

5-14-58

Dear John:

PARBLE 11 Rec'd and I found one thought therein so provocative that I must stop to reply even before I go on to finish reading the rest of the PARBLE... I refer to (Gahh! Of all people!) Jack Harross' comments about Freedom. He says, and I quote, "Now, I would say that Freedom is actually Freedom From. Freedom cannot exist without barriers or restrictions. If you want the freedom of a neat room, things therein must be compartmented according to exact barriers. To have the freedom to vote as you choose, you must vote according to the barriers of Voting Day.. and so forth.... Total freedom would be anarchy, chaos, wherein no guarantee of your freedom could be predictable."

Now, I must state (to my intense astonishment) this is a Good Thought. However, I notice one slight discrepancy. Jack talks about "Freedom From" but he actually describes "Freedom To.." is, he equates Freedom (and correctly, in my opinion) with the individual's right to perform or enjoy certain self-initiated actions. In my opinion, one reason this country is ~~in danger~~ finding its "Freedom To" in danger of such drastic restriction, is because of the Socialist-planted, FDR-credited, slogan of "Freedom From" (which he publicized with his famous "4 Freedoms" which were nothing else, really, than 4 Freedoms From something -- ie, Want, Fear, etc. etc....)

In my opinion, "Freedom To" is equally if not more important than ~~this~~ latter "Freedom From". In both cases Freedom must accept restrictions. But to me the concept of Freedom To is a lot more important than the concept of Freedom From... The latter is passive and merely asks protection from unpleasantness. The former is active and includes the right to achieve even an unpleasantness if the individual so desires. In short, it even encompasses the right to starve if you'd rather starve than be forcibly spoon-fed. When you get right down to it, the only person who enjoys complete economic "freedom from want" is an inmate of Alcatraz! (He doesn't have to worry where his next meal is coming from, nor where he's going to sleep that night...Neither does he have to worry about his clothes, or doctor bills. He has a complete, paternalistic social security and the utmost "Freedom From Want". But how about his "Freedom To...?" He can't even go on a hunger strike without being slung into solitary for the ministrations of some husky attendants in white coats!) I think Jack's definition of Freedom is excellent. But I think it could be improved by calling it "Freedom To" rather than "Freedom From". Freedom also implies the right to act, as well as to be unharmed, in that action.

Well...on to the rest of it....

Hah! "MOONMAN CONFESSES...I for one am bored completely stiff by... world relations and 'current events.' Yes, I know that such goings-on have more or less direct bearing upon Me, but....that has never been more than a drag to me." Unfortunately (or maybe it is fortunate) he'll be the one whose taxes will be paying for all the "drag" he finds too utterly boring to discuss....

However, I do agree with you that much of what passes for 'current events' is nothing but "verbal diarrhoea". I wouldn't be at all surprised that our national unrest -- even the international unrest -- might clear up altogether if all news publications (including radio commentators) were placed on a Monthly Schedule. Of course, the history of World Diplomacy does not indicate any better international stability during eras that HAD no radios/newsmags/daily papers, etc. But at least the ordinary citizens weren't developing ulcers over it.... Me, I'll take the NATIONAL REVIEW!

Thanks, John, for keeping me on your mailing list.

