

Dear Fr. Bob,

Sunday 24, 1985

I was glad of your letter, and I agreed with all you had to say about socialistic philosophy. I feel also very strongly what you say about helping the Contras restore freedom, and also helping the Afghanistans.

As you know, I haven't had extensive experience with politics and with the effects of politics. Of course, my views have changed in harmony with changes in the world.

As one of my nephews pointed out, 'Vanity is a motive of immense potency.' The emotional impulse to 'get the better of one's opponent' has not ceased since the dawn of what historians often refer to as Civilization. My Nephew was convinced that debates on survival in the Nuclear age ought to be conducted by national adversaries with a sense of history and a compassion for the continued existence of the species Man.

Something must be said about the population of the world: India, like the United States, contains its quota of cruel bigots, who prefer poverty, famine, and war to birth-control.

while the Hindu and Moslem religions that predominate in this subcontinent do not prohibit the practice of birth-control, many of the nation's 600,000,000 people

greed
envy

oppose it through superstition or belief that it is against the laws of nature.

There ought to be universal instruction in birth-control, with penalties for those who have too many children. By these means Governments could, if they chose, easily arrest the increase of population within a generation.

But unfortunately mankind are divided into nations, and the apparent interests of individual nations are by no means always in harmony with the interest of mankind.

The importance of the population problem, although it is obvious to all who are concerned in the administration of countries with a high birth-rate, is minimized in almost all official publications for fear of offending those who think it wicked to do what is necessary for the alleviation of human misery. It is to be hoped that the man who at present holds these views will gradually modify them, as many other cruel doctrines formerly held by theologians have been modified. It is difficult for kindly men to continue indefinitely to believe anything that involves vast unhappiness, whether in this life or in the next, and I hope that those who, as yet, persist in doctrines having this effect will cease to hold them when the results to mankind become obvious to them.

Of course, the Russian Government has a different conception of the end of life. The individual is thought to be no importance; he is expendable. what is important is the State, which is regarded as something almost divine and having a welfare of its own not consisting in the welfare of citizens. This view, which Marx took over from Hegel, is fundamentally opposed to the Christian ethic, which in the west is accepted by free-thinkers as much as by Christians. In the Soviet world human dignity counts for nothing. It is thought right and proper that men should be grovelling slave, bowing down before the semi-divine beings who embody the greatness of the State. when a man betrays his dearest friend and causes him, as a penalty for a moment's indiscretion, to vanish into the mysterious horror of a Siberian labor camp. when a school-child, as the result of indoctrination by his teacher, causes his parents to be condemned to death; when a man of exceptional courage, after struggling against evil, is tried, convicted, and objectively confesses that he has sinned in opposing the Moloch power of the authorities, neither the betrayal nor the confession brings any sense of shame to the perpetrator, for has he not been engaged in the service of his divinity?

It is this conception that we have to fight, a conception which, to my mind and to that of most men who appreciate what the western world stands for, would, if it prevailed take everything out of life that gives it value,

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leaving nothing but a regimented collection of grovelling animals. I cannot imagine a greater or more profound cause for which to fight. But if we are to will a victory - not only on the battlefield but in the hearts of men and in the institutions that they support - we must be clear in our own minds as to what it is that we value, and we must, like Boethius, fortify our courage against the threat of adversity.

I do persuade Richard to enlist in the military when he is of age. Richard knows all about the National Guard because that is about all he talks about.

Just a word of warmest good wishes from us all. By the way, Richard just said "hello" to you and Miss Cora. He is doing very well in school.

Let me thank you most heartily for the letter you had the friendly thought to write

Believe me sincerely
yours,

Ernest Deruchie

P. S.

Please reconsider becoming a Unitarian Minister?