

STONEGRAVE HOUSE

STONEGRAVE

YORK

Sir Herbert Read

18th July, 1963.

Dear Rafael,

I was delighted, on my return from Australia, to find your letter of May 31st and to hear of your new appointment. I congratulate you heartily - it is an important position and you will be able to make your influence felt where influence most matters - in the U.S.A.

I have read the Address you sent me with great interest, and appreciate its message. I hope that Argentina will indeed be able to find its own salvation, independently of Russian communism and equally of American capitalism. The communist bloc seems to be splitting up - I always believed and said that it would. The genius loci is stronger than any kind of universalism, especially political universalism. When I was in China four years ago I already saw that Chinese communism was fundamentally different from Russian communism. Different also is Yugoslavian, Polish, Czech communism.

This does not mean that nationalism is the alternative - nationalism is an aggressive term. I prefer the word regionalism. One should base a mystique on the land and the people not on the State and politics. I agree that the Christian idea of charity is the highest human attitude in our dealings with fellow men. But we also say, charity begins at home. It is right that your first faith should go to "the originality of the Latin American community", but first to the originality of the Argentinian community - for it is original, it is unique, as a land, as a way of life. I distrust all organisations that look beyond the borders of their own country. Unfortunately the global ideals of communism have called into existence other global ideals, of which Pan-America is no doubt one. This may be inevitable as an historic phase, but the only human ideal is the communal (not communist!) ideal - the ideal of a brotherhood that does not exceed the bounds of one's physical and social horizon.

But you know my thoughts on all these questions, so I need not repeat them. I hope to see you in Washington one day, perhaps next Spring, when I spend a semester at Wesleyan University, Connecticut. In August I go to Montreal for an educational congress, but for one week only.

All good wishes,

Yours very sincerely,

HOVINGHAM 214

Mr. Rafael Squirru,
Director, Department of Cultural Affairs,
Pan American Union,
WASHINGTON.6. D.C.
U.S.A.

Herbert