

Sebastopol, Calif.
Nov. 10, 1942.

Dear Kazuo:

I didn't think that your second letter would catch up to me before I had time to answer your first one, but it did and so I am going to try and answer both of them tonight. Joe is going to be home all day tomorrow due to the holiday so we are going to pack apples all day and for one evening, tonight we are spending it home. I sorted wormy apples this forenoon and we will finish those tomorrow and then pack the balance. We hope to be through either Saturday or Monday - much sooner than we had planned, but the stuff turned out so wormy up above that we are not able to use any more. Most of the orchards are well cleaned up anyway, and the few that are left realize that we are losing on them. We have a large load coming down tomorrow night and another Friday or Saturday and I think there won't be over 150 sacks after that and we are trying to get Harry Silva to handle them. That deal up there started out to be a perfect one, but about 6 or 8 weeks ago the side worms got busy and boy, we've been busy ever since, too. For one thing, we couldn't say a word to the crew about trimming closely for fear that they would just walk out on us. Some of them trimmed loosely, others didn't trim at all and then the dryer men didn't do much picking out so you can imagine what the stuff looked like in the bin. Well, we finally got three lots out of four wormy apples and that put the clamps on everything. Ever since then Joe and I have been putting in hours and hours sorting every pile that looks the least bit wormy and if you have never done that I hope you will never have to. I never lost so much sleep and worried so much in my life as I have the past three weeks. We knew we weren't making much, but we had hoped to make fair wages and since that happened and the stuff continues to come down wormy, well, we have just given up ever coming out on the long end now. Well, we learned something, we believe, and next year if we have to do anything like this we will figure differently. Right now the crew we have put together from here and there is getting mighty tired and would like to get to their other jobs so the sooner we get it over with the happier everyone will be. Sam is the head of things now after his cousin or nephew left. One of them is still here - I never did find out if they were nephews or cousins, anyway, Bill is still night dryer man, but the day dryer man left a week ago and Sam has been a different person ever since. When I talk with him now I feel terribly mean that I wrote and told you how he had been acting and how disgusted I was with him because he has certainly changed a lot. He takes interest in everything, discusses possibilities and reverses, etc. and is really tending to business. He has been sorting like a trouper and never wastes a minute around the dryer all day, then goes back in the evening to help the little stinker. He has been tipsy a couple of nights since the other guy left, but never enough to keep him from working and he is on deck bright and early every morning. I really can't say a thing against him for the past week or ten days and I hope he keeps it up. We had quite a talk with him the other night when he was tending dryer for the young guy who had gone away for a couple of days. He told Joe and I that his weakness was gambling and how he never saves a cent, etc. and I gathered from that that he would never trust himself to run a business - I thought at the time, perhaps that is why he wouldn't undertake to run the ranch up there this coming year. He just told me when I asked him that he had no money and couldn't finance it. I thought at the time and told him that I would help him get credit for what he needed, but after thinking the thing over and seeing the way he acted here I just made up my mind I wouldn't be responsible for anything he did. That still goes, even though he is acting like a different person since he has been boss this last

