

(No reply  
needed)

116 WASHINGTON STREET  
ITHACA, N.Y. 14850  
6 OCTOBER 1971

Dear Mrs. Meagher,

Thanks for your letter of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the newspaper clippings. I must admit that the passage of time has dulled my familiarity with the Stevens affair, but I do recall that, as of a year ago, Gary Schoener still considered it to be one of the major flaws of the WL. I'm not in any position to evaluate either your article or David Belin's reply, but I must say that I was somewhat amazed at his childish tone in the last few paragraphs — that ~~one~~ line of, "My credentials are OK because I'm against the war" is getting to be as phony as the old saying that "some of my best friends are Negroes." And his quasi-threat to write a book "exposing" you as a "sensationalist" really deserves no comment. In any case, I'm glad to hear that you're still active on this matter. After all, I could be wrong — maybe, someday, there will be a major breakthrough.

On re-reading your letter I am very much struck by your last sentence: "the main thing is to try to achieve for oneself and for others as much justice and decency as can be wrought from the experience [of life]." Those words, I think, come close to epitomizing the Sermon on the Mount, the teachings of Buddha, and, indeed, the central core of almost all spiritual philosophies. I certainly did not mean to imply in my last letter that the only way to overcome one's miseries was to turn to some definite form of religion — for, as your statement shows, one can hold the same general outlook even if one was "born with a built-in anathema for religion." I don't think it matters very much precisely how one formulates ~~the~~ one's moral views, so long as one arrives at the right conclusions. (I suppose this brings up the question of how one knows what is "right," but I'll dodge that for now!)

(over)

I'm still working at that same job, and living in the (2) same place, but I'm not complaining. I am confident that my situation will improve. I shall probably have to go job-hunting soon, as I can't live very securely on a minimum wage, but I know I must be patient. When one chooses to live in a one-horse town like this, one must accept its drawbacks as well as its advantages!

I do hope you'll keep in touch. I'd be interested to know if there are any follow-up articles in the Observer concerning the Stevens affair.

Sincerely,  
Richard P. Edelman