

Tom Johnson

Monday Sept the 3rd
1125 Filbert St No 1
San Francisco Calif 94109
(415) 673-3974

Dear Sylvia:

Hope this note finds you doing okay and by the way please overlook the long delay in my writing but things have been busy, chaotic and most depressing here. The 'most depressing' has to do with the state of things in this country, which I find to be at their lowest point in my memory. I'm seriously thinking of emigrating, perhaps to New Zealand.

But I mainly wanted to let you know that Carol Anne and I will be making a week-long trip to New York, getting there Sunday Sept 30 and leaving Sunday Oct 7th. We'll be staying at the Chelsea Hotel and will check in with you shortly upon arrival. Maybe sometime during the week we can play a game or two of Scrabble, have a bite to eat and that sort of thing. We'll also check out music and the plays and it might develop that you'd like to come along with us on seeing something. Anyway, we'll call you Sunday or Monday, depending on logistics. We'd sure like to see Ted, too, needless to say. Our trip is just a vacation; we both still think NY is The Place, although we don't have the money to live there just yet.

I'm still typing letters for the phone company and teaching computers part-time at SF community college. I may not get to work on my MA at SF State after all and so things are kind of up in the air with me right now. Carol Anne is still working impossible hours at the Bank of America on the cutting edge of transforming all banking activities to computer systems. She's going to Amsterdam Friday for a week or two to attend (represent B of A at) a high-level worldwide confab on the subject.

The nationalization of the Continental Illinois Bank spurred me to finally bite the bullet and try to learn something about how the banking system works, both in this country and worldwide. I have been totally ignorant of it all my life. So I have gotten some books on the subject and am beginning to get a rough idea of what's going on. As I suspected, it's rotten to the core, fuelled by greed and unchecked by any hand, invisible or otherwise. The \$600 billion Third World debt, loaned largely by private US banks through the Euromarket to sovereign countries who can never pay it back, is a house of cards whose collapse would send us all to the poor house for a long time. The main villain of the piece seems to be Walter Wriston of Citicorp, whose drive for ever greater profits at literally any cost set the stage for the whole banking industry and has resulted in the present crisis.

That has been depressing but nothing can compare with the Olympics and the media coverage thereof, newspapers as well as ABC. It's the way Goebbels and the Propaganda Ministry would have handled events at the Berlin Sportspalast in 1936 had they but had the technological means. There has recently been a noticeable increase in gay-bashing here (at least one death) and Geraldine Ferraro brags about putting people in prison. Ronald Reagan will be re-elected by a landslide and my thoughts are forced to ~~look~~ look at ways to get out of this place while I still can. The hungry beast that chanted 'Heil Hitler!' half a century ago has immigrated across the Atlantic, learned English and now chants

'USA! USA!'

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