

CHAPTER 7

OPEN LETTER TO JOE

Dear Joe:

Everybody is writing you letters. Don't let this annoy you, for with us Americans writing letters to editors, congressmen and other celebrities is only a national habit. It's in line with what we call democracy—if you will pardon the expression.

Let me assure you that my presumption in addressing you stems from a sincere concern for the success of your program. I am not one of those who are bent on reforming you. Far from it. You are The Perfect State; to even suggest improvement is superarrogation. I suspect that the criticism hurled at you, particularly from our own neophytes in the business of Statism, springs from envy and is in fact only left-handed admiration. You are the Ideal of every Statist in the world, including the pip-squeak professors who try to show with

calculus how you can be bettered, as well as the “democratic” boy scouts in Washington who hurl epithets at you. Don’t let these amateurs bother you. You are tops!

Your mission is world conquest. Good! That has always been the goal of The Perfect State. Other fellows in the past have failed in the attempt, but that is no reason why you should fail. You have more than an even chance of making it. The only hurdle in your path is the Bungling State at Washington, and I want to tell you just how you can remove it. That’s why I am writing you.

II

It seems to me your present course is hurting your chances. You are building up your opposition. By supplying the Bunglers with a scarecrow you are making it possible for them to build up a State here that would give you a run for your money. Chief Bungler Harry is not strong on knowledge and probably never heard of the Marxist maxim that the way to destroy private property (and thus establish a top-drawer State) is to tax it out of existence. Despite his lack of book learning, he is learning fast, principally because he has seen how you do it.

Harry’s difficulty is the American tradition of private property, to which we still give lip service, and Harry can’t break through this tradition without a permanent “dire emergency.” You know how important it is for the State to work on the herd instinct and how necessary for that purpose is a first class bogeyman. Everything you have been doing these past five years has helped to build you up as the bogeyman supreme, and unless you change your tactics Harry will make use of you to confiscate every bit of property in the country, and then you will have a real State to contend with.

I have no illusions about your predatory ambitions. You’ve

got to have a war to stay in business and a successful war with this country would suit you fine. Your native slaves are undoubtedly kicking up a fuss over their rations; a diversionary war might be *comme il faut* in the circumstances. And you are undoubtedly thinking about the confusion and the ineffectiveness of our defense measures, and how much easier it would be for you to attack now and not wait until some sound program, like that proposed by Herbert Hoover, is put into effect; the aimless plans of Mr. Truman and Gen. Eisenhower might be more propitious for you.

However, the question is, is this the proper time to get going on your war? I don't think so. I believe I can show you that if you put off your war for a couple of years, despite internal difficulties, your prospects for success would be improved. If you will correct your timing, Joe, you should be able to achieve the first World State in history. You will achieve what a lot of fellows, from Ghengis Khan down to FDR, only dreamed about. Listen to my argument.

III

For some time now our economy has been geared to war. More and more we have been producing for waste, not consumption. Every machine in the country is turning out something that, directly or indirectly, contributes to the stockpile of destruction, and every worker is engaged in providing fodder for the management of that stockpile. We still talk of "business" as if it were the process of the production of goods and services, of things people want, but the fact of the matter is that for several decades more than a third of all our production has been going down the rat hole. (Look at the tax figures.) At this writing, due to the scare resulting from your poor timing, the proportion is increasing; within a year, the way things are going, at least half of our time will be put into feeding the State.

To drive home the point, our armed forces and our bureaucrats now total approximately six million non-producing consumers, and that comes to about ten per cent of our employable population. The other ninety per cent are thus "fully employed." I needn't tell you, an expert in these things, that besides being busy we are quite rich, thanks to the printing presses.

You know all this, but what you are apparently losing sight of is that all this "prosperity" rests on you. Without you as Bogeyman Number One all this busyness would be impossible. Our economy is so constructed that without an "enemy" it would collapse. Of course, the economics professors could undoubtedly frame another reason for continuing along these lines, but that would take some time. Right now the structure of American "business" is supported by none other than Joe Stalin, and his removal from the scene would be a calamity.

You should see what I am driving at. Some of your economists have been predicting the smashup of what remains of our capitalistic system these past five years, and have been advising you to wait for it before making your war-move. Report has it that because the smashup has not come you have put these boys in the doghouse. You must not be so hard on them. They simply did not take into consideration the support you yourself have given our economy; it even escaped your omniscience. Maybe if you had not supplied our neophyte Statists with plausibilities for spending ourselves into prosperity, things would be with us as your oracles predicted. You put off our "bust."

IV

Suppose you should pull the rug from under the boys who are managing our economy. You would leave them flat on their collective buttocks, and before they could pick them-

selves up—well, the thing you have been hoping for would happen. Without you to blame everything on, there would be no immediate excuse for spending billions on armaments, both for ourselves and our weak sisters in Europe.

What then? Our factories would shut down, millions would be out of work. There would be moaning and groaning all over the land. The proletariat would be joined by the capitalists in one general “relief” concert. Our “prosperity” would indeed be punctured.

So, the thing for you to do—and that is the purpose of this letter—is to remove yourself as the indispensable bogeyman. Pull a real peace offensive—right now. I don’t mean one of those fake things you have been staging; these have obviously boomeranged in your face. I mean something that cannot be mistaken, say like marching your armies straight East out of Germany, and doing it without previous parliamentary palaver, without notice. You ought to be able to figure out some world-startling stunt that would leave our inept planners gasping for breath. The sudden realization that you cannot be counted on to support our economy would be most demoralizing.

What I am suggesting, if you think of it, is in line with what your immortal Lenin advised as sound Communistic strategy: one step backward and two steps forward. After you have upset our economic apple cart by the move suggested, and confusion is all over the country, you can then go ahead with your main purpose.

For, as you know, chaos always brings on a demand for a messiah. Some one will surely pop up. Whoever he is, he will be ideologically beholden to you, for there would be no better one to turn to. In fact, the logical candidate for the job would be one of the fellows you have planted in our bureaucracy, or in our unions, somebody who has been worshipping you all these years.

Permit me to nominate for the job somebody with a good old Anglo-Saxon name, maybe sporting a Phi Beta Kappa key. Or, you couldn't do better than to pick one of the ubiquitous Roosevelt clan.

There it is, Joe. Don't you realize now that an honest-to-goodness peace move right now is just what you need to get yourself a satellite across the Atlantic? Now, go to it.

Yours for the State Supreme,

FRANK

P.S. This advice is given gratuitously. If, however, you should think it of any value, and wish to recompense me, just put me wise about a week before you make your big move—but don't tell anybody else. I will notify my broker to place some "short selling" orders and, believe me, I will make plenty. And, about the time your armies start moving out of Germany I will take a walk down to the corner of Wall and Broad Streets to see what happens. I believe I will have to duck the bodies of the deflated millionaires as they drop from the tall buildings.

P.P.S. The newspapers are giving front-page space to the proposed Four Power Conference. It is reported that you had something to do with instigating this thing. In that case, it may be that you anticipated my advice. Good! However, let me warn you to watch our Washington boys. They talk a lot about peace, but I suspect they would like to keep the war-pot boiling. They don't want war, of course, but they certainly don't want peace—real peace—either. In order to keep in the saddle and to carry out their economic phantasmagoria they must have a permanent *delenda est Carthago*; in which capacity you have served well. So, be careful they do not maneuver you out of a real peace move at Paris.