

Tom Johnson

Tues Jan the 12th 82
Dallas

Dear Sylvia:

Hope this note finds you well. Carol Anne is as you know back in Tarrytown this week; ~~she~~ she said on the phone this evening that she hopes to get to see you Friday night. We will in all probability be back for at least a couple of months starting sometime in February. WE'll certainly have to squeeze in as many Beatrice's etc as we possibly can then.

I don't want to sound like a chronic complainer but I'll be damned if I can find much good to talk about aside from Beethoven. Maybe I'm a congenital malcontent, I suppose such things are possible. I've just about reached the conclusion~~g~~ that the very marrow of this country's bones is so fraught with lies that it's incapable doing the right thing for the right reason. Historical revisionism is the national scholarship, greed the state religion and consumerism the measure of morality. It's all right for the US to ^{HAVE} acted in its own national interest throughout its history, as have most other countries, but the American people have always been fed such a steady diet of deceit regarding motive that it is widely held here that we somehow possess a higher moral purpose than other peoples. Hell, this country didn't even ^{oppose} Naziism, the greatest organized evil in history, till it was literally forced to. And then, less than 10 years later, when the sword is taken up against communism in the name of civilization, it is said and believed that this is just another chapter in America's traditional opposition to tyranny. I often think that the Reagan people are so stupid and out of it that they really believe this to be the case. It is true that there has been more personal freedom here than in most other places but that's only because this country had such tremendous natural wealth and space that it has never really had to face up to and deal with the societal problems stemming from the Industrial Revolution that Europe has been struggling with for well over a century now. Even the labor union movement in this country has been so co-opted, corrupted and misdirected that it is today no better than management, really of less value in many respects. What bothers me about all this (and it's my problem, I'm perfectly free to try to go out and ~~try to~~ get rich) is not so much the reality of what America is as the necessary tissue of lies that the reality is packaged in. There's probably not much that is new under the sun, as is said in Ecclesiastes; but my God, is our very existence dependent on gross lies about who and what we are?

Well, I've done it again: another typing exercise devoted to ~~the~~ the metaphysics of despair. But I cannot for the life of me expunge the gut feeling that Alexander M haig Jr cares about as much for the welfare of the Polish people as I do for the continued success of the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Yours in Angst,

Tom