

January Graduates:
Retreat Conference, to-
night, 7:00 in Dillon

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
January 14, 1949

Don't delay confession
until Sunday Mass.
Go tonight.

Controversy Involving Notre Dame
(Editorial of Clifford Ward, Fort Wayne Sentinel)

Westbrook Pegler and I have been having some letters back and forth on the subject of honesty and decency in public life. Both of us agree that there aren't too many men in public life today who are outstanding examples of honesty and decency. In some of his earlier remarks, Mr. Pegler seemed to me to be implying that Notre Dame, as well as West Point, were somehow guilty of the sins of Pendergast, Hague, Curley, Kelly and errant Army officers. I couldn't see the connection, but Mr. Pegler has convinced me that the fault was mine, because he was not attempting to make the connection that I saw.

What he was saying was that neither West Point nor Notre Dame has succeeded in turning out men as good as some of our national leaders have been bad. He would like to see Notre or some other school turning out a stream of grads who would be outstanding examples in public life of high morals. So would I, and I presume so would everyone else.

But there is this idea to be considered. With the way the world is now constituted, virtue doesn't get the play that vice commands. It is not a signal for everyone to throw his hat in the air because someone is decent, but lack of decency makes headlines. I happen to think that Herbert Hoover is one example of decency and honesty in public life, but there hasn't been as much attention paid to him on that score as has been paid to wrongdoers like Pendergast, Hague, Curley and the others.

That there has been a general deterioration of morals and as a result, a deterioration of ethics, is apparent to all. We now look upon wrongdoing with a tolerance that would not have been usual a generation ago. A generation or so ago, a husband or wife who defaulted their obligations and broke up either their own homes or the homes of someone else, would be scratched off the community's invitation lists. Today no attention is paid to the misconduct, unless the misconduct is generally detected and becomes involved somehow with the law. The rule is not to avoid doing wrong, but to avoid being caught and embarrassing your friends. That is a deterioration of the general moral sense.

I think what Pegler would like to stress, and when he likes to stress he does so, is the need for more manliness in today's American men. The word "virtue" comes from the Latin root "virs," meaning "man", and "manliness adds up to virtue. If you ever start looking back and around at the men who command your respect, you'll invariably discover that there were virtuous men. The idea is current however that manliness means the opposite of virtue and that virtue is a sort of effeminate thing, which it isn't. As Peg says, it is revolting to note the general idea today that married men overseas must always cheat on their wives and that all bachelors must always go chasing.

Only an inherently decent guy, as Pegler is, can be affronted by the moral laxity which is praised nowadays on all fronts. Fortunately, the armed forces are now taking steps to mix up a little morality with hygiene, but the best way to procure morality generally in the armed services is for the leaders in those services to set a good example of it. That hasn't been done too generally.

Doctor Kensey may be right in his statistics. I wouldn't know. But if he is right, it is a terrible commentary on the morals of present-day American man and I can understand why Peg sees a beautiful opportunity for either Notre Dame or old Siwash--- to start associating virtue again with manliness.

PRAYERS: (Ill) father of Bill (Cav) and Fred '41 Holsinger. Nine Special Intentions.