



Written by **E. Merrill Root**

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A Letter To Our Soldiers There

E. Merrill Root is the brilliant author of two best-selling books, Collectivism on the Campus and Brainwashing in the High Schools. Professor Root may also be America's greatest living poet. His work has appeared in Human Events, Christian Economics, Bluebook, National Review, Freeman, New York Times, Literary Digest, New York Herald Tribune, and elsewhere.

I AM VERY humble in writing to you. Who am I to be worthy of writing from the sidelines to you who are in the forefront of battle? Yet I do write because I believe you may need and wish to hear American words from home that support your American deeds abroad.

I write to you, the sons and soldiers of America—flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone, blood of our blood. You are our own American soldiers—the paladins of contemporary history. As such you deserve our humble thanks and our proud support, and our love in fullest measure, to match in quality the service to your country that you so generously give. I write to you irrespective of politics, above and beyond all consideration of the spiderwebs of the politicians: What Party we support, our judgment as to the wisdom of this war, the question as to whether or not this is a Constitutional war since it has not been declared by Congress, our doubts of the men who make our foreign policy, our question as to whether you are to be allowed to *win* the war that they tell you to fight, are here beside the point. There are questions about all these things, but there can be no question about *you*.

We are one with you, one-hundred percent, without question; we uphold you unequivocally. The living center of America, the Americans who are the heart's blood of our country, support and honor you without doubt or limit. In a time when, here at home, we often fail in moral quality, you renew and ennoble the soul of America, you exemplify the courage and integrity that made America great. Our thanks to you—and our love! You offer your lives without question for your country; we, without question, support you. You exemplify the words of Christ: "*Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.*"

I

All that I see of you, all that I hear of you, makes me know that you are a miracle of renaissance and resurrection. You give all real men, all good men, a renewed faith and hope and courage; a restored belief in the American dream become the American fact.

I remember seeing and hearing on television one of your officers speaking from the front. "Remember," he said, "that they" (and he meant you) "*are kind.*" And your letters and your actions prove that you are. I have seen you helping the people of the villages of Vietnam—the mothers, the children, the old men, the sick and the hungry; and you do so with a beautiful and



natural kindness. I read the letter of Marine Sergeant John H. Hill Jr., to his wife: He wanted seeds to plant— “Green onions, carrots, head lettuce, anything that will grow” . . . he has (his wife says) “a green thumb” . . . he loves gardens, all gentle sane growing things, all God’s chlorophyll children. He writes the sort of letter that a real man would write: *My darling, I want a picture of the first snow, just so I’ll know that somewhere in the world there’s a place without steam, mud, slush and stink. It’s only 9:45 a.m., and the temperature is already 104 degrees. The humidity is 97 per cent. I’ve lost 22 pounds. We sweat 24 hours a day. This jungle, there’s no end to it. There’s so much I want to talk about. Things have got to get better, darling. They can’t get worse.*

So, like a good soldier, he faces and states the agony and the evil; like a good soldier, too, he does not snivel or repine; steadfastly he fights the awful fight as a good soldier should. And he is kind: He found a Vietnamese child, three days old, in an orphanage; he hopes to bring that child home with him, adopted, to be his own, for his wife and he have no children.

And you are brave, too, and wise in the simple fundamental way that our philosophicats have lost or have never known. I remember seeing on television a Negro soldier who said something like this: “I know why I am here. I am a part of the war for freedom.” I read in November part of a printed letter from David Handler, twenty-one, of Portland, Oregon. In a moment of natural bitterness and wonder he asked: “Is this why I am here? So some damn Americans may sit and yell at us?” But I think he knew they were only “some”—and that those “some” are not “Americans,” —though they are surely “damned.” Be that as it may, he knew his own commitment; he wrote,

Men are getting killed, wounded, maimed for life. But we would rather be here defending freedom than anywhere in the States watching Communism spread over the world. [Our emphasis.]

