

the catholic peace fellowship

An educational service conducted by Catholic members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation

5 BEEKMAN STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10038

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Dear Tom:

The appearance this morning of the new issue of Fellowship prompts me at last to write, sending along a couple of Issues of Fellowship so you may admire the fine cover art we have obtained of late. (The reproduction is really excellent.)

I suppose you know I have moved to Nyack during the working day. John Heidbrink is no longer on full time staff and it happens I have inherited his office. (John has opened a shop and coffee house in Cornwall, both very lovely. There is some possibility he will be representing the Presbyterians in Eastern Europe at some future time, of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. He is to continue as time permits as a personal assistant to Al Hassler, by the way, ~~in~~ a prospect I think will be of great value to all of us. But in the meantime, John remains in the grips of extraordinary personal poverty; he has launched off in his New World bark with few provisions; several rooms of his house still are without exterior walls; he has sold half his library; the phone is disconnected; Elizabeth is looking for a teaching job; the debts are enormous.) If you know of anyone who might wish to give him something, he has probably never needed it as he does now -- nor been less willing to ask for help.)

There is a world of difference being here as opposed to working out of New York. One almost forgets after two years of immersion at Beekman Street that in ~~ix~~ some fundamental way the place is Mad -- constant interruptions, slovenly so much of the ~~ix~~ time, attuned to nothing but the Crisis Mentality (as we call it up here at Nyack). I have found that I can do twice as much actual work here, far more reflectively, and leave at the end of the day with a certain calm tranquility, feel I actually have gotten things done and that they were done well, be glad for the kind of personal contact we develop and maintain here. No one comes into my room without knocking! I forgot a year ago that something like that could happen.

On another front, just now I'm looking for an apt in East Harlem. As I mentioned in the post card from Mount Savior, I've joined the Emmaus House community and need only to get located in the area. I've gotten quite fussy in my old age about apartments and so the search may take some time. But I've had it on living in crummy, falling-apart buildings, bathtubs in the kitchen and the rest. I've also had it on five flight assents to top

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floor living quarters/ Further, I expect more from the landlord than an envelope fork the rent at the first of the month.

Still working on your two books. Not a very fast or determined reader, it seems. Neither of them are to be rushed through anyway, though I really have prolonged it without much justification, in light of the Critic's desire to get these reviews in at a reasonable time. ~~Yet~~ I'll be damned if I'll stuff your thinking down like a meal on the run. I find your treatment of technology fascinating and provocative; the whole matter of real liberation (as opposed to the make pretend freedom heard so much of on the Fourth of July and editorial pages) terribly important and fundamental. Your thinking rubs very much against the grain of what's happening, as I'm sure you're completely aware -- and that is indeed for all of us out here the Rub that makes your books so very important. But I find myself I have to fight to keep going, because the message for all its final value is uncomfortable. I think of that Chesterton bit: "I tell you not for your comfort, not for your desire, but the skies grow darker yet, and the seas rise higher." ~~X~~ So much bright chatter, so much color and flare, so much seeming promise. Stringfellow speaks of it in that book I last reviewed for Critic: liberation rising out of history, man at the center, machine servants: the promised land of cyberculture. Better than what we have despite the price tag of more whore houses, more coca cola, more waste. Hard to say that this is some kind of sad delusion. Really hate to say it, hate to agree with those who say it -- which it seems to me you do say and say and then say some more.

moving
in
today

I suspect it was the kind of discomfort I too feel with this all to ~~human~~ assessment that was ~~unpleasant~~, at the heart of that interesting review in the NCR.

Enough for now. I must get on with a few other matters. I do hope you are pleased with the Fellowship cover and that in other ways things are going well: stomach and back functioning and so forth. (Do you think the Abbey might in some way be able to help with the funds for the Blessed booklet, by the way? Type is being set for the Ms now; ~~and~~ ~~should~~ galleys should be up the end of next week so we can begin laying out the booklet, getting Corita to work on the cover and so forth. I think this is going to be a very important publishing event for the Catholic community -- and many others. Just the right size to reach a large audience. But we are simply strapped for money! Any help that can be gotten, in other words, would certainly move things along much more promptly.)

In Christ,

Jim

Jan 25, 1967