

1975 SOLZHENITSYN--DISTURBER OF  
THE WEST'S CONSCIENCE

Alexander Solzhenitsyn is making a lot of Americans very uncomfortable. He dares to preach such outmoded concepts as good and evil; that communism is an unmitigated evil; that it should be left alone to demonstrate the superiority it claims for itself; that the West should stand up for freedom.

Everyone knows of course that everything is relative so there is no good or evil--merely different ways of looking at things. But Solzhenitsyn says that murder is murder no matter who commits it; that there is a moral standard to which men should adhere; that man is not merely a conglomeration of atoms, but something far above the animals. In other words, that man while he comes from and returns to the earth, has a divine spark within him which should be nurtured and cared for so that it will become a flame, not only of magnificent works of art and accomplishments, but of goodness.

Everyone knows we can live with communism; that it is no menace to us; that it is merely another form of organized society. But Solzhenitsyn points out that the theory and practice of communism are completely inhuman, that "communism is anti-humanity". And well he knows how true this is by sad experience. He attained his fame in 1962 during the period of Khrushchev's de-Stalinization campaign, with the publication of his autobiographical novel of one day's life in a prison camp in Russia. He speaks with knowledge burnt into his soul by his own terrible experiences.

Everyone knows that communism is able to establish a viable society, just as capitalism is. But Solzhenitsyn says no, it cannot. He says "Let's allow it to show that it is advanced, that it is omnipotent that it has defeated you, that it has overtaken you. Let us not interfere

with it,...let it stand on its own feet for 10 or 15 years. Then we will see what it looks like." And he goes on to say that it will have to reduce its military preparations, it will have to relax its system so as to feed and clothe the Russian people. The grain deals which the Soviets are trying to make with the West are adequate proof of the truth of Solzhenitsyn's views. Russia cannot even feed its own people. Without our help the Russian masters could not continue to enslave the Russian people. When the people riot for bread in the streets the system will have to relax so food will once again appear in the stores.

And what has been the reaction in the West to Solzhenitsyn? Have we taken him into our arms and made a

hero of him? On the contrary. What has happened was precisely what the Soviet leaders hoped would occur when they permitted him to leave Russia. He is looked upon as another tiresome preacher against communism who wishes to continue the Cold War.

The President of the United States actually refused to see him when he was in Washington, D.C. for fear of endangering the detente with Russia. Here is a man who defied the Russian authorities, dared them when he was under their control to do their worst to him; who demonstrated that burning flame of freedom residing in man and when he comes to America--the land of the free--the President refuses to see him for fear of offending the slavemasters of Russia!

As Solzhenitsyn goes about in the West trying to awaken the conscience of those who supposedly are dedicated to freedom, no doubt, increasingly he will be denounced and vilified. No one wants to listen to a man who keeps reminding you that there are certain standards to be followed, especially if you have adopted relativistic views. But men like Solzhenitsyn cannot be stopped. They represent the indomitable spirit which resides within all of us wishing to be free from the oppressive hand of governmental power.

Above all else, whether one agrees with Solzhenitsyn or not, one must admit that there is a man!

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