You know that, you feel that, thank God! You know that freedom is not an “academic” pingpong ball to be batted cleverly to and fro by Smart Alec “minds” in the game-room of Academe. You know the meaning and the menace of Communism—you know that there is no discharge in this war for any of us—you know that there is a war of the Eternal Light with the Luciferian darkness that seeks to dim the noon above earth and to erase the sun from heaven. You fight well with your hands because your minds see the enemy and know him for what he is — the conspiratorial pestilence that wastes at eclipsed noonday, which men too pallidly name *Communism*—but which *is* the Red Death.

And so you are like the clear sun and the strong wind that sweep away the fog—or smog—which has misted most of the world. You—*U.S. News & World Report* for December 13, 1965, states—have often, as green rookies just out of training camps, met in combat tough veteran Communist guerrillas on their own chosen ground, and bested and beaten them, man to man and hand to hand. The correspondent for that magazine writes (December 13, 1965): *Here in Vietnam the record of the American fighting man is something to marvel at....Americans in all these battles have been tenacious, aggressive fighters. In the words of one battle-seasoned American officer: “These kids don’t panic when ambushed. They don’t break when the odds appear overwhelming. They don’t run when the situation calls for hand-to-hand fighting. They may not always relish a*



fight, but they don't quit."

What else is it to be a good soldier? We, like your officers, and like the overwhelming majority of Americans, are proud of you; we salute you; we support you with every inch and ounce and atom of our being. You are ours—and we hope, very humbly, that we are worthy to be yours.

And the supreme wonder of it is that you *understand*. It would not be enough if you fought like brave but dumb driven cattle, yours not to reason why, yours but to do and die. You *understand*! *U.S. News & World Report* quotes a South Vietnamese correspondent: *They are mostly young volunteers who have left comfortable homes in a wealthy fatherland to battle for Vietnam. They are powerful, eloquent fighters. You can feel their pride.*

And the same magazine quotes a private: *We all get terribly involved. We sympathize with the South Vietnamese right off and suddenly the war becomes a personal thing and nothing is more important than winning it.*

And Specialist Fourth Class Kenneth W. Bagby writes, after a bloody battle: *Folks, don't let these men die in vain. Appreciate what they are doing over there in V. N. They died protecting you, and all the people in the United States. We just can't have the enemy get to the folks back home. We have got to stop them here, before that happens. If it is God's will, we will do it. Tell the people back home to pray for us, as we need their prayers.... We raised the American flag on the grounds.... I sat beside a tree and looked at it, and hoped I would never see the day when it would be torn down and destroyed.*

When I read words like these, tears come to my eyes—and to my heart. Even in this day of apathy, of cynicism, of the Wise Guys “who know the price of everything and the value of nothing,” of the Know-It-Alls and the philosophisticates, a *man* speaks. And he is one of you, soldiers of America—the eternal American, the sort who was once named Nathan Hale, or John Paul Jones, or Douglas MacArthur. You make us humble—and very proud. In a day of the anti-hero, you restore the hero; in a day of agile existentialists leaping from ice-cream to ice-cream lest they wet their dainty feet, you bring us again the basic granite on which to build the City of God.

And I have seen and heard you on television—officers and men—speak of the Vietcong. And in that speaking there is truth and generosity: They are excellent soldiers, you say, brave fighting men; you do them justice without rancor or braggadocio. I am reminded of Nietzsche's words: “Ye must be proud of your enemies.... Ye shall have enemies to be hated, but not enemies to be despised.” That is the good soldier's *love* of his enemies (which pacifists can never understand), the justice of the good soldier of the right to the good soldier who fights on the wrong side with courage and skill, as a “first-class fighting man.” You are just to our enemies as soldiers, even when you know that they are wrong and must be stopped because they threaten the values of life that make this a decent and beautiful world. You are gallant to them, even while you firmly say with the great Roland, that classic soldier, in the French epic: *“Pagans are wrong, Christians are right.”*

You offer your lives for an eternal, spiritual reality greater than our temporal, physical lives. For that we revere you, we honor you, we support you. You are dear to us, for you are the soldiers of America.



