tell him I'm looking forward to seeing him also. Give Ray my regards but I hate to admit that I am still a little skeptical (there is that word) of him. I hope he will prove that I was a God damned fool and if he does I shall be the first to admit it.

Thanks for taking the precious time to write me a long letter. I do hope you'll find time to write me once again before I see you. You know it's letters like yours that keep upping my enthusiasm!

I appreciate your sending the article. I did read it and enjoyed it and would like very much to hear your story of Mark and Phi B. D..

Will be seeing you very soon.

Best regards from the  
"New Koko"