A conference-call conversation with Fr. Theodore Hesburgh, President of Notre Dame University, Wednesday, October 31, 1973. Those participating:

At University of Washington:

Dean Aldon Bell et al

At Seattle University:

Dr. William Guppy, Academic Vice-President et al

At Bellevue Community College:

Esther Gregory, Librarian, B.C.C.
Dr. Gordon Zahn, Dept. of Sociology, University of Massachusetts
Joel Connelly, P. I. Reporter (N. D. alumnus)
Dick Carbray, Course Coordinator, Dissent and Affirmation

At Western Washington State College:

Dr. William Sodt, Campus Christian Ministry
Prof. Richard Bertell, Dept. of Philosophy et al

Conversation with Father Hesburgh:

Richard Carbray: Father Hesburgh?

Father Hesburgh: Yes.

RJC: Greetings from the Northwest.

Fr. H.: Glad to talk to you.

RJC: I thought we'd let the campuses come in alphabetically and say howdy, identify themselves.

Fr. H.: O.K.

RJC: We here at BBC among others we've got Joel Connelly and Gordon Zahn, both of whom you know.

Fr. H.: Know the both of them.

RJC: And Esther Gregory, BBC librarian. Now how about Seattle U? Bill?

Dr Guppy: Bill Guppy, Seattle University.

RJC: Academic Vice President?

Dr Guppy: Yes

RJC: O.K., and how about the University of Washington?

Dean Bell: All right, this is Aldon Bell. I'm Director of Undergraduate Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences. There'll be others coming on as we move along.

Fr. H.: Fine. Well, delighted to talk to all of you.

RJC: O.K. There's one more, Fr. Hesburgh--Dr. Sodt up in Bellingham at Western Washington College.

Dr Sodt: We're up here at Campus Christian Ministry--have a large group of faculty and students. I'm Bill Sodt, one of the campus ministers.

Fr. H.: Good to talk to you Bill.

RJC: Well, now, Fr. Hesburgh, how much time can you spare for us?

Fr. H.: Well, how much do you want?

RJC: Well, if you could be with us 'till about 1:30 our time, that would be great, because people are going to be coming in after lunch.

Fr. H.: What time do you have now?

RJC: It is about five after twelve.

Fr. H.: Good. Well, I'll stay as long as I can. I don't know if I can stay that long, but I'll stay as long as I can.

RJC: O.K. Good enough. I thought that you could speak uninterrupted for maybe 15 or 20 minutes on dissent in academia, particularly the way it was handled at Notre Dame the past five years, and then accept questions from the various campuses. How would that be?

Fr. H.: O.K. I'd much rather have the dialogue than a monologue but let me just say a few words.

RJC: O.K.

Fr. H.: First of all, one would have to say about dissent in academia that it came up very suddenly on the students' side, and I think much of that was due to the concern of students about poverty in the midst of affluence, about the slow progress in achieving civil rights for the minority members of our communities--blacks, Chicanos, Indians, women--women are not a minority, of course, but they are treated like one at times; and also and primarily I guess, the war, the draft and the fact that while the young people of this country were very much against the war, they were the ones that had to go out and fight it and get killed and wounded in doing so. I think what probably got me some prominence on this whole discussion was the fact that I wrote a letter to our students meaning only to write them, and it was suddenly carried all around the country. The problem was that the people that carried it in the press only read the center part--they didn't read what came first and what came afterwards. What came first was a statement that there were a lot of things students should be upset about and I was glad they were, that I was upset about the same kinds of things, those things just mentioned, but that the way to attack those things in a university environment is in a university manner and that two great virtues of a university are rationality and civility, that first of all we shouldn't just be emotional about these things, we should have good reasons and make a good case; we should employ strong reasoning and logic to the situation and try to educate and demonstrate to others that the situation is not good. And the second thing, of course, is universities are characterized I think as places where a lot of people disagree with each other, but they do it with a good deal of friendship and civility, they do it in a civilized manner, not in the manner of the jungle where if you disagree, you bite. I felt all along that we were losing a sense of rationality and a sense of civility and I tried to stress that both of those were important.