II

But now, after my praise of you, I must come to those whom I cannot praise. I would prefer not to speak of them at all—but in justice to you, and for your sakes and for the sake of America, I *must* speak of them.

These are those who deny you and oppose you, those who abandon you and criticize you, those (some of them) who even join—or wish to join—the enemies who fight against you and our country.

They are of various degrees and kinds: But they all forsake you or oppose you, they all aid your enemies, they all are unworthy of you. They are more lethal than nuclear fall-out, for they are the fall-down of the American soul.

I saw and heard on television a college boy who declared primly that he didn't want to be drafted—that he was going to do his best not to be drafted. And why? Was he opposed to war? No, he was opposed only to his own discomfort. To be drafted would interfere with his “career”—would snarl his “plans” and delay his “success”—would hurt his “future.” He didn't want to stop his serene passage on the open Thruway for any roadblock of “war”! He wasn't having any! Why stop the Communists? Why fight for his country? He had better things to do—an education to complete, a career to establish, a personal success to win. And this was not a concern to preserve for God and country a great unique gift—a rare genius as scientist, inventor, executive, artist, philosopher; he cared only for his own selfish little personal “career” in a time when you were giving your all. I remember a brilliant gifted young Connecticut school teacher, who not only served as a soldier, but who in Washington's desperate need volunteered to go into New York as a spy; and who said, when discovered, and with the noose around his neck, “I regret only that I have but one life to give for my country.” I remember that he, too, had a “career,” he too found war an “interruption,” he also found death a nuisance; but he spoke and acted far otherwise than this shallow college boy of 1965.

Dante long ago knew the like of our contemporary college boy, and set his like in Ante-Hell: *This miserable fate Suffer the wretched souls of those, who lived Without or praise or blame, with that ill band Of angels mixed, who nor rebellious proved Nor yet were true to God, hut for themselves Were only....*

They (Dante says), neither good enough for Heaven nor bad enough for Hell, drift meanly through a Limbo of mist forever—despised of man, rejected of God.

Then there are the conformist “clergymen” and “professors,” the weathervanes of the “Liberal” wind, the “humanitarian” marchers and the “intellectual” protesters, who charge you with “imperialism” and “aggression” and lust for indiscriminate butchery of children with napalm, and all the other old false horrors that “Liberals” love to exclaim about — unless they are committed by collectivists. They never notice — they deliberately ignore — items such as this in the *Boston Globe*, a “Liberal” paper, December 13, 1965: “Cong Kill Sleeping Women, Children,” which tells that “The Vietcong killed 23 men, women, and children sleeping in a pagoda at Tan Huong . . . a



small Vietcong force invaded the pagoda early Sunday and slaughtered the people.... One of the survivors was a 3-year-old child found under the body of its dead mother." No, these "humanitarians" never notice such real atrocities; they are too busy inventing atrocities of yours! . . . They have no slightest hint or word of blame for the Vietcong, the Communist invaders and torturers and extortioners. Have they never read, in the late Dr. Tom Dooley's books, of the Communists in Laos or Vietnam who tear boys' ears off with pliers lest they hear "evil words" (such as the Lord's Prayer!) . . . or prop old men's mouths open with chopsticks and splinters of poisonous bamboo. . . ? These double-standard minds, these anti-humane "humanitarians," demand a pacifism from America, a pacifism from you, but never hint at any pacifism on the part of the enemies of God and man, the ambushers and scatterers of bombs in Saigon. They never attack the darkness at noon, the killers who "liquidate" (O suave and gentle word!) by setting a high-power pistol behind the right ear (they would never shoot you through the left ear!), and squeeze the trigger and blow the gray brain-plasm out through the shattered skull. But I need not labor the point for those with your awful experience, or spell out to you the catalogue of their dreary illogic!