Wormy

Sam
O'Dayson

week, still I have decided that he has no confidence in himself and I wouldn't care to see him get tangled up in anything that he might make a failure of and cause loss to others. I think he will probably work out fine on a payroll where he can figure how much he has to gamble every week end. I really believe that he lost everything he made at the dryer this summer up there, because from all the figuring Winkler and I did there is no reason why he should have lost a couple of hundred dollars as he says he did. I think the gang just took it away from him in a game. He told me the other night that last Sunday he went to Forestville and played all day and that at one time he was over one hundred dollars ahead and that by the time he came home in the middle of the night he had lost it all back again, he said he never knows when to quit. For this reason I am glad that he is not interested in the deal up there because if labor is going to be any harder to find next year he would have his hands full running that place and then when he did get shold of a dollar he would run right out and throw it away, perhaps neglecting to pay his bills in the rush. I may be wrong altogether in my judgment of him, however, a stitch in time may save nine and we'd better let good enough alone. I asked him the other day if he intended to go back up there as soon as the dryer is over and he told me that he didn't think so, that he would rather stay here now that the gas is going to be rationed and he won't be able to get very far from home. He said further that he didn't care to work for Winkler any more, that he would much rather work for us if we could keep him fairly busy and if we couldn't that there was plenty work right around close where he could walk to it. He hasn't let on about this, but the young guy told Joe sometime ago that Sam lost his driver's license and that he doesn't know when he will get it. I know that he has never driven his car since he came back from the hop field, he always has someone drive him around and I think that is one of the reasons that he doesn't want to live up there any more - he would be on the place alone all winter with no way to get around. Quite a few of the boys are sticking around this part of the country to prune and he can find one of them to do his driving for him, otherwise he can walk to town to do his gambling. I haven't let on to him that we heard about this - when all the boys are gone he will probably have to tell us why he is not herding his car. The Chev is down below with his nephew and he told me today that they are bringing it here next Sunday before the gas rationing goes into effect. They have had it all summer down there, but evidently he wants it back. About the truck and Buick - I found out before mailing in those things that they were absolutely not necessary unless a person wanted to drive the vehicle which the questionnaires covered so I didn't bother to send them at all inasmuch as the cars will not be driven for the duration. I went up there today and brought both batteries down to the charger a fellow has here at Molino. Joe had him work on his Ford the last few days and in the course of events I mentioned about the batteries that were just stored up there. He suggested that I bring them down and put them on his charger as he said they would go haywire if they were allowed to set around much longer without charging. He said the best thing to have done is to have the charge taken out completely and then store them. ~~xxxx~~ I thought I would have them charged now as we have had a number of inquiries on batteries lately and if they are in shape it will be easier to sell them. This fellow told me today that we were foolish to leave them setting around because they went haywire much more rapidly than if used so I think after they take a full charge they will be in shape again for a while and we will watch them carefully if we don't sell them in the meantime. I wouldn't be surprised that if they are in good shape after the charge we can get rid of them for a pretty decent price.

I looked over the packing house roof and found it in good shape - can't see any loose shingles or bad spots anywhere. Of course, so far haven't had any hard rains or windstorms - I will watch it carefully. Dryer is all cleaned up nicely - I saw that : "am left it and

After he left Joe came home and I told him all about the deal he wanted. Joe went and talked with Sam and told him that if we were sure of the labor we would take a chance on the ranch and Sam got pretty well enthused and that's when he said that he would do all he could to help us if we would take it. Now, I'm more befuddled than ever because I don't want Winkler to think that we are trying to cut him out, on the other hand, if he is going to have the use of all the equipment, there isn't any reason why we shouldn't have the use of it for that ranch only and I know that we wouldn't use it anywhere else because we are not running any other places but this one and Johnny's which is done with our equipment. As far as that is concerned, if it wasn't for the labor shortage and the time it takes to move equipment from here to there the problem would be simple, excepting that Joe and I would have to pay this ranch for the use of their equipment at the same rate that other outside places pay. I made it clear to Winkler that once when it was talked that the equipment might be ~~used~~ turned loose for that ranch it was specified that it shouldn't leave that ranch at any time and I said that would still hold good. He said he wouldn't move it from there if he got it this year and then he also said that he didn't care - because if you people wouldn't turn that equipment loose he wouldn't consider taking the place under any circumstances and also that he didn't think anyone else would because it cost too much money to move equipment around with wages the way they are now. Well, he is right to a certain extent, it does cost a lot of money to move equipment quite a ways when you are paying two or three men 60 or 65 cents an hour.