Correlative to that whole situation, of course, especially the civility

part, was the fact that in a university all protest should be by nature non-violent, especially if you're protesting things like the war, which is an exercise in violence, probably the ultimate violence, and that you don't protest violence by being violent. In a way you negate your protest by doing that--I'll say more about that later. And anybody who knows this letter, all I was really saying is exercising one's right to protest is something I'd be very happy to support and I would support it, provided the protest was both civil and rational and non-violent, and that if people insisted on being just emotional and violent and uncivil to one another, well then, they were stepping on the rights of other people and I had as President to uphold the rights of both the people who were protesting and the people perhaps they were protesting against. But in any event, I would hope that what characterized all our actions were that we would respect the rights of ther people in exercising our own rights, especially the right to protest. Well, if people did not want to do that, they would be given a warning and let go, if they insisted on being either unrational or irrational or uncivil or violent or stepping on the rights of other people, in a way that would prevent them from going on with the educational process.

At the latter part of the letter I said that what really worried me most about what was happening was what I felt it would usher in--insofar as it was just emotional and violent and uncivil--I thought it would usher in a new wave of fascism. And I think that is precisely what we have been seeing in the whole Watergate incident, looked at most broadly, the methodology of it, the attitude of concern, and all the rest, that it was really an exercise in fascism. And I think it was to a large degree, reading between the lines of the testimony ushered in by pecple who reacted that way to something else. And that's why I regret very much that we were not more rational, more civil, and more non-violent.

Now let me say a word on non-violence. Very early on after writing this letter our students from every end of the spectrum from the Y.A.F. to the S.D.S. got together, and they told me they had a project that they were very concerned about and they said the one thing they would all agree on was that they would like to have some academic experience in non-violence. In other words, they felt that somehow as part of living and being educated in this period in history, the little part they knew at the very root of

what non-violence was about; it seemed to me like a fine idea, especially if we are to approach non-violence from the psychological, historical, even the biographical point of view, to see the result of a life of a Martin Luther King or a Mahatma Gandhi vis-a-vis the life of a Napoleon. I think that in fact was the kind of thing they had in mind, plus collecting some literature on non-violence. As a result of that we were able to get some money together and over the next two years; right in the middle of the student revolution we had at least 2000 students sign up and take a semester course on non-violence and there were several courses as well as lectures--I believe Gordon Zahn was in at one time--and we had a number of people in and a number of books and articles, etc., collected during that period. The result was that at what I would call the very height of the student revolution which was the invasion of Cambodia, that famous first week in May--at that point there was a very good dimension of students, maybe two or three thousand of them, who were convinced not only that non-violence was theoretically a good thing, but it was part of their student life-style and at that time when buildings were burning at Northwestern and at Michigan State on two sides of us--those were two schools--I could mention others--and while up here there were people on this campus who wanted to be violent and burn down the ROTC Building and things of that sort, it was really the students themselves and their long all-night discussion who came to the conclusion that non-violence was the route.

Perhaps one of the most interesting weeks of school during that period was the one of a lot of demonstrations--massive marches, 5 or 6 thousand people into the middle of town for a meeting there at the local park. But the whole thing was done in a completely non-violent manner, and I think the students get the credit for that, not us, because it was their planning and they were of this mind and the idea of being non-violent from the very beginning was their idea. Getting back to dissent in academia, I think academia would be a pretty dull place, if we did not dissent. As a matter of fact, on the Carnegie Commission for higher education on which I just finished spending six years, eight of us--all over the country--felt that one of the very important functions of the university was to be critical--first of itself, of course, and the whole educational process, but secondly to be critical of the society in which it lives, especially the quality of

life of that society, the values of that society, you might say the goals and priorities of that society, both locally and on the state and national and even international basis. I believe that the day that that sense of critical appraisal gets weak, is abandoned or vacillates, at that point we'll be in serious trouble as a community, because there are few groups in society that are given the things that we are given. First of all, the chance to really think and read and study life as we look around us at the various things worthwhile and useful. And there are very few people who have the leisure of two or three or four uninterrupted years in which to think and write and meditate and to come to some sense of what our society is, what it should be, and how we can move from one point to the other. And while it seems to me there may be a certain unreality at times to intellectual discourse on the matter, at the same time a university, by its very nature, should be critical of the process that characterizes its educational process, and as well the kinds of values that are represented all around us, in corresponding life and on every level. I would think, for example, our university, being a Catholic university, should be critical of the Church's role. While we are not the Church, we do belong to it, most of us, and we should be critical of the values that are reflected in the church today. I am putting all these things together--that we don't do this in any but a university way; in other words, first of all in a rational way. I think we're not just flailing out at society, but we're trying to heal society. We have compassion about society, and certainly compassion about people. We are not just critical in a negative sense in saying this is wrong and that is wrong, but we've got to have alternate solutions.