And then there is the strange congeries of the odd specimens who disfigure youth with the grotesque conformity to ugliness popular in this world-hour—the caricatures of youth with their faces stubbly with deliberate artifice of beards, the metallic "girls" with hard hatchet faces and hacked stringy hair and lumpy trousers instead of skirts, the assorted punks and Beatniks and Smart Alecs, the reduction of God's creation to absurdity, the creatures that once were men, the candidates for the Twilight Zone. They lust to make themselves grotesque; they think to demonstrate their "intellect" by degrading their bodies; they prate of loving "humanity," but they hate all that is nobly human; they talk of "oneworld" and they mean one concentration camp. Their brains are soft but their hearts—if they have any—are hard. They "love" their enemies — they hate their friends. Greater hate hath no man than this, that he reviles those who lay down their lives for him. These grotesque creatures are the sour suds of youth's pricked soap-bubble; the dregs and faeces of human potentiality; the devolution of man to ape. When we compare their hard lapidary soulless faces to yours, we thank God that you exist to redeem youth from the contemporary debacle and collapse of such as they.

But where I can no longer love, let me pass by!

Or I would that *I could* pass by! But these hard metallic haters, these extremists of ideology, these punks of "protest," do things one cannot pass by unless he is to betray you. Recently on the 6:30 news over WHDH in Boston, the newscaster told of the incredible antics of these incredible creatures. He told of one hundred war widows in Columbus, Georgia, who are constantly harassed by anonymous phone calls of secret voices that label them "hypocrites" (I quote) because the widows said that their husbands had "died for their country." In the *Boston Globe* for December fifth, the story was elaborated: *One widow, who asked that her name not be published, said she had received anonymous telephone calls in the night accusing her of hypocrisy. "They tell me that I am a hypocrite," she said, "because my name was in the paper, because I said my husband died for his country. I will bury my husband next week, when his body comes home. Please don't*



publish my name, because I think I have given all I can give to my country." Filled with disappointment, she was beyond tears. "There are others who have received the same calls, and they call back again and again and tell you you are a hypocrite," she said. "It is as if it isn't enough to give your loved ones for your country."

And this attrition by atrocity, this torture of the soul worse than torture of the body by Apaches, is ignored by our Pooh-Bahs of Academe or upheld as legitimate "freedom of dissent." I may be simple, but to me it is the gangrene of the American soul.

To you, our soldiers whose wives in their own country have to suffer such indignities and insults and tortures from the same enemy at home that you are fighting abroad, I say that we genuine Americans despise these hard haters, these creatures that perhaps never were men, these perpetrators of atrocities, as much as you do. We loathe them as you do, we abominate them as you do, we say (as Christ would) that they should be cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. That there can be such ambulant viruses today in America is a symptom of our share of guilt for such incredible debacles of faith and hope and love, of patriotism, of moral integrity, of simple decency and fair play. (One is reminded of the high-school senior in Connecticut who wrote in her school newspaper: "To be a patriotic American is to be a blindly stupid individual." Such the seeds of poison that we sowed; such today the fruits of those seeds!) This is the sort of thing you fight abroad; such is the thing we fight at home. It is the sort of hard, metallic, evil spirit that Communism—to which truth is only the most convenient lie, to which right is only the most expedient wrong—has spawned in the world, till it infects even those who are not (technically) "Communists." But certainly such assassins of the heart must be themselves Communists—in spirit when not in formality.

I assure you, soldiers of America, that we who love and support you will not let our sword sleep in our hand, we will not cease from William Blake's "mental fight," until we have established here at home a world of fairer quality where such things can never be again. We apologize to you for their existence—our art, our education, our philosophy, our culture, should have made such a Masque of the Red Death impossible in America. They did not. So our culture is addled or infected with the illogic and insanity that our "intellectuals" uphold: We post guards with rifles on the outer walls, half way around the world, and invite our enemies in through the inner door. We call this "freedom of dissent"—whereas it is the license of infamy, of insult, of betrayal.

