

Robben Island Bad,  
Robben Island.

30th November, 1964.

Dear Mrs Marquard,

When I wrote my reply, I did not have ~~my~~ your letter with me. I had misplaced it somewhere. But, yesterday, when I took up a book on Economics I came across your letter resting snugly between the pages. I read it over again and as a result, I am sending this postscript to you.

I wish you to know that I appreciate very much indeed and am grateful for the solicitude that prompted you to write despite your rheumatic hand. I felt very rotten when I realized how imperceptibly I was becoming selfish and callous. I wish you a speedy recovery and a pain-free and happy Christmas Season.

Forgive me if I indulge in my usual reminiscences. But I can't help remarking that while the English pedantically wish one another a "Merry" Christmas and a "Happy" New Year, we braffleinkers - the location population - wish one another a "happy"

Christmas and a "happy" new year and we say it loudly, person to person. We aren't mercenary in outlook: for you it - but we do, all things considered, expect those on whom we confer the blessings of the gods to show their appreciation - a piece of cake, a cent piece or a bottle of beer, shall we say?

However, it often happens that our friends have nothing but good wishes to give us in return. The formula is "same to you", said indifferently or warmly depending on our feelings towards our well-wishers. There are characters at Gnefflenist, however, who are known to hate having their good wishes reciprocated, preferring a solid, tangible token of good will. They are quick to follow their "happy Christmas" with "en moet my nie 'seventy-you' gee nie!" - in the idiom of our location.

I was interested also in your account of the lecture on Galileo. I do not know what to think of the man. I happened to read, by accident really, Arthur Koestler's The Sleepwalkers, in which he traces the history of astronomy. For some reason or another he felt called upon to cut Galileo

down to size and to accord pre-eminence to his countryman, George Kappeler. Well, if there's one thing Kocotles can do it is debunking theories and denigrating characters. He makes Galileo appear an arrogant, petulant, perfidious liar towards whom the Church showed unusual tolerance. He has marshalled his facts skilfully; but, as I say, he is arguing a case and has been too harsh on Galileo. But it is amazing how steadfastly scientists refused to make the assumptions that their observations should have let them to make, how they skirted the truth for centuries, making momentous discoveries and yet not realizing that they had. It's a fascinating story of how in his laborious serpentine climb man so often goes off at a tangent, confidently; ends up in a cul-de-sac and has to retrace his steps!

Yes, a lot is happening on the world scene. I am happy about the outcome of the American elections because, whatever shady deals mar his past, Johnson, I believe, wants to and can fire the imagination of American youth. And I have a soft spot for Americans. Perhaps because they are so desperately anxious to

be loved or because they are so vulnerable. There is one respect in which they resemble the Communists <sup>whom</sup> ~~that~~ they loathe so much. In the days of Lenin, the Communists seemed to enjoy announcing their failures from the rooftops and going back to the job with the renewed vigor of those who have just returned from the confessional. The Americans, too, are extremely self-critical - a sign of strength.

I do not know the history of the crisis in South Vietnam, unfortunately, but I do believe that the Americans are allowing themselves to be blackmailed unnecessarily. There is not a single country in Africa, Asia or Latin America that would voluntarily go Communist. Of that I am certain. They'll all declare themselves socialists, yes, but it will be their brand of socialism. If America were to take up the attitude and let it be known, that she will assist to the best of her ability where her assistance is required, but that she will withdraw willingly where she is not wanted, there would be no demonstrations, anywhere, against American embassies. Of course it is an unavoidable risk in democracy that some obscure paper will publish some uncomplimentary matter on some Asian or African country - something that State-controlled Communist

papers can NEVER do - and that paper's sentiments are taken as representative of the country as a whole.

In Europe, the situation is most intriguing. Professor Kalff was of opinion that the Socialist parties of Europe would regard a Labour victory in Britain as a sign of a change in the international climate. Mrs Willy Brandt, Signor Nenni and M. Gaston Defferre of Germany, Italy and France, respectively, are going to be watched very closely in the coming months because Socialist victories in these countries will give a fillip to the explosive though latent idea of a Socialist United States of Europe. What a mighty power that would be! And who knows, if liberalisation were to continue behind the Iron Curtain, <sup>whether</sup> the Soviet Union and its satellites were not to be drawn into such a Union.

Strange as it may seem, I have no fear of a world conflagration. I have a strong consciousness of God's active intervention in the affairs of the world. We are moving towards God's solution.

I wish you and your family a God-blessed and memorable Christmas and New Year.

Yours very sincerely,  
Richard Luke.

In my previous letter, I spoke of  
bringing the roof down. As no  
appliance was provided for it would have  
been more correct, perhaps, to have the  
roof blown off or the walls collapsing as  
they did in Jericho:  
Robt.

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