

COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE
ASSASSINATIONS
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BERNARD FENSTERWALD, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 18, 1981

Dear Fellow Sufferer:

The purpose of this letter is several fold.

1. It will let you know that the CTIA is alive, if not overly well, in Washington.
2. We wish to call to your attention an article appearing in today's Washington Post which we believe is worth your perusal. Possibly, it is a shortage of anger and outrage that really is discouraging support and progress for our efforts.
3. We wish to inform those of you who are not already aware of it that Western New England College in Springfield, Massachusetts, is undertaking the establishment of a library and research center to study American assassinations. If you want to know more about the project and how you might assist, address your enquiry to:

Dr. Jack Gordon
Western New England College
Springfield, Massachusetts 01119
(413) 782-3111
4. Gary Shaw and I are looking into the activities of one or more French militants who were or may have been in or around Dallas on the fateful day. They include Jean Rene Souetre (OAS), Michel Roux (possible OAS), Dominique de Roux (founder of Aginter Presse), and Michael Mertz (SDECE and narcotics). We would appreciate any leads or information that you might have on a possible "French Connection."

Happy hunting and best regards,

Sincerely,



Bernard Fensterwald, Jr.

BF/is

R. Emmett Tyrrell Jr.

Honest Anger

What is it that has turned the Western world into a bovine herd? Now there has been an assassination attempt on the pope, and the response from notables throughout America is the usual moral Muzak: insipid, comforting, glossy noise for stringed instruments and harmonium. Would it be too distressing to the herd if we introduced some threatening timpani, some angry brass?

Really, the world-weary response to this latest atrocity goes beyond the bounds of the tolerable. Are impotent bromides about the "sickness" of the world, the "mind-numbingness" of the event, the need to forgive, all we can confection? Can those whom Neal Kozodoy of *Commentary* magazine calls the keepers of public emotion offer only ambiguity, sermons on madness, and exhortations for gun control—this last I heard from Father Hesburgh as he apparently labored under the delusion that the Italian parliament is another servile instrument of the National Rifle Association.

Surely there is a wider range of responses available to our greasepaint moralizers. Honest anger would provide them with as much scope for hamstringing it up as their present Laodicean flummies, and honest anger would be infinitely more salutary. What holds them back? Is it decadence or perhaps, as they believe, goodness? No, I believe they are afflicted by enervation, the same enervation that Tocqueville anticipated when he looked into the future of egalitarian democracy.

As he foresaw it, egalitarian democracy would establish a set of petty rules and pieties "through which even men of the greatest originality and the most vigorous temperament cannot force their heads above the crowd. . . ." Such a political order "seldom enjoins, but often inhibits, action, it does not destroy anything, but prevents much being born; it is not at all tyrannical, but it hinders, restrains, enervates, stifles and stultifies . . . in the end each nation is no more than a flock of timid and hard working animals. . . ." What we hear now are the sounds of the enervated, not the decadent.

Men as varied as Moses and Kant have seen the propriety of anger and retribution. Anger and retribution are proper responses to the current plague of terrorism. Anger is an eminently human emotion and, though some of our pop solemnizers will demur, some forms of anger have always had a moral sanction. I have little doubt that these

cowardly acts of terror would markedly diminish were Western opinion loudly to abominate terrorists and were Western governments to pass severe penalties against their acts.

Assassins who would ambush a defenseless citizen are vicious animals to be destroyed in much the same way a diseased dog is destroyed. They are a mortal threat to the civilized order, and if they were to be dealt with summarily and without soap opera you can be sure that recruiting them for their foul tasks would be far more difficult.

It is amazing to hear that the beast who shot the pope will, if convicted, spend the rest of his days being cared for in Italian prisons. There he will remain a source of mischief for as long as he chooses. The Italians do not have capital punishment, and so their jails abound with causes célèbres, encouraging still more kidnappings and murders. The governments of the West should formalize an agreement that terrorists who kidnap or ambush will be tried promptly and, upon conviction, executed.

The day after the ambush of the pope, *The New York Times* in one of its dime-a-dozen editorials sympathetically quoted someone asking "Is nothing sacred?" The person who asked that question might have been sincere, but what of the editorialist who passed the question on to us? After all, the answer is obvious: no, nothing is sacred.

Over the past few months activists of all sorts have been badgering Pope John Paul II for all his transgressions against their various high-minded reforms. They have depicted him as a grand-standing pol, a male chauvirist, a religious reactionary. One particularly tendentious writer in the Jan. 17 issue of the *New Republic* assailed him for his theological conservatism, attributing it not to a reasoned theological position but to his "East European heritage"—in other words, his primitivism. The author was very concerned and warned of "a new element of secrecy and even fear" that has accompanied Pope John Paul II's pontificate.

No, as long as we are tyrannized by the petty rules and pieties of our time, nothing will be sacred. The enervation will smother honest anger, making retribution impossible. The terrorists will continue to blast away, and the phony moralizers will maunder on.