

Harold Weisberg
Route 8, Frederick, Md. 21701
9/12/73

Editor, Aftenposten
Oslo, Norway

Dear Sir,

My first, shocked reaction to the Associated Press account of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's abandonment of the most sacred obligations of the writer is to wonder if this can be the man who once wrote, "As little truth as there is in the world, the supply is greater than the demand."

I am one writer who believes our fundamental responsibility is to know the truth of what we write and to offer no opinions not amply supported by fact.

The ignorance Mr. Solzhenitsyn falunts in the context of his opinions make him indistinguishable from a fascist. He knows nothing about The Watergate or contemporaneous American politics or parties, makes virtuoso display of this ignorance in your paper and internationally through you, and exploits an alleged Nobel nomination as the vehicle for a defense of tyranny and the police state that cannot possibly be the belief of the author of A Day In the Life of Ivan Denisovitch.

There is no rational way in which a man can expect to be believed when he defends tyranny and the police state simply because he claims not to. There is no way in which Mr. Solzhenitsyn's words can be taken by the rational, particularly those who know what he so clearly does not, as other than a defense of tyranny.

It is obscene to castigate the victim of the rapist as an attractive nuisance.

Were it, as he pretends, that The Watergate is merely the planting of instruments for electronic spying - and this pretense is an incredible self-defamation - it remains the fact that in the sordid history of American politics there is no parallel of The Watergate. Were it that all of what is truly encompassed by the generic, Watergate, has been reported - and this is far from true - he is still self-exposed as a defender of tyranny. He who proclaims himself its victim? How unbecoming!

The author of For The Good of the Cause defames an Ellsberg by defending a Nixon and his Hunt/s and Liddys and Barkers and assorted other political second-story men?

He dares defend those who napalmed wholesale and bombed embassies pinpoint?

Yet he deigns to pontificate about what is "sensational" and what is "hypocrisy" without due regard for the injunction about the casting of votes. It is "sensational" to expose villainy, "hypocrisy" to condemn it? This is doublegoodspeak and ducktalk added!

Can it be that this self-cast god does not know that the mortal he defends while proclaiming he does not actually approved the abrogation of all human and legal rights after they were committed to paper and after he was given the written warning he did not require, that it all was illegal? For this he finds an equal in United States history? If so he is more than omniscient, his pose. He is Goebbels and Orwell, rewriting history with his memory hole.

I have spent bitter, painful years exposing Democrats and Ramsey Clark in particular, so I am not their partisan. But it offends decency for ^{Solzhenitsyn} ~~him~~ to malign Clark, of whom it took considerable political courage and for whom it held no possibility of personal gain to oppose United States bestiality in Southeast Asia ^{Solzhenitsyn} ~~him~~ aligns himself with the man who has the Orwellian ambition to bug an entire nation. Clark, to his credit, refused to authorize electronic surveillance of the Nobel laureate, the martyred Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. And that too, to anyone who understands domestic forces within the United States, is hardly the act of a "fluttering butterfly."

How tragic this all is! Solzhenitsyn has done to himself what others cannot do to him. His words portray a man who has lost his balance, has no perspective and can't or won't distinguish between good and evil.

His "reasoning" is simple. People are killed by motorcars. Therefore, all who drive motorcars are murderers.

It has come to where this wretched man must really conceive himself superman. How can he possibly not know that he does not and apparently cannot know anything about which he writes? A simple test is his, "Yet in the United States there was no criticism of this Clark." This is not merely incredibly false. Your own wire services must have told you it is past the absurd.

All of which leads to a question I hope you will not regard as impertinent, for I do not intend that. How could you be so irresponsible, if the AP's representation is faithful, to print 3,000 words of such factual incompetence, and intellectual garbage that debases reason?

Can it possibly be that you do not know how false it is to allege that "emocrats alone" affected loudmouthed wrath? Can you possibly regard this as a fair representation of horror over The Watergate in its limited or full sense? Are you unaware that the symbol of Republican conservatism, Barry Goldwater, from the first and as recently as yesterday, has been a leader in complaint over this extremism? Or that he also does not here speak for a minority of Americans?

Do you or this shell of what was once a man believe that any of the exposures of this frightful and frightening authoritarianism came from anyone other than a Nixonian Republican?

