

Editorials

Letter to a Soviet Pilot

Dear Comrade SU15 Pilot,

It is difficult writing a letter to a stranger. It is even harder because of your country's addiction to secrecy which precludes the world knowing much about you, a man who publicly and calmly murdered 269 innocent people aboard a civilian Korean airliner.

We understand what your implied defense is, something like just following orders. It is almost impossible, however, to countenance the lies in which you are embroiled, such as that the plane's lights were out and it appeared to be a spy plane. Fortunately, your own radio messages were picked up to belie that claim. Without going into detail, the evidence is simply and clearly that you and your superiors and your government are guilty of premeditated murder.

The world does not know much about you as a human being -- whether you have a sense of humor or if you're intellectual or athletic or warm or serious. Because of the secretive policies of your government, we will probably never know if you are a father, an uncle. We will probably never know even your name. And maybe none of that matters since your actions seem to have been that of a machine rather than a person. When and how and why were you so dehumanized as to be able to cold-bloodedly destroy a civilian airliner in peacetime?

Wait, don't throw this away yet -- be assured that we Americans know that our country is not always right either. Indeed, if we were to list our transgressions, there would not be room enough on this page. To avoid the appearance of trying to escape admission of hard guilt by generalization, here are just a few of our questionable acts and outright sins -- the dropping of atomic bombs, some of our policies in Southeast Asia, our treatment of our own

native Americans, racial bias, liberalized abortion. Most Americans know we are not perfect and have no right to self-righteousness. But we are allowed to publicly criticize our government about these things and even organize to oppose them. That's a big point in behalf of the United States, vis a vis the Soviet Union.

In that vein, there are a few other things you should realize. If this country had shot down a commercial airliner, no matter under what guise, it would have been public information immediately. If, say, U.S. jets had gunned down a Korean airliner over Alaska for whatever reason, our news services would be passing it on to their thousands of outlets immediately, with names, places and facts. If the U.S. had shot down an airliner carrying innocent men, women and children, the protests by Americans would far outweigh both in number and fury those that would presumably be conducted at our embassies in other countries, as is now happening at Soviet embassies across the world. Are you aware of them or are they, too, unreported in the Soviet Union?

Why have there been no such outbursts of indignation in the Soviet Union? Because the people do not care? That is difficult to believe. Though you personally seem remarkably mechanical about your deed, hopefully you are not reflective of all Russians. No, it is more likely that your people, much like Americans, would abhor your action, if they were allowed to know the real facts. Unfortunately, in your country that will not be the case.

In our country, you would not be allowed to appear on a scripted, taped and obviously rehearsed interview. You would have to face the sharp questions of a free press.

In addition, consider this. In the United States, in this very area, hundreds of women in recent weeks protested the possibility of nuclear armaments at an obscure military depot. No shots were fired; no one was killed. Would this be possible in your country? Wouldn't you have gunned down these protesters?

Aside from the indignation most people in this world feel about your execution, there is even more

involved. This world that we share teeters on the brink of ultimate holocaust. Much as your finger pressed the button destroying 269 human lives, there are at this very moment other fingers on other buttons that could destroy this world. Many good people from all lands are striving to prevent such an occurrence. Many Americans are trying to bring about a nuclear freeze toward this end. Honestly speaking, one of the biggest obstacles is the fact that your country's integrity is suspect. Your action in killing the people on a civilian airliner, for whatever reason, has geometrically threatened all the people of the world. For if you have disdain for one innocent life, or for 269 innocent lives, then it is logical that you have no use for four billion lives.

Even the most reasonable adherents of a nuclear freeze admit that it is unworkable without "verifiable" checks and inspections. That word verifiable comes from the Latin "verus" meaning "true." The shabby lies of your government in the wake of the shooting down of the Korean airliner have been inimical with any word stemming from true, including "verification."

Your act has set back the cause of world peace and in so doing darkened the already ominous clouds of possible nuclear destruction. Probably you didn't think of all these things when you pushed the button and therein may lie the real shame. Too many of us have been taught not to think; too many of us have been brainwashed into becoming humanoids.

Your government in perhaps the most barbarous statement short of those heard in all-out war, promises to repeat this atrocity, given the same circumstances. One of your leaders has declared that the boundaries of the Soviet Union are sacred. It is frightening that he, and you, do not realize that there are many things more sacred than nationalism -- such as human lives.

Would you be willing again to push the button? Indeed, if you are a dedicated Communist and continue to perform admirably for your government, it is not inconceivable that your finger may be the very one on that other button. You may some day "lock on" to that greater target, the world itself.

and Opinions

Nuke Policy Idiotic

EDITOR:

T. K. Jones, the man Ronald Reagan appointed deputy undersecretary of defense for Research and Engineering, Strategic and Theater Nuclear Forces, holds that nuclear war is not really so devastating as the peace propagandists would like us to believe. He is an ex-research engineer at Boeing and a member of the Committee on the Present Danger. His formula for surviving a nuclear war is simple: "Dig a hole, cover it with a couple of doors then throw three feet of dirt on top... It's the dirt that does it... If there are enough shovels to go around everybody's going to make it." This is one example of the idiocy that pervades the Reagan administration.

