

SEP No. 67

FEB 27, 1962

"PEACE AND FREEDOM"

- (1) Allan Blackman of ACTS FOR PEACE, Berkeley, has raised some questions about the attitude toward Communism of people in the Peace movement.
- (2) My letter of Feb. 2, 1962, to Allan Blackman indicates my approach to these problems. It is necessary to examine the "channel capacity" of human beings and human groups, - to study the thought of both Russian and American thinkers, etc.

P.O. Box 1061
Campbell, Calif.
February 4, 1962

Mr Alan Blockman
ACTS FOR PEACE
1730 Grove St
Berkeley, Calif.

Dear Alan:

I have read your "FREEDOM AND PEACE -
A Statement of Concern (First Draft)".

I agree that we must work for "Peace and
Freedom," not just "Peace". However, some of your
arguments fail to penetrate my active thoughts
because I am working close to my "channel capacity".
If you are not familiar with the concept of
"channel capacity" in INFORMATION THEORY, please
let me know and I shall give you some references.
(See Servo Engineering Problems Nos 28-A and 29-A).

In your paragraph #2 you accuse some AFSC
and WILPF leaders of refusing to deal with the issue.
(? communist question). I think the real problem is
that both you and those you criticize don't understand
the limits of human communication capabilities and
the nature of the coding problem by which one can
break through such barriers. I feel that "ideology"
is a social analogy of the coding process in
information theory or synaesthetics in engineering.
I vote against Daniel Bell's The End of Ideology.

The "inference to communist expansion" is the result
of the failure to develop an ideology or coding that
brings a perspective of human society within the
channel capacity of human beings. Perhaps you can
derive this from ~~James G.~~ Miller's "Information Input Overload
and Psychopathology" Amer. Jour. Psychiatry 116, 8, Feb-1960,
pp 695-707. If not write me and I shall explain.

I think your criticism of "communism" should be replaced by an information-theoretical analysis which would evaluate the totalitarian elements in terms of negentropy. (See SEP No. 14-A).
Or see my notes & outline of "Frontier Problems of Engineering Sociology", SEP No. 65, which I sent to Bob Parks with my pledge of time for TTP.

Are you aware that from 1948-1953 the CPSU denounced Information Theory as reactionary bourgeois science etc. Stalin's concept of "evolution from above" could not stand the philosophical attack, if people took IT seriously.

I feel that there is a principle of "quantization of truth" that enters these political questions. To describe the process we would need to develop further Norbert Wiener's concepts of "Cybernetics". Leaders in the Soviet Union have now apologized to Dr. Wiener.

Have you studied L. L. Whyte The Next Development in Man? or Accord in Form.

I think the feedback concept of cybernetics will provide us with the general forms for the next development in man, and information theory will give the analogous concept of channel capacity.

If you don't understand this let me know, and I shall try to explain in more detail.

Sincerely yours,

Frederick B. Wolf

cc: Allen Garrison
Bob Parks
Helen Mehr
Cele Cleveland