Putting all this together, I think the critical function of a university and life in a university--both on the part of students and faculty--is to make life vital and enjoyable and a lot of fun; meanwhile university professors have been characterized as people who think otherwise. I think there are, at least to my knowledge (and I've spent my whole life in a university)-there are few environments or places or milieus in which one can be as friendly and as accepted and as at home as a real member of the society and still differ quite fundamentally with other people in that society. I would take for example that while we're a Catholic university here, we have all sorts of different religions, different cultures, dif-

ferent points of view, different world views, if you will, within our body, and we get along great together. We enrich each other by taking each other seriously. I'd like to say one last thing--I think the university today or the college is one of the few places on earth where a young person can take his or her idealism seriously, where other adults will take the idealism of the young seriously. I think the worst one could say is that this would be a place where young people become apathetic, where the very opposite ought to be true; they ought to become critical in a good,positive,loving sense. At the same time, I would think it would be a kind of disaster if because of the kinds of present trauma we are going through in our own national and international life, young people would become cynical. While I've seen some older people that are cynical, and they are generally not very attractive, and their life almost stops at that point when they become cynical because they don't produce or build, and they can sit back and criticize in a negative sense. I would think it would be a horrible thing to think of young people being cynical because if anything the present conditions we live in both politically and economically and socially should spur us on, if anything, to take an even more positive, more generous, more activist view of the world, especially insofar as we can make the world different, and all of us can. That I think is the great challenge to students in a university today, and faculties as well. That I think is positively what I'd like to say on the subject, and I guess I have used up my time.

RJC: Not at all. Can you hear me, Father?

Fr. H.: Yes, I hear you fine.

RJC: O.K., I thought we'd start with the campus that is furthest away from you and from us here in Seattle, namely the one up in Bellingham. But before we put somebody from up there on the conference call, I wanted to make a request of the University of Washington. Kenneth MacDonald, who for ten years was chairman of the Board Against Discrimination in the State of Washington, is going to try very hard to put in an appearance with Dean Bell there. So I would appreciate being alerted when he comes, so at some point you and he can communicate. But Bill Sodt up in Bellingham, do you want to come abroad with a question?

Dr. Sodt: Dick, we're going to have to pass up here right now. We'd like to ask

Fr. Hesburgh to talk a little louder. We can hear you very well, but we can't hear him.

RJC: Oh, O.K. Did you hear that, Father?

Fr. H.: I do.

RJC: They're having a little trouble up in Bellingham hearing you. How about the University of Washington. Aldon, do you have a question?

Dean Bell: Yes. I'd like to ask something about the situation at the moment. Obviously, most of us saw dissent and the response to dissent over the past five, six, seven, years, regarding rather volatile issues--there were strong feelings. I'm wondering--obviously we've moved into a rather different era--what really bothers me and I'm not quite sure how to get at this sort of a question I'm afraid, is that the work against dissent, the dissenters--that is, the weeding out of dissenters--is rather a subtle thing now. There are other ways, both for administrators, fellow faculty and indeed students, peers all along the way, to dispose of awkward people, not over an issue like Vietnam but over a variety of other ways. I'm very troubled about this. It seems to me that in a way already indicates an element of cynicism within universities and colleges. I don't know--it's just an observation. I'm wondering whether you'd like to comment. Maybe others whould like to comment.

Fr. H.: Yes. I'll just put in my two cents worth. I think the dissenters ought to be welcome in a university milieu because that's what the university milieu is about. There are some people, of course, who are professional dissenters, they are just congenitally against anything that comes up, and I think that's not what I'm talking about. What I am saying is that anyone who as a matter of conscience or as a matter of intelligent critique feels he must speak up, even unpopularly, the only one in chorus singing out of tune, if you will, I think that should be taken seriously in a university community and that such a person ought to be cherished, because there's no question about it--it takes a good deal of courage to be the one person in the room who is going to disagree, but not just captiously, but because he or she has a matter of conscience or a matter of serious concern intellectually about a problem or a proposition. And I think at times the worst thing that happens in a university is peer pressure, whether it be from faculty peers or student papers, to the extent that

people have a feeling that they become pariahs by the fact that they don't agree with everybody and that there is a certain conventional wisdom in the university they have to go along with. I don't think there is that conventional wisdom, nor should there be.

Dean Bell: I don't think there is--I just feel that in the last year to year and and a half there has been something of a demand, at least I would say among the majority of faculty, for some kind of conventional wisdom. Maybe it is the insecurity as part of an aftermath of what's happened earlier.

