

EXCERPTS FROM SIERRA LEONE LETTERS -- #13

June 2, 1964

It's Sunday morning and raining. It is unusual for it to rain in the morning, but by next month it probably will be raining for a week at a time.

Big news: I wrote my PC boss in Freetown yesterday and told him I don't want to teach next year. I've always known that I had no desire to teach, and this year has confirmed it. I'm not a good teacher and have absolutely no patience with mass stupidity. I don't want to quit the PC, I just want another job. The assistant rep suggested my being a librarian in Freetown. Will let you know how it turns out after I see the PC rep in Freetown next week.

Also while in Freetown I'll make arrangements for my trip to the Canaries, probably mid-July to mid-August.

There really not any news to impart. I'm in a rut. Get up, take my vitamin pills, have breakfast, force myself to go to school, force myself to go to my classes, come home, lunch, then vegetate for a while, go out to the club for a swim, home, snack, go visit friends or read or go to the movies or to the club, and then to bed.

My roomies will all be leaving in 3 weeks—hallelujah!

The club wants to have American food on July 4th, so I'm in charge of the menu: hamburgers, potato salad, deviled eggs, baked beans and pie (apple, peach and pumpkin). The pie wasn't my idea. I wanted applesauce cake, but the Britishers outvoted me. Since pumpkin pie is traditionally American, that's what they want. But I don't think they are going to like it since you have to acquire a taste for it. Besides there aren't any pumpkins here. It will be a marrow pie, although the grocery does have pumpkin pie spice.

I'm convinced we have a maternity home downstairs. After a baby is born here, the husband sends the wife away for 2 years. If the wife has a second child before the first is two years old, the first is likely to starve. So to avoid temptation, they send them off. (Only about 50% of all babies here live to the age of five.) Downstairs there are only women and their suckling babies; and the number increases each week.