



Nazism and Communism (巴特)

作者其他文章

2006年5月21日

来源:论坛主题

栏目广告6, 生成文

件 HTDOCS/NEWXX9.HTM 备用,

Karl Barth has been the major force behind the revival of Protestant theology in this century. His personal war against Hitler is history, and his multi-volume Dogmatik is a theological landmark. This letter was written by Professor Barth in response to criticism from Germany that he did not seem to be applying the same standards in opposing communism that he applied to Nazism in 1938. At that time he wrote a significant letter to Professor Joseph Hromadka in Prague, asserting that opposition to Nazism was a service to Christ. It appeared in the Journal *Christianity and Crisis*, February 57, 1951. Used by permission. This article was prepared for Religion Online by Ted & Winnie Brock.

You think it would be advisable if I stated expressly why I do not want the logic of my letter to Hromadka applied to the present East-West conflict, why I do not find the present situation analogous to that of 1938. One could put the question even more clearly: Why do I not write to my West-German friends today what now would apply to the Russians in the same way that my letter then applied to the Nazis? I shall try to give you my answer:

(1) The Hromadka letter in 1938 was written in the days of the Munich settlement. It was sent to Prague where the decision was being reached, as to whether the world outside of Germany would tolerate German aggression. On the 30th of September in that year I wrote in my diary: "Catastrophe of European liberty in Munich." I stood alone with this interpretation. "Realism" meant in those days the acceptance of the situation created by Hitler. Thanksgiving services were held in all the churches, including those here in Switzerland, for the preservation of peace. Six months later Hitler had violated this infamous accord of Munich. A year later he was in Poland—and the other consequences followed. If the "Czech soldier" [of whom Barth spoke in the Hromadka letter] had stood and had not been betrayed by the West, the Russians would not now be standing at the Elbe. That is when the die was cast. That is when the East-West problem arose. And that is when Europe and Christendom slept....

I do not know when and how and to whom I would now direct a similar letter. A situation in which everything depended upon a yes or no decision has not subsequently developed. The determination, whether rightly or wrongly motivated, to resist Stalinist Communist aggression is the common policy of the West. Its intensification through a Christian word is superfluous. On the question no one sleeps today. On the contrary, one notes rather a nervousness, hysteria and fear which is not conducive to the highest form of determination. The Christian word today would have to be that we ought not be afraid. But such a word ought not be shouted. It can best be expressed in the way one lives and remains silent, particularly since so much is being said, both helpful and foolish. ...

(2) In the Hromadka letter I called, in the name of the Christian faith, for resistance to the armed threat and aggression of Hitler. I am no pacifist and would do the same today. The foe of Czech and European freedom proved in those days again and again that his force would have to be met by force. . . . The peace at any price which the world, and also the churches, sought at that time was neither human nor Christian. That is why I "shouted" at that time....

The present Russia is not the peaceloving nation it professes to be. It claims to be menaced, particularly by the Anglo-Saxon powers. I cannot understand the reasons for this fear though I have tried to remain receptive to its arguments. It is obvious that Russia assumed a threatening attitude immediately after the conclusion of the war.

I must admit that if I were an American or British statesman I would not neglect preparations for a possible military defense. . . . But all this is being done in the West today without any specific Christian word or warning being necessary. . . . Today the Christian duty lies in another direction. Today we must continue to insist that war is identical with death in the sense that it is inevitable only when it has happened. In 1938 war was an actuality, but it could have been nipped in the bud with the right kind of determination. Russia has not created a similar situation today. It has not presented anyone with an ultimatum or committed aggression. (I do not hold it responsible for Korea.) There is no evidence for, and much evidence against the idea that it wants war. There are still means of avoiding war. Until they are exhausted (as they were exhausted in 1938) no one in the West has the right to believe in the inevitability or the desirability of war or to meet Russia as Hitler had to be faced. We do not face the glorification of war and we must, therefore, express our resolution to oppose communism without falling into fear and hatred or into war-like talk and action. A war which is not forced upon one, a war which is any other category but the *ultima ratio* of the political order, war as such is murder. . . . Every premature acceptance of war, all words, deeds and thoughts which assume that it is already present, help to produce it. For this reason it is important that there be people in all nations who refuse to participate in a holy crusade against Russia and communism, however much they may be criticized for their stand.

Finally we cannot emphasize too strongly that the most important

defense against communism consists in extension of justice for all classes. In the event of war we must be prepared to face an army of millions of well equipped soldiers who will be convinced (from our standpoint, wrongly) of the righteousness of their cause and who will be prepared to give everything in the battle against the "criminals" (they mean us). Could one say as much for the armies of the so-called free world? Mere hatred of communism and Russia will not suffice us. The masses of our people must have experienced the value of our freedom in such a way that they would be willing to give their life for it. . . . Of course communism might triumph without war if its worse values appeared better to the masses of the Western world than what we offer in the name of democracy. In France this seems to be the case. Whoever does not want communism (and none of us do) had better seek for social justice than merely oppose it.

(3) On the question which you put to me on the remilitarization of Germany: One must not confuse this question with the general problem of pacifism, nor with the general question of the defense of the West. It is not logically correct to demand that anyone who disavows pacifism and believes in the defense of the West should also favor German remilitarization. I will give you a few reasons why I regard this as a unique problem. . . .

In the first place, I do not have the temerity to ask the German people, who have been bled white in two wars, to make this sacrifice again. A normal survival impulse must persuade the German people to refrain from this sacrifice.

In the second place, I regard it as impossible to expect of the German people that they arm for a war that is bound to be a civil war for them, in which Germans will be arrayed against Germans.

Thirdly, it does not seem to me to be morally defensible to tell a nation that one has sought to demilitarize to the point of denying it the use of tin soldiers as children's toys, that its salvation now depends upon preparation for another war.

Fourthly, it seems clear to me that the remilitarization of Western Germany might be the spark in the powder barrel with which the West, and Germany in particular, ought not to play.

In the fifth place, it is not at all clear to me how the western strategists propose to defend Germany between the Elbe and the Rhine, which might mean that a German army is expected to sacrifice itself at the Pyrenees after leaving their families in Germany.

In the sixth place, I believe that the positive defense against communism has a special significance for Germany. Has enough been done for the exiles, for the unemployed and the homeless, and for the return of war prisoners that communism might not be drawn into Germany as a sponge draws in water, despite the present rejection of it in Western Germany?—As a German I would be inclined to say, we cannot do this for we are otherwise engaged.

Finally, I ask a question hesitantly because I will risk the ill-will

of Germans: Would it not be bad policy to have a German army, with all that goes with a German army in the European situation? History has proved that if an Englishman or a Swiss puts on a uniform that is not the same as when a German puts one on. The German becomes a total soldier too easily and too quickly. In common with many Europeans I would rather not see the re-emergence of the German soldier. And even if I were a German, and perhaps particularly if I were a German, I would rather not have his re-emergence, not even when the peril from the East is considered.

文章添加: [消失的火](#) 最后编辑:

点击数:1200 本周点击数:1 [打印本页](#) [推荐给好友](#) [站内收藏](#) [联系管理员](#)

相关评论 (只显示最新5条)

没有找到相关评论

[加入收藏](#) | [关于我们](#) | [投稿须知](#) | [版权申明](#) |

| [设为首页](#) |

[思问哲学网](#) Copyright (c) 2002—2005

四川大学哲学系·四川大学伦理研究中心 主办

蜀ICP备05015881号