Fr. H.: I suspect we're in a slough period here where people want a little peace and quite, a little less adrenalin running.

RJC: Bill Guppy, do you have any questions there at Seattle University at the moment.

Dr. Guppy: Yes, I do, Dick.

Fr. H.: A little louder, Bill.

Dr. Guppy: Can you hear me now?

Fr. H.: Yes, I hear you now.

Dr. Guppy: Very good. You spoke about this need of a university to be critical. I just wondered--would you expect any campus protest over the recent actions of President Nixon? I'm thinking, for example, that the AFL-CIO and Seattle U. have taken a position with regard to them, but I haven't heard of any national or even regional groups sending petitions to Washington, that is, responding as a youth organization or student group. Do you expect that there would be any protest of students on this?

Fr. H.: Yes, I would expect, Bill, that there should be some, and we had some here as a matter of fact. I know that our student group did meet on this and they had a big discussion and got out a paper, which they sent to our local senators and congressmen, as representative of the feeling of students, as far as they could identify it. I told them I thought that was a good thing to do.

Dr. Guppy: I wonder if we had a similar response among the schools that are engaged in this hook-up here? I'd be interested if there were any such things at the University of Washington or Bellingham or Bellevue Community College.

RJC: Anyone want to respond to that? I haven't heard of anything on this

side of the lake. Just a minute--here is one of the librarians at Bellevue who might want to comment on that.

Esther Gregory: There is a rally of types planned at the University of Washington HUB. This was told to me, but I think it's on the 6th of November. We can check around on that a little later--something is being done.

Dean Bell: Yes--this is Aldon Bell. There's been no mass meeting but there has been a good deal of student support for the ACLU on campus. The student newspaper has run an editorial, the same one that has appeared in several student papers from the Amherst student paper, and there has been a good deal--but it's not been mass or quite as obvious, but it's definitely there, and a lot of students have written letters--just a phenomenal number, if our local congressman can be believed, and I feel he probably is in this case--he's a Republican and he is very aware of that kind of response. A lot of students have written, have taken the time out to write here.

RJC: Our visiting fireman from the University of Massachusetts, Prof. Gordon Zahn of Sociology, would like to say something on this point. Just a minute.

Prof. Zahn: I can't speak as to whether there is anything going on in Massachusetts because I've been away since the real thing broke, but I did spend a few days in San Francisco and I was amazed by--there did seem to be a real mass meeting out at Berkeley that was widely reported in the San Francisco press and on the TV. They had big-name speakers and it was a clear Impeach Nixon rally that they had, and they had several thousand people at it.

RJC: Any other comments on that particular subject of apparent, not apathy, student apathy but not the same measure of concern that seemed to seize the student in the Vietnam days? Anybody else want to comment on that? Well, here's Joel Connelly who has co-authored a biography of Fr. Hesburgh and would like to weigh in at this point.

Joel Connelly: Good afternoon. I wanted to ask simply what effect generally the revelations of this year have had on your students and on you. The general feeling seems to be that out here among some people that I speak to that generally the idealism etc. that's often demonstrated by people in the college years, that you have in fact spoken of, has been somewhat sapped

over the last couple of years by the revelations of the lack of underlying philosophy of the people who are in governing positions in the country, and also lack of personal ethics and this sort of thing. And in fact that a very cynical philosophy toward political life and toward politics has developed among young people as a result of the example being set by those who are in a position to exercise physical and moral leadership in this country. Have you noticed any such sapping of idealism on your campus and the sapping of the engergy toward government and the desire to change it, etc., that we saw, say, at Notre Dame in the late 1960's?

Fr. H.: Joel, I think it's an ever-present temptation, and I've been trying to do all I can to oppose it, and to say that we ought to be doing the very opposite, that at a time of great moral crisis we need a few prophets around and we need a few people who will stand up and be counted for what is the life and vitality, and especially the quality of life in the country. And I think that it gets fairly well received, because the youngsters will then say "What can we do?" and I said "You can at least make a resolution that while you're getting prepared you're just not getting prepared to get out and get a very powerful job or make a million dollars. You ought also to say, "Some part of my life is going to go to making this country a little more committed to the kind of values it began with." And I think we tend to get distracted by the sensational part of this and to forget that there are other very key fundamental tendencies in the government today which we must be even more concerned with, because in a sense they go deeper and they divert the quality of life and a lot more. For example, I think that there's a real cooling-off of the kind of fervor and energy and effort that went into the achievement of equality of opportunity for all Americans during the 60's. I think we made more progress before that, and I don't think any civilized country that I know of made such an enormous leap forward in the 60's. And in social progress the tendency I think is to press the peak and then drift into a valley and I think we've seen that drifting into the valley during the past few years and somehow we all have to be concerned about that and especially as it is manifested in a governmental way by the dropping of the money for the poverty program or the elimination of the poverty program, the kind of disavowing of the Peach Corps, which was a very idealistic, almost symbolic expression of American young people's dealism and generosity. I think the medical

