

To: Dad
From: M. Prokes

I thought what Dick Tropp wrote up to you was an accurate statement about where white people from educated middle-class backgrounds are at (or at least were at). With very few exceptions, we are all elitists. One doesn't get rid of his elitism suddenly, because one doesn't become enlightened in a ~~xx~~ vacuum. I am an elitist, arrogant, chauvinistic-- and I don't believe I am any better for admitting it in this fashion. (Some people probably think they are honest for admitting bad things about themselves.) The important thing, I believe, is that I have admitted it to myself and I am willing to change. (Depending upon how much courage I have, will determine how fast I change.)

The thing that disturbs me most about myself is why I don't feel more guilt for letting you shoulder all the burden. I feel some guilt about ~~that~~ ^{it}, but not an enormous amount which is what I should feel. The only answer I can come up with is that I've been repressing *the guilt*. Though I fit very well into what Tropp wrote, I know I am committed to what we are doing, whatever the future might hold. The reason I know this is because--believe it or not--I don't know how to relate to what people like Debbie and Stoen have done. I absolutely cannot understand it. ~~xxxx~~ Another reason I know ^{my} commitment, is that it no longer matters to me what image you have of me. It used to matter, but it doesn't any longer. After I admitted to myself my faults, I could then only conclude that you must have known all ~~ix~~ along that I've not been worth a shit (because I haven't been). I believe that. I didn't admit it to you though because I was ashamed of it (and still am), and I felt then that your image of me was important to me. I didn't want to hurt the image I thought you had of me. Now -- *irrespective of what you or anyone else thinks of me -- I know what I'm prepared to do. I am prepared to live on indefinitely doing nothing special and nothing that would bring me any glory. And to live on indefinitely is the hardest thing to be willing to do -- as far as Jim concerned.* I know where Jim is at because I know enough about ~~that~~ where you are at and I don't turn my back on that. My conscience simply won't let me.

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I especially related to what Tropp wrote, about being shot after one becomes useless. I only feel useless in the sense that there is nothing I can do that someone else couldn't do. I am no longer "special" (i.e., re: my role). But I realize now that a person's usefulness isn't determined by doing something "specialized." I finally had to come to terms with doing mundane work.

Finally, I come to the realization that you related to me to bring me to socialism. Though I'm sure you know I didn't particularly enjoy it ^{at the time}, I can understand why it was done - to make me feel close to you. It was hard to admit to myself that I needed that. I'm sure ~~it did~~ ^{I did} however, or you wouldn't have gone through ~~so~~ that kind of hell.

To me, what you did was the greatest act of character I could possibly imagine. The act was so great that I find it almost impossible to relate to that much character. It's mind-boggling. It had to be among the most repugnant things you ever did. I don't feel any resentment about it because I know you did it for me out of pure love. Hell, you knew what you were letting yourself in for, the first time you let me in the door and told me about socialism. You knew what you would have to put yourself through to bring me along. You didn't have to do it (as the song goes) but you did. ~~It's so~~ Why in the hell would you go through

that needless hell? ~~You ~~see~~ didn't~~
I know the answer -- it's simply due to
some kind of unfathomable love that
you have. Up till now you haven't
gotten much in return -- but before it's
over I'm going to ~~try~~ try to find the
guts to make it worth your while.
Thanks for carrying me this far and thanks
for your perfect commitment to the only
thing that has given any meaning to my life.

Mike

P.S. This requires no response -- in fact,
I'd feel better if you did not
respond.

ttt-3

Dad