Along with the idiocy goes the deadly deception. Colin Gray was appointed by Reagan as consultant to the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and as a member of the Advisory Committee on Arms Control and Disarmament. He states, "Nuclear war is not only winnable but the U.S. should be prepared to initiate nuclear war against the Soviet Union." Paul Nitze was appointed by Reagan as chief negotiator for Theater Nuclear Forces and Edward Rowny as chief negotiator for Strategic Nuclear Forces. Both, along with Gray, are members of the Committee on the Present Danger, which is a radical right-wing, anti-Soviet group categorically opposed to arms reduction and which was a significant factor in the non-ratification of SALT II. These men are indicative of Reagan's sincerity in seeking arms reduction. Then there is the madness

of the experts who are the theorists and strategists who have designed the weapons and laid the plans for nuclear war. These are the military bureaucrats who speak casually of acceptable losses in terms of tens of millions of deaths on one hand and on the other of minor casualties if we have enough shovels. Many of these are also members of the Committee on the Present Danger.

Ronald Reagan is not only the actor in this scenario of warplay but the director. He and his same-thinking associates have written this script which if played out could mean the end of civilization as we know it. It seems all they want is confrontation with the Soviet Union and its subjugation. This is not foreign policy or national security or even ideology, it is insanity.

We the citizens must speak up before it is too late.

Adolphe and Loed Audiffret
RR 2, Naples, N.Y. 14512

Fatima Gave Us Answer

EDITOR:

I'm ashamed of the appearance of our Catholic sisters at the so-called peace camp at Romulus. And your front page photo of the two sisters (with no religious attire) Aug. 31 disgusted me. We are all against nuclear weapons and nuclear war. No sane person is for either.

Is protesting a part of the formulae given to the world, in particular Catholics, by Our Blessed Mother at Fatima? Did she at Fatima say "to avert future wars peace minded individuals should protest" (peacefully, publicly, prayerfully, whatever)?

She said to the world,

particularly to Catholics, the formulae was and is:

1. The rosary.
2. The scapular.
3. The five first Saturdays.

Flora Novak
Noble Road
Seneca Falls, N.Y. 13148

Pastoral Prediction

EDITOR:

I can hardly wait until the bishops come out with the projected pastoral on economic systems.

If the same lack of knowledge of human nature as lay behind the nuclear freeze pastoral is used, one can be sure that 1. capitalism which works will be downgraded, and 2. socialism which does not work will be overtly and/or covertly recommended.

Father Bryan Hehir who apparently wrote the nuclear freeze pastoral will not even commit himself as to whether communism and Catholicism are compatible. He obviously would be the ideal person to write on economic systems; he could probably turn it out right now.

Anyone who doesn't believe the above should just hang on to this letter.

John F. Starkweather
1840 Middle Road
Rush, N.Y. 14543

Father Shamon Commended

EDITOR:

Father Shamon's article on Catholic Action was one of the best articles I have ever read in the Courier.

I agree that protesting at the Seneca Army Depot is a secular action that will not be as effective as prayer and sacrifice would.

God, who is the author of peace, sent His mother to

Fatima to give us the perfect peace plan. Why don't we listen?

Father Shamon, reiterating Our Lady's message at Fatima, requested praying the rosary, attending the five First Saturdays and offering sacrifices in reparation for sin and for the conversion of sinners.

The sooner enough people do as Our Lady asked, the sooner we will have peace.

Karen Lloyd
645 Glendale Park
Rochester, N.Y. 14613

Letter Policy Questioned

EDITOR:

The letter regarding St. Maximilian Kolbe which appeared in the Aug. 31 issue causes me to question your editorial policy.

In your Guidelines you specify that you condense letters and edit libelous statements. The Aug. 31 letter ran almost a full column and certainly contained offensive statements.

Any fair-minded individual would agree that compassion and concern must be accorded our fellow human beings. But to imply that the Polish martyr might have been identified with, or approving of homosexuality, is downright ridiculous.

Mrs. Andrew Lamb
23 Cottage Ave.
Hornell, N.Y. 14843

Homosexuals May Repent

EDITOR:

The letter "Kolbe Article Questioned," written by Tim Sally, attempting to glorify perversion by aligning St. Maximilian Kolbe, is indeed sacrilegious.

Communism favors



"YOU CAN MAKE BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE SOME OF THE TIME, AND YOU CAN MAKE BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO SOME GOOD PEOPLE ALL OF THE TIME, BUT YOU CAN'T MAKE BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO ALL GOOD PEOPLE ALL OF THE TIME."

Fr. Shamon Bright Star

EDITOR:

Bravo, Father Albert Shamon, bravo! What a wonderful thing you are doing for the faithful. Although I have not attended your Sunday Rosary in the park, I was with you in spirit, and shall be there in the future.

Thank you for all your efforts in spreading the Marian devotions. They say a star burns brightest before it hits the earth. Your star, Father Al, is burning very bright here on earth and I am sure all the souls of the faithful departed are pleased with what you are doing.

Peter K. DeBellis
246 W. Genesee St.
Auburn, N.Y. 13021

Edna C. Faulkner
227 Privet Way
Rochester, N.Y. 14624