

Commentary

Letter to the Editor: Eternal gratitude

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

December 11, 1979

Dear, Dear Editor:

I have waited a few days in order to regain some objectivity before writing this; I hope that the delay has helped. The Journal arrived on December 7, a fateful day in more than one year. The members of my family are, by turn, weeping and gloating over the extra copies. We all thank you for those.

You are not a bad psychologist yourself. A basic goal of psychology is the prediction of behavior; you predicted almost my exact words when I read your two editorials in this latest issue (Vol. 5, No. 4:4-6). After all, you did lay it on a bit thick. After the initial surprise, my reaction, and Nita's quickly passed through two other stages as we digested your words: first, we both decided that we would like to meet the fellow that you described; then we found ourselves looking at each other through very tearful eyes.

The struggle between pride and embarrassment was hard-fought: pride in the fact that some one would find it in their heart to express such wonderful sentiment, at the same time humbled by the grave doubt that such praise was deserved. This battle is still undecided.

At this point, the one tenet of which I am fairly sure is that you have struck such a high note that I could never hope to equal or surpass the image you create. Anything I might do now would be strictly anticlimactic. Accordingly, I can now fade contentedly into the background, leaving the icon untarnished, and yielding the field to those with more youthful vigor.

I hope you realize the problems that you have caused when I now meet people who know me only from your description. Their expectation will be so high, based on your beautifully worded flattery, that I am doomed to dispense only disappointment and disillusion. Nevertheless, you must know how touched we were, how deeply pleased, and how cherished these two items will be until our dying day.

I'd better stop, before I start to gush myself. You have our eternal gratitude.

Merry Christmas,

R.H. Barrett,
Tucson, Arizona