Then there are those (some of them fall into the previous groups) who engage in "teach-ins"—one marvels at their imprecision and coarse errors of language!—and some of them instruct young men in how to evade the draft by burning their draft-cards, by claiming to be (or being) homosexuals, by aping mutilation or illness or drug-addiction or any excuse in a storm, by asserting "conscientious objection" to war that many of them *lust to fight on the side of our enemies*. They lie down on railroad tracks (but scramble up when the engineer drives on); they try to bull their way into army camps to insult you; they picket the streets with false insulting posters. They make public nuisances of themselves much as flocks of starlings in our city streets do, with noisy raucous cheepings and guano.



Or sometimes their sick flawed unbalanced minds—though only a few are courageous or crazed enough for this final commitment — soak their bodies with gasoline and touch themselves off as screaming torches. Why do not our “Liberal” psychologists, who love to psychoanalyze everyone on the Right, delve into the psychological symbolism of this lust for fire, this yen for self-immolation? They are like the symbolic mad Greek, long ago, who destroyed the most beautiful of temples by fire, to call attention to himself and to express in outward destruction the inward nihilism of his own soul. They find a sick satisfaction in destroying the body which is the temple of the Lord. By the drastic self-criticism of suicide, they rub what they think (in their blindness) is the final eraser of death over their pathological unbearable lives. Symbolically they choose as their mode of exit the most masochistic of means —the flagellation of fire. Perhaps there is a hint here that they thus seek some sexual satisfaction that in their impotence they cannot otherwise find. *They* destroy themselves in a nihilistic orgasm of fire; you offer your brave creative lives to stand between your country and wild war’s desolation. Anyone with a shred of mind, with an even rudimentary intuition of reality, knows the great gulf that stands between them, the nihilists, and you the defenders and saviors.

Most culpable perhaps are those who, by their crooked “teachings” incite all these on to their excesses and follies and perversities. The *Catholic Worker* certainly is most culpable of incitement to excess. The Left-leaning professors are certainly culpable of such incitement to excess. So Professor Genevese of Rutgers:*I do not fear or regret the impending Vietcong [Sic!] victory in Vietnam. I welcome it. (April 23, 1965)*

Thus the good professor *welcomes* a “victory” which means your defeat, a Vietcong victory which must mean your disaster! And Fulton Lewis Jr. quoted (see *Counterattack*, August 13, 1965) one in-teacher who exhorted his hearers:*Let young American men and women go and actively join as American [Sic!] soldiers for justice in the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people against their oppressors and invaders.*

You, you see, are “oppressors and invaders,” the Vietcong are the “heroic Vietnamese people” and “young American men and women” are to militantly, as “American soldiers” (God forgive *us!*) *shoot you down*. Is this “freedom of dissent”—or license for treason? Do these self-styled “intellectuals,” these idea-mongers, not know *any* reality? Are they unaware that ideas have consequences? Ideas are the deliberately fashioned blueprints of acts. Ideas *are* acts. Or otherwise they are the idle chatter of Kipling’s Bandar Log —*Here we sit in a branchy row, Thinking of beautiful things we know; Dreaming of deeds that me mean to do, All complete in a minute or two— Something noble and grand and good, Won by merely wishing we could....*

Either these professional idea-mongers chatter like the Bandar-Log . . . or ideas have consequences. Thus a man who commits treason in words—that is, gives verbal aid and comfort to the enemies of America—is the mental brother of him who commits treason in act. We should say: “A man in America is free to believe what he will, subject to the laws of reason. Let Mr. Genevese



be free to think his nonsense, or even to spout it from his own private soapbox. But we are free also. We are free to say that our taxes shall not support such a man and let him loose to corrupt our youth with illogic and nonsense. We are free to say that we do not believe that such a man should be given the honor of an academic position supported by any State of the United States while young men of the age of those he is teaching—and whom he publicly hopes their enemies will defeat—are being wounded, maimed, killed, shot to rags by the Vietcong, whose “coming triumph” this man “welcomes.” Have we abandoned all logic? All serious concern for the intellectual life and the validity of ideas? All reality, all reason, all consistency? I, as a college teacher for many years, have always honored academic truth—the truth that shall make us free. But how can we honor academic truth when we give academic position to such a man? I would not blame you if, reading such words as his, you said: “Why should I defend a country that defends my enemies?” But of course you understand what American liberty is all about; you say of your country, “Though she slay me, yet will I trust in her.”

