

Verbundkatalog Kalliope

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Pacific Palisades, 1948-09-22

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1550 San Remo Drive
Pacific Palisades
California
September 22nd, 1948.

Dearest Duff.

* if not as sloppily as this one!

And I thought you knew me! Hell and damnation! "Stalinist". "Fellow traveller which is worse because less courageous". Who do you think I could possibly be? Lillian Hellman? But do I - just because I hate, despise (and fear) totalitarianism - have to like and praise "our" (and I mean ~~inferior~~ the American) brand of ignorant, uncivilised, and abandoned imperialism? And do I have to deplete my slim vocabulary of the word "imperialism" just because horrid Joe uses it? Do I have to approve of "our" preparations for a war which is as superfluous as are any goitre and appendix combined, - superfluous because, as you rightly point out in one of your articles, "the Russians don't want war; it is not in their interest to wage war; and they are not good at it." (No, it was your last letter to me in which you said something of the sort.) But "we" do want war because we are so rich and so powerful and by no means as yet powerful enough; and because we are having so much - superfluous - trouble at home; and because war has always been such a perfect way out; and because we are so preckless and shortsighted and silly that it isn't even amusing. You hope not to be about when a reborn Germany plunges this haunted planet into another merry disaster. I am afraid, though, that we'll both be present to watch America do it. And should, by any remote chance, the great show be postponed, and Germany be permitted, or called upon, to cast the first A.- bomb, it would still be this contry- of which, believe me, I am extremely fond- whose anti-Russian phobia and whose untutored arrogance would have caused it all.

I enclose a piece by Stephen Spender whom I do not admire. He is, I think, rather an ungifted bore. Also, the "letter" is miserably written. Even so, it expresses what I am sure is an important part of the truth and if you consider it "stalinist", I'd better apply for my membership card at my earliest inconvenience. Incidentally - your remark concerning the fellow travellers' cowardliness indicates your unawareness of what is going on here. Were it not for my fierce dislike of the comrades and virtually all that they stand for, I should - out of sheer stubborn courage - promptly commence to fellow travel like mad. For, believe me, neither the "Un-American Activities Committee" nor the "Loyalty Checks" nor any of the activities of the F.B.I. and related bodies are at all funny, and it takes considerable mulishness not to be intimidated. What - by the way - makes you say that "Stalinism is the most efficient form of totalitarianism"? Is there, to your mind, any one blunder, tactlessness, and self-destructive idiocy which they have failed to commit? And are they not in fact even incapable of exploiting "our" numerous wrongs, simply because they cannot themselves distinguish between black and white?

Enough.

to know

I am glad ^{that} you are enjoying yourself but truly sorry to hear that no book is in the making. There are - you maintain - too many books in existence. Yes, - but how many good ones (by contemporaries)? And yours chance to be excellent.

Don't be cross with me, please. ^{here} I am certain that if ~~myself~~ I'd see you there'd be no argument. There isn't any, actually. Or would you be dead set against a Europe that would be less corrupt, less "kept", less willing to serve as either a Soviet or an American colony and buffer? Would you mind a stronger and wiser leadership in a more independent Britain? Would you hate to see Britain and the continent - or, rather, the continent under British guidance - hold their own against the two sturdy morons at whose lack of mercy they have thrown themselves? Nor would you.

All my love. - Somehow I seem to have managed - in this and my last letter - to make it appear as if I were possessed by politics, and unable to think, talk or write about anything else. That's all wrong. But then, I've been provoked and couldn't possibly have let your outrageous insinuations go unanswered. Next time it'll be nice private chatter which you'll hear from me. This time I might conclude by calling your attention to a brilliant front-page editorial in DIE WELTWOCHEN (Zuerich) by that great democratic mastermind, Dr. Hjalmar Schacht. The piece is entitled " Der Marshall Plan - die Grundlage des Wiederaufbaus ", and tells us just why the ERP is such a wonderful thing. Pensive making, - is it not?

More love.

Yours
E. B. A.