programs are under fire. I think basic research which is terribly important in universities, the way we've made our great discoveries, is being dropped for research for very pragmatic short-term goals. I think there are a whole spate of not just so much as doing something as not doing something, or ceasing to do something that has characterised the general feeling around Washington in recent years, and I think that's the kind of thing we must be terribly concerned about. One sees it on the world scene when you look at the enormous concern for getting along with China and Russia which I am all in favor of--I think it's a wonderful thing to get detente on that level. Because when the elephants are fighting, all the smaller elements of life get trampled underneath them, and certainly Vietnam was really a good example of that--it was really a fight between China, Russia, and the United States, but it was the poor Vietnamese that got it in the neck, and us to some extent so far as we were there physically whereas other's weren't. But let me say that if you look at the whole area of overseas development and foreign aid, we said we would give at least seven tenths of one percent of our GNP to that, we're now giving three tenths of one percent. The amount of altruistic help we're willing to give goes downhill every day. We have a terrible time getting a new foreign assistance bill through Congress, and everybody says "Forget about that--we have troubles at home." And so forth and so on--it would just seem to me that if you take great problems of the world like, for example, food which is a real crisis, every bit as large as the energy crisis--I won't go into detail, but I could--and we're spending 70 billion this year for research and development of one kind or another but the bulk of it going into either military or security, if you will, or the other part of it is going into making a bigger profit on this or that. What we're spending for food research at a time when it's a world-wide crisis is .001 or 1/1000 of one percent of that research budget. Whereas I think more altruistic people like say Rockefeller or the Ford Foundation have proved that by spending a few million dollars we can triple, quadruple the production of rice or of wheat or of all the food grains in the world and find all kinds of new means of springing forth in a green revolution. Well, with all this kind of lack of concern for what I think are the humanitarian or the interests of suffering humanity or the concern for the whole southern part of space ship earth, if you will, where there are two billion people

trying to live on less than $100 a year, it's that kind of concern abroad and at home that bothers me and I think that to the extent that that becomes symptomatic of our society, it puts us in even a worse position than the fact that we have people in government who are dishonest or unjust or whatever.

RJC: Father Hesburgh, I think your biographer wants to come aboard again.

Fr. H.: O.K.

Joel Connelly: Quit using that term, Dick. A quick follow-up question on that--even though the answer won't be too brief. When he was campaigning for the Democratic presidential nomination, one of my favorite politicians, Senator McCarthy, said that one of the underlying causes of the problems of the Nixon administration is that you have in fact ruling us a government that does not have an underlying philosophy and does not have a concrete affirmative program of action--things that it wants to do--and that hence policies are made simply on the ethics of the immediate situation and with the overriding goal of the preservation of that administration. I'd like to know whether you generally agree with the assessment that McCarthy has given of the Nixon Administration, whether you see any philosophy governing us at the moment, and whether you see any concrete, affirmative or any affirmative program of action coming from the government whatsoever, in some of the areas you've discussed?

Fr. H.: No, I would agree perfectly with that analysis of McCarthy, and I think it is still true today. I give you one example which perhaps would explain it as well as any--when the O.E.O. got in trouble and it was in some administrative trouble because they'd never had an O.E.O. before--it was the first time through the gate--and it was an effort to try to get poor people to do some administering of their own problems rather than to have other people tell them what they should have and want. It was an effort to do something about the problem where the problem was--in the ghetto or slum or whatever, and when they got in trouble, the only answer was, "This is an inefficient operation--cut it out." But if something like Penn Central gets in trouble--I could mention two or three other companies but some of them are a little close to home and I won't--then the immediate reaction was, "We've got to help them out." And they were the ones that should have known about administration because almost by definition they were

bodies that were supposed to be skilled in administration, large corporations.

RJC: Does Seattle U. or the University of Washington want to