Yet it must be hard for you to understand what goes on in the name of “freedom of dissent.” You must have heard or read reports and seen photographs of the marchers who carried through the streets of our nation’s capital, and to the steps of the very White House, *the flags of the Vietcong who are killing you*. Now I do not question their right to question the war, to oppose the war, to protest the war. But I do question their right—their moral right as Americans—to proudly display and flaunt *enemy flags in our streets*—the flags that are the symbol of our enemies who at that very hour and moment were shooting at you, and wounding you, and killing you. These flags of the enemy, flaunted in America, were sold (I am told) for ten dollars each . . . and the money for their sale was turned over to the Vietcong. One of Shakespeare’s characters said: “’Tis a mad world, my masters!” It is.

And there are others, the like of Mr. Genevese, loose in the land. So a Professor Ball: “Our position in Vietnam is hypocritical”—that word again!— “We are moving in the same direction Hitler did.” A Professor Boulding: “The United States is a bandit. We have no legitimacy. Red China is much less committed to conquering the world than we are.” A Professor Morgenthau: “Let Ho chi Minh win.” A Professor Millet: “. . . terror on our side accounts for all that has happened in Vietnam.” *

And there are those—you may have heard of them—who advocate giving blood to the Vietcong. Would they advocate giving blood to Hitler and his Nazis . . . to the Mafia . . . to the Thugs who throttled their victims in India . . . if not, why give blood to equally evil enemies now? Of course if that donated blood restores the Vietcong, it will restore them to shoot and perhaps kill you! But I somehow doubt that even the Vietcong, who at least are consistent in their evil, would relish the blood of such men who deny their own country and their own principles.

The *Washington Post* (October 27, 1965) reported: “. . . the West Coast Branch of the May Second Movement is sending blood and first aid supplies to North Vietnam and the New York office plans to sell blood and forward the money to the Viet Cong through Algeria.” Blood money, you see! Thirty pieces of silver for the enemies of America—and the betrayal of you who are fighting for America!



Such groups, it is said, even enlist— or plan to enlist—“American” young men to join the Vietcong and fight with them against you. If you encounter any of these, I hope that you will shoot straight and shoot to kill.

Perhaps some of these assorted oddities calling themselves “Americans” know not what they do. *But they do it!* As “Liberals,” and “humanitarians,” and “pacifists” (I honor the true pacifist** who follows his own God-based conscience *and takes the consequences*), they may not know what they do. But many of them, but most of them, are too sophisticated for such naiveté: They know well what they do. And beyond any “Liberal” hypnosis lies the conscious design of the hardcore few or many who know what they do only too well. These are the far-Left manipulators who coldly use the “idealism” of the muddleheads to serve their own cynical aims. Such is the “Viet Nam Day Committee” pamphlet—addressed to you. It tells you: *The war in Viet Nam is not being fought according to the rules. Prisoners are tortured. Our planes drop incendiary bombs on civilian villages. Our soldiers shoot at women and children.... A growing number of GIs have already refused to fight in Viet Nam and have been court-martialed. They have shown great courage.... You might be forced to do some fighting—but don’t do any more than you have to. Good luck.*

I think you can answer better than I the charge that you “torture prisoners,” that you deliberately shoot “women and children.” I only know that I have seen on television and read reports of young captured Vietcong given as careful medical aid as your own buddies; I only say that, knowing you, I will never believe that you torture, that you wantonly kill women and children. But that is what our enemies say—in the attempt to corrupt you, to subvert you, to delude you into becoming traitors. Knowing you, I know that they will not succeed.