I guess this ~~saxkxpxa~~ sounds pretty well muddled up to you - I know I feel muddled up by now. In fact, I haven't felt any other way since we finished the dryer. Every day I have tried to get our figures together and get the settlement out and do you think I have been able to do it? No sir, every time I sit down thinking I will get somewhere the door bell rings or the phone rings and somebody is always wasting my time. On top of all this, I have been trying to get into town to get our gas rationing cards straightened out and finally got in there this afternoon to get the trucks taken care of, or at least to make application on them. Tomorrow I am going in to apply for B cards on the Buick and Joe's Ford. If I don't get a B card on the Buick I just won't be able to go anywhere with it because 4 1/2 gallons per week will not take me to Forestville and Sebastopol very many times during one week. We went up to Forestville yesterday when we came home from our dinner and looked over everything. We picked three boxes of persimmons for Mrs. Dickey. She already had 6 boxes before these and paid me 75¢ per box for them - that is, the La A. lug. I don't know whether this is a good price or not, but I tried hard to get rid of some here in town and they told me they couldn't sell those things. They showed me a box of them they had had there for weeks and they weren't moving at all. Mrs. Dickey can't pay so much for ~~hexx~~ them probably, but she gets rid of quite a few. There are quite a few there on the tree near the pump, but they are quite small compared to the others. The worst thing about the whole persimmon deal is the fact that we went up there a little over a week ago and picked a couple of boxes and everything looked fine. A few days later we had a terrible rainstorm with a lot of wind and Joe came home that night and told me that he went past the place on the grader and saw one of the small trees all busted down. Well, we went right up the next day and sure enough, two limbs went right down the weight. We picked off all the fruit we could then and there tried to lift them to see if they would heal if tied up, but

RATIONING
PROBLEM

WINTER 1943

they splintered when they went down and it was impossible to get them back to the trunk. I've been sick about it ever since and ^{at} myself for not knowing enough to suspect that they might break with the weight, but the darned things looked so innocent the day ~~we~~ were there - nothing like an ~~xxx~~ apple limb when it is overladen, they looked like they were supposed to have that crop and that ~~nothing~~ would happen. I think they just couldn't stand the weight and all water on top of it. We have been picking all the ~~xxx~~ fruit off of them with exception of that that was crushed when it hit the ground. So far Mrs. Dickey hasn't noticed the difference so I intend to pick all the rest of it if she can handle any more. Sunday we are going back again and will bring her all she can take care of. Oh ~~xxx~~ yes, we got all the things you wanted out of the house, that is, all we could find. I simply couldn't find anything your Grandma wanted out of the cabinet on the table. I am sure that I got into every nook and crook of it, but I failed to find the incense burner and the candles and the book. I am sending some candles that I found in the little closet in the hallway thinking perhaps they are the ones, but the incense burner is nowhere in sight unless it is something that I don't recognize, also the book unless Tsugiye didn't explain just what the difference might be between that book and any other that I would be looking for. I am sending about everything that was in the cabinet with the exception of the wooden dummy and if she will tell me more about the stuff I will look around until I find it. Gee, we got those things right after getting the letter and I still haven't got around to packing them up. In the first place, I didn't have boxes that were heavy enough and clean enough to write on. I got three of those boxes from under your dryer yesterday and will find something for tops for them around here. I am going to pack the heavy articles like Mrs. Ito's canned goods in one of them and then a whole lot of mixed things in the others. Guess I will be doing good to get these off to you, let alone the apples. I told Sam that I was glad he could get his off, because that would give you something to chew on while waiting for mine. You can't imagine just how much time I haven't got these days - I'm more crazy than sane (guess this letter shows it). I've been so tired since we started the dryer that I don't think I will ever get over it and some days like today I really feel sick all over. I don't know if it is from being so over tired ~~xxx~~ or if there is really something catching up with me, but today has been a corker. I can't think, I can't relax and everything gets on my nerves so that I want to holler all day long.

SENDING THINGS

About renting the house - don't remember if I have written since you told me about it, but anyway, I have been trying to get someone for it. There are plenty people that want it, but I don't want somebody that will give me trouble and that may cause you damage. I am hanging out for some middle-aged couple that can't afford an expensive place, but that will take good care of everything and not pry into things that are none of their business. I figured that when I made connections with such I would go up there and with the help of Sam move all the things that must be stored there upstairs into one room that I can lock and then tell them that I am responsible for everything in that one room and don't want it molested by anyone. I had a bite the other day - a couple that wasn't so old, but had a married girl. They had another place in mind and said they would see me in a few days after they talked it over, but they didn't come back. There is a young fellow that works on the road with Joe that would just love to have it because he works out of the yard up there. The only thing there is that they have a two year old kid and I would rather stay away from kids if I can help it. Outside of that I believe he ^{would} take care of things and I know he is upright and all that.

RENTING HOUSE

Well, I know if I try to read this letter over I will be *much* worse off than I am so I will just keep rambling on and let you do the deducting. I surely wish you people were within talking distance so we could discuss these problems at hand. Our plans are only embryonic and may never develop, but we have hopes of doing something for ourselves next year as there is such a shortage of help that a lot of places are going to be left to the weeds and we will get a chance at something. Our dryer deal this year was not altogether a losing one, but it was very dissapointing outside of the fact that we feel that we learned a lot and believe we could make something of it next season, providing we can find the help. Everybody we talk to is in the same fix - 'if they can get the help' is all we hear. Here is what we have figured up to date: If Sam and the other fellow stay and prune they will do what we have money here for then go to Johnny's and do a fairly good job there. His plans are to get one more man and if he does they should get over it in a hurry. There ~~xx~~ are two fellows pruning for the neighbor that said they would help us when they got through there if we still need them. Now, the question arises: if such a thing should happen that we try to handle your place the plans would have to be changed somewhat because the place needs fertilizer and that should be put on right away - Sam and the other fellow could do it in a pretty short time, however. Then I would want Sam himself to do all the pruning possible up there because he knows the method. If he teaches this guy and he is good at all he will learn his style, too, and he can help up there. Of course, in the event that we did get the work up there we would put Sam there as soon as we knew about it, in fact, I wouldn't be surprised that he would move back there if most of his time would be spent on that ranch. The only time he would come down here would be for spraying when we were needing him for that. Joe thinks that he will be doing most of the cultivating this coming year unless we get Lloyd's dad to run the equipment both here and outside. We would like to hang on to those outside places if possible and the only way we can do that is to have somebody like Al handle the equipment for us. I know the ranch would be sore if we took the equipment up there for our own personal gain and let the chance of taking in that extra money around here slip away from us and I wouldn't blame them a bit - that is the reason that I say if Winkler won't take the place without the use of the equipment then we should have the same privileges. Joe's plans right now are for quitting the road for at least four months starting the first of July which would have him home during the harvest when he can supervise the crew and do the hauling and then be on hand during the dryer run. About the dryer - we have already decided that if the folks won't consent to spending some money on power equipment we will not have anything to do with this dryer. We wouldn't go through another season like this one for all the money in the world and from all the talk we hear this type dryer will be out of the running next season unless it is by someone who has a crew already staked out and sure of which is almost impessible. The Okamoto dryer is already being figured on for power peelers, Alfred Hallberg ordered power peelers and one or two others are talking about them. It looks as though they will be the only salvation because crews for the other type are just about done for. Sam feels sure that he could get a full crew for one dryer and as far as ~~xxx~~ we are concerned we don't care if it be this one or yours - if we run the place up there and Sam can get the crew it will be for that one. If the family puts in

-6- equipment here and Sam can handle the one up there, we will try and operate this one and spend most of our time here because I know that Sam will run that one without our assistance. With Joe home there isn't any reason why one of us can't be up there every day to see how things are going along and to keep the books in shape. As it was this season, Sam did all the bookkeeping for Winkler as far as growers' tags was concerned and Winkler paid according to Sam's books. Winkler already told me that he would want the dryer, however, due to the labor situation he would want it stipulated in the contract that he wouldn't guarantee to run the dryer only in the event he can get the help. I don't blame him for that, because the way it looks right now there will be many a dryer that won't run on account of lack of help, but if he makes a proposition like that we can make one that good, in fact, ours is a little better to start with, because with Sam's help and cooperation we can probably get the crew. Our main hope lies in Sam on your ranch because ~~he~~ he is very anxious to run that place and because he feels that he owes it to you people to take care of it but I think due to the fact that he can't hang on to a penny he doesn't want the responsibility. He says he doesn't have the finances to carry on the deal - we haven't either, the only thing we can do is borrow from the bank for whatever labor we have to put out. The spray materials are bought on credit and as ~~soon~~ soon as delivery starts we can borrow money for the harvesting. I know it will take considerable money for all this, nevertheless, if the crop is not a failure and the bottom doesn't drop out of the market or the railroads be in a position where they can't haul the green stuff we should come out alright. I am not prepared to discuss any terms of a contract with you right now - I am going to have a talk with Harry and tell him that Sam feels that we should run the place with his help and cooperation. I don't want Harry to go back and tell Winkler that we are trying to horn in on him or cut him out of a deal. The least said the better on that to Harry. He knows that the feeling last year was that Sam might take the place this year, and if I can make Harry see that all we are trying to do is back Sam in a way that won't tie us down to any mistake that he might make then he may give us a few pointers and help us financially. I suggested to Joe that we make Sam a proposition whereby we pay him the going wage for the work he does and then give him a fair percentage of the net profit at the end of the season. This way, if we make something he will gain by it as well and if we lose or don't make a cent he still has his wages. I believe he will be very well satisfied with this proposition and it should be an inducement to him to make the best of the deal throughout the season, don't you think?

Joe and Harry are going to Watsonville tomorrow morning with the idea of ordering a belt eliminator for next season. Harry is going to set his up right away and we will store ours until we decide on running a dryer and which one and if we don't run any we can always sell the thing because lots of the small dryers are putting them in for next year if they operate. The time has come when it is impossible to compete with these big dryers unless we cut all those small sizes out and that's the only way to do it. Winkler took your stuff to Oscar Hallberg and out of 24,449# he took out 2592# for small and 120# for rots. Winkler feels that he got gipped plenty on the deal, but he admitted that if he ran a dryer next year that is the only way he would do it, too.

You be thinking this thing over and discuss it with whoever you wish then write me as soon as you can. My other thought is

SAM
ANDERSON

HARRY
SILVA

If you feel that Winkler's proposition is not satisfactory and that we should wait for one that is much better I am perfectly willing to do so. You have plenty money in the account to take care of what is necessary - I will see to it that fertilizer is put on as soon as I can get it and that the pruning starts as soon as either Sam or somebody else can get at it. If and when a renter is found he can reimburse the estate for whatever has been done or the terms will be made so as to come out on what has been spent up to the time of the lease. I have already talked with Archie on the fertilizer and he tells me that they might get some Sulphate pretty soon, they are not sure - the nitrate fertilizers are out for the duration. They can get the 80-20 and those other balanced kinds almost any time anyone wants them. We plan on getting some Sulphate for our Baldwin block and unless you have different ideas I would order the same for up there. Sam thought 1 1/2 tons would do it, but you let me know what amount you want on, also the kind if I can get it. Sam and I can haul it up there on Johnny's truck and the two fellows can scatter it in jig time.

I believe Winkler intends to write to you as he asked me for your address the other day. He did ask me to write to you right away, however, as he wants to put the fertilizer on immediately if he gets the place. I hope I haven't got you as muddled up as I feel with this letter - at any rate, try to figure it out and let me know your ideas. The main point right now is whether or not you want Winkler to have it on those terms - as far as we are concerned - you can figure that out later. It is my duty to see that the place is taken care of, and while waiting for someone to take it I will do what is necessary to be done immediately and up to the time that a deal is made, as I said before, so don't worry about it at all. I know that prospects are few and far between because there ~~hasn't~~ hasn't been anyone talking to me about it and of all the guys we know that have run places in the past they all say the same thing - 'they are not running any extra ones this year because they can't get the help', so there you are.

I hope you people aren't waiting too anxiously for your things that you sent for. Tomorrow I must get the ration cards taken care of and that is a half day's wait when you go to one of those places. McFarlane has been on a drunk and I haven't got the last returns for the dried stuff - about six tons - which is worth going after, so I am going to try and find him and on top of that I have a fellow coming to wash the trays that will need a lot of watching and showing how - you know how that goes! Joe will be gone from daylight until the middle of the night so I will have to take care of all of this stuff alone and I am sure I won't have time to pack boxes carefully and send them. On Sunday we are going to butcher a pig that we are going halves on with Harry Silva and I suppose the biggest part of our day will be wasted there, although by night time we should have a breathing spell long enough to get most of the stuff in the boxes. I have some nice sized persimmons for your Grandma because Sam told me she liked them so well and I am trying to get some sort of cartons or fillers that will keep them from smashing if they should get ripe on the trip. Keep a stiff upper lip and everything will be coming along. After this coming week I hope to have lots of time between cleaning the dryer and brush raking, if the pruners start here next Monday as scheduled. Don't give up - if you need anything else let me know - you will always have it coming! I will try and write Tsugiye tomorrow sometime - more than likely, tomorrow night.

As ever,
Lea