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11-9-71

Dear Pastor Rehwinkel:

I am very sorry to add this additional burden to your work. I know that what has been done is wrong from all that I have been taught and that any reasons that I might give will not make it right. But you are the one person that I know that while not endorsing this will at least possibly understand why I felt that I had to do this.

1. I wasn't earning anywhere near enough to support us. Everything I had seemed to fall  $\frac{1}{2}$  price. True we could have gone bankrupt & maybe gone on welfare.
2. But that brings me to my next point. Knowing the type of bratons that we would have to live in plus the environment for the children plus the effect on them knowing they were on welfare was just more than I thought they could & should endure. I know that they were willing to cut back but this involved a lot more than that.
3. With Pat being so determined to get onto acting I was also fearful as to what this might do to her continuing to be a Christian. I'm sure it wouldn't have helped

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4. Also, with Helen not going to church I knew that this would harm the children eventually in their attendance. I had continued to hope that she would begin to come to church soon. But when I mentioned to her that Mr. Jitzi wanted to pay her an Elders call. She just blew up & stated that she wanted her name taken off the church rolls. Again this could only have given an adverse result for the childrens continued attendance.

This is not a  
recusation of Ed.

So that is the sum of it. If any one of those had been the condition we might have pulled through but this was just too much. At least I'm certain that all have gone to heaven now. If things had gone one who knows if that would be the case.

Of course Mother got involved because doing what I did to my family would have been a tremendous shock to her at this age. Therefore, knowing that she is also a Christian I felt it best that she be relieved of the troubles of this world that would have hit her.

after it was all over I said some prayers for them all - from the hymn book. That was the least that I could do.

Now for the final arrangements:  
Helmi & the children home all agreed that they would prefer to be cremated. Please see to it that the costs are kept low.

For mother, she has a plot at the Frank-  
mouth Church cemetery. Please contact Mr Herman Schellhas Rt 4  
Vassar Mich 41768. } She always wanted  
Reverend Zehnder of Bay City to  
preach the sermon. But he's not well.

He's married to a niece of Mother's & knows what arrangements are to be made.

Also in leaving some letters in your care  
Please send them on & add whatever comments  
you think appropriate.

The relationships are as follows:

Mrs. Lydia Meyer - Mother's sister

Mrs. Eva Morris - Helmi's mother

Jean ~~Marie~~ Syfert - Helmi's sister

~~Fred & Clara - Fred's sponsor~~

~~Herb & Ruth - Fred's sponsor~~

~~Marie - Pats' sponsor.~~

Also I don't know what will happen to the books & other personal things. But to the extent possible I'd like for them to be distributed as you see fit. Some books might go into the school or church library.

Originally I had planned this for Nov-1. - All Saints Day. But travel arrangements were delayed. I thought it would be an appropriate day for them to get to heaven.

As for me please let me be dropped from the congregation rolls. I leave my self in the hand of Gods justice & mercy. I don't doubt that He is able to help us, but apparently He saw fit not to answer my prayers they way I had hoped that they would be answered. This makes me think that perhaps it was for the best as far as the churches would be concerned. I know that many will only look at the additional years that they could have lived but if finally they were no longer Christians what would be gained.

Also, I'm sure many will say "How could anyone do such a horrible thing". - My only answer is it isn't easy and was only done after much thought.

Pastor Mrs. Morris may possibly be reached at  
802 Pleasant Hill Dr  
Elkin - home of her sister.

One other thing. It may seem cowardly to have  
always shot from behind but I didn't want any of  
them to know even at the last second that I  
had to do this to them.

John got hurt more because he seemed to  
struggle longer. The rest were immediately  
out of the pain. John ~~probably~~ didn't  
consciously feel anything either.

Please remember me in your prayers  
I will need them whether or not the government  
does its duty as it see it. I'm only concerned  
with making my peace with God + of this I  
am assured because of Christ dying for me

P.S. Mother is in the hallway in the attic  
- 3rd floor. She was too heavy to move.

John.