Your enemy, the enemy of America, is *Communism*. That, I am sure, you increasingly know; and I am sure that you will return to America with the steadfast resolve to defeat Communism here as you would defeat Communists there. The world could be rid of wars such as that in Vietnam tomorrow—if *Communism were resolutely destroyed in its conspirational centers, the world will have no respite from such wars until those conspirational centers are destroyed*. The wise Cato concluded every speech in ancient Rome: “*Carthago delenda est!*” And the Carthage of Moloch and his furnaces into which children were tossed as sacrifices was only a pale shadow of Communism.

IV

This brings me to the hardest thing I have to say—and the most important. America must win—not just fight, but win—the war in Vietnam, the total war with Communism. As a great American said, “In war there is no substitute for victory.” They would not let him win the war in Korea—which is why you are fighting in Vietnam today. Unless the Administration, unless the State Department, unless our “leaders” say what they mean or mean what they say, your sacrifices will be in vain. Unless you are allowed to win this war your sons will have to fight another futile war within a decade . . . if America survives for that decade . . . or your loved ones will fight the war on their own hearths and streets in America itself. If the politicians employ you like chessmen in a game, expendable to maintain their aims and power; if they use you to fight a phony war, a shadow war;



if they shed your blood for a fallacy, they are of all men most shameful. If the war in which you give your blood and sweat and tears is to end in stalemate, or in “negotiations” that settle nothing . . . or that settle everything in ways that the Communists wished from the first; if Communism is to walk into renewed cynical absolute power over the red carpet of our dead— then you will be betrayed, and America will be betrayed.

Your devotion, your willingness to do and die, your faith in your country and your flag, must obligate our leaders to see that that devotion, that willingness, that faith shall not be the expendables of power politics. Therefore our leaders must really fight the war—to *win the war*. They must strike the enemy where he lives. They must bomb his industries, his harbors, his central hornets-nests of power. They should bring in, to fight as free Asians defending Asia, the magnificent and eager troops of Free China poised on Formosa.

All anti-Communist forces should join—and this will make your sacrifice lighter—in the crusade to defeat Communism. Mere wurrawurra and huggermugger of attrition and indecisive blood-letting will never win the war. There must be bold imaginative overall direction, there must be the all-out decision to win, there must be war on the full scale that will save your individual lives and that will break the enemy’s will to fight and power to fight. If we fight another Korea, leaving the Communists still in the saddle to ride mankind, you will be betrayed and America will be betrayed. That, as one of our finest contemporary American poets expressed it in these pages, would be “planned futility.” The only justification of this war is the goal of sanity and freedom won—and the victory that will establish that goal. Otherwise we have no right to ask you to fight the war at all. You are too noble for our leaders to prove ignoble. But meanwhile we salute you, the brave men who shoulder the sky even if our leaders may let it fall.

V

As I said at the beginning, as I have said throughout, we support you, above all politics and politicians, whatever the outcome. If you fail I know it will not be because you are defeated, but because you are betrayed, because you are not allowed to win. Courage like yours, patriotism like yours, skill and will like yours, can win the victory that may renew the world. You prove that the minds and hearts of America’s people are sound. Pray God that the will and the brain of America’s leaders may be sound too! If so, in your victory, out of the wreck and sediment of the world today you will help to create the fairer world that yet may dawn.

If they let you defeat Communism, then the great words of Thoreau may come true: “There is more day to dawn. The sun is but a morning star.”

* * *

* These quotations are from a letter by Don Clark a junior in the University of Oregon, to the campus newspaper, and quoted in full by the Reverend Daniel Lyons, S.J., in his column in the June twenty-seventh *Sunday Visitor*, a national Catholic weekly.

** Such a true pacifist, writing in the December issue of *Quaker Life*, says: “Speaking as a



conscientious objector who was drafted in World War II; speaking as one who still holds the same views; and speaking as a member of the Society of Friends I would call upon Friends across Quakerdom to Influence everyone we can to stamp out this scourge that is sweeping our land—the use of conscientious objection as a draft-dodge and a screen behind which to hide while pointing the finger of guile at others.—B. Eugene Fisher, Richmond, Indiana.” That is true pacifism—which I honor, and which I know you honor.