

Jan Howell



DECORATIVE ACCESSORIES

Mar. 7, 1958

Dear Martha:

Today's letter to Tami gives blow-by-blow description of the Chicago set-up. Hope it is clear to you or Tami, or whoever is trying to straighten it out.

On the DRS, think it best for us to sell from now on until supply is exhausted on "assorted" only basis, with no specific colors on firm basis until checked with you, with the exception of course of E,G,K. We will not show the new colors until we get the actual samples of the new jackets when they come through with the longer length and the two pockets. On sizes, send all the orders through with the exception of that one order that requested extra large...cancel that one as I think I suggested in my earlier letter.

Will be glad to see the new kimonos when they come through. Think we should have a sample of one in color, in addition to the natural which we have. Did not know they were coming through without slits...thank you for advising us.

Good handling on the mail order house lighters request. Think too they should carry at least part of the burden of ordering in advance. Thought it was reasonably safe to suggest the lighters because Henri assured us last year that he was bringing these in in very large quantities. Would Takahashi prefer that we discourage mail order business altogether? Just let us know so we can govern our responses accordingly. It is difficult for us too...we are as anxious as Takahashi to build up sales, but not at the expense of extra sork, confusion, etc. in your organization.

Best regards,

March 11, 1958

Dear Jan:

Thank you for your letter of March 7th.

As Tami is still home with the same bad cold, we are enclosing a check for \$106.70 mentioned in your letter to her.

On the DRS raw silk jackets, I made an error in the count I sent you in the last inventory list for C,E,G,K,. The fellows at the warehouse counted only the ~~un~~opened cases for tax purposes. We still have ample supply still in unopened cases on these patterns. The count for the wide striped jackets were correct. I think orders for those might be better as assorted.

Our shipments are coming in very nicely. The first of the parasols are expected later this week. The G-16s and 17s will also arrive. We will also get all the paperfish. We were surprised that the paper doves did not sell in New York, compared to all other areas where they are really going like hotcakes. We have a very good supply now, and will be getting the paper stork of similar construction soon (will send samples as soon as we get them). We have been out of sparrows for some time, but glad that we will have enough to fill orders we now have, later this month. We are all sold out of the large waste baskets but hope to get more in May or June. We also expect a new shipment of the XLO ~~hatter~~ openers (steel with cherry handle).

Please note that we now charge a straight \$1.50 each for lacquer lighters even under 1 doz.

Bad news department: The government tax man was here and ~~weld~~ told us that we have to pay 10% excise tax on all lighters sold, retroactive, to last year when we first started selling cigarette lighters. This means that we are actually selling the lighters 10% below the price. Dorothy is working on the figures now and will no doubt let you know more about it.

Re mail order houses: They have always been a big headache to us, and I remember we wrote about this subject about a year ago, and we don't like them any better this year. We can sell mail order houses only if they stock, and give us two to three months for delivery. The small time operators who ask for samples and glossies and later return the samples are out. Samples are not returnable. Some are very slow pay, even a few of the large ones. Many regular gift shops put out catalogs, especially in the fall. They should confirm with us before they put items in their catalogs. We h

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no way of knowing that they intend to do this most of the time as their initial order is usually small. The whole trouble with mail order houses is that they don't want to commit themselves and yet want our guarantee for unknown quantities in case they sell more than they anticipate. In other words they won't take any risks, but want us to. This seems most unfair, don't you? We are always getting lots of inquiries, but very few come through with actual orders. There are a few items we can sell mail order houses, however, without too much difficulty. They are such things as cocktail picks, pencils, and circus banks. We usually keep a pretty good stock and can order them without too much trouble if they gave us advance notice. Such things as lighters are a bit more trouble as the makers of the lighter base is different from the maker of the lighter heads. They are quite behind on production and our sales are so good on this item that we have a hard time keeping them in stock. It is very difficult to lay down any general rules, but shall we say we should proceed with caution and warn them at the time they order samples.

Guess that's about all. My husband, Will, is probably wandering around New York now. He left yesterday for Washington on business and said he wanted to see New York again. Hope the weather there is better.

Warmest regards,

Marta