Germany
Jan. 26, 1945

Dear Mrs. Meeker:

As the Catholic chaplain of Virgil's unit, I wish to express my deep sympathy over the death of your son, Bernard.

Virgil has undoubtedly told you that I had lent him my jeep on several occasions, so that he and Bernard could contact each other and spend the day together. Knowing how much I would like to see my own brother (in the Air Corps) I could appreciate the happiness it gave them; and, while any one would have done the same, I am glad that it was I.

The several times that I met Bernard are enough to convince me that you should be a proud mother. In my life as a priest I have made many contacts with men and it is my business to understand people: Bernard was a man, every inch of him, a man with a boy's heart. He was clean cut and decent and

enthusiastic, a symbol of all the things he was fighting to preserve. I realize this is high praise, but I honestly mean every word of it.

It is necessary now that you borrow from the courage displayed by your son, displayed to such a heroic degree as to prompt him to make the supreme sacrifice.

And it is equally necessary that all of us dedicate ourselves in peace to preserve the ideals which your son has purchased for us at such a price.

According to my Catholic religion, it is a good and holy thought to pray for the dead that God may lighten their punishment if any and quickly speed them to Heaven. Rest assured that Bernard will be remembered in all my prayers and Masses.

May God strengthen the weakness of your heart, and give you

the grace to be the brave and
proud mother such a son as Bernard
deserves. He has learned his
courage from you; now in turn
learn it back from him.

I shall also, in my prayers
for Bernard, include Virgil and
you and your family.

May God bless you.

Your friend,

Fr. Schweitzer
Chaplain (Capt) 104th
Div Arty