Even those with criminal involvement are today aghast at what they did.

It would appear that Solzhenitsyn and Nixon alone are not.

It would also appear that Denisovitch now lives in his self-created Siberia.

It is more terrifying prison.

The writer said he was in no way defending President Nixon or the Republican Party, but he accused the Democrats of "affected, loud-mouthed wrath" and asked:

"Has American politics not been full of mutual deceit and misuse already in earlier election campaigns, maybe only with the difference that it happened without electronic aid and was fortunately not discovered?"

The write also made a scathing attack on former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark for reports he brought back from interviews with U.S. prisoners of war in China.

"Is it possible," he wrote, "to believe that the late, former attorney Ramsey Clark, former minister of justice, who simply would not understand quite simply could not believe that the prisoners of war who gave him a document needed no a clear document to have had been subjected to

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

Hits U.S. 'Hypocrisy'

Solzhenitsyn Attacks Democratic Party

OSLO, Norway, Sept. 11 (AP)—Soviet novelist Alexander Solzhenitsyn today accused U.S. Democratic Party leaders of hypocrisy and likened recent years in the United States to the last years of Czarist Russia.

Solzhenitsyn's blast, also directed at other Western critics of the Soviet government, was contained in a 3,000-word letter in Norway's biggest newspaper, the conservative daily, Aftenposten. The letter was written to nominate another noted Soviet dissident, H-bomb physicist Andrei Sakharov, for the 1973 Nobel Peace Prize.

Accusing the West of a double standard in judging recent events in the Soviet Union and in the West, Solzhenitsyn wrote:

"This deep hypocrisy is characteristic even of today's American political life, of the Senate leaders with their distorted view of the sensational Watergate scandal."

The writer said he was in no way defending President Nixon or the Republican Party, but he accused the Democrats of "affected, loud-mouthed wrath" and asked:

"Has American politics not been full of mutual deceit and misuse already in earlier election campaigns, maybe only with the difference that it happened without electronics and was fortunately not discovered?"

The writer also made a scathing attack on former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark for reports he brought back from interviews with U.S. prisoners of war in Hanoi.

"Is it possible," he wrote, "to believe that the little flustering butterfly Ramsey Clark, former minister of justice, quite simply could not understand, quite simply could not imagine, that the prisoner of war who gave him a document needed for a clear political purpose had been subjected to

toriture beforehand?

"Yet in the United States here was no criticism of this Clark. This is no Watergate."

Solzhenitsyn said that having devoted years to the study of "Russian life before its destruction," he was struck by "the seemingly impossible similarity between the Czarist government in the last years and the United States of recent years. I dare say, which are also the last ones before major chaos."

Solzhenitsyn added, in the psychological lack of restraint of politicians, in their lacking emotional ability for "afterthought," the "entire Democratic storm of wrath over Watergate appears like a parody of the Kadets' furious and

unthinking storm against Goremeykin-Stuermer in 1915-16."

Czarist Prime Ministers Ivan L. Goremeykin and Boris Stuermer were attacked by the moderate opposition Constitutional Democrats, or Kadets, following the fall of Warsaw and other Russian military reverses on the German front in late 1915. Goremeykin was forced out in January, 1916, and Stuermer in November.

The Kadets—an acronym based on the Russian words for Constitutional Democrats—wanted only a reformed monarchy. The Bolsheviks were seeking revolutionary overthrow of the Czar Nicholas II.

Reviewing Western reactions to some events of recent years, Solzhenitsyn said, "the proven, bestial massacres in Hue by the Vietcong and North Vietnamese during the 1968 Tet offensive "were only registered in passing, almost immediately forgiven."

"It was only annoying that these counts of victims leaked out in the free press and for a time quite brief caused embarrassment quite small among the frenetic defenders of this social system."

He also attacked Australia and New Zealand for protesting French nuclear tests in the Pacific, asking why no such protests had been raised against Chinese tests, which he described as much more serious.

Solzhenitsyn submitted his nomination of Sakharov in his capacity as the 1970 winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature. Since only winners of the Peace Prize are entitled to make nominations for that prize, a Swedish member of Parliament said he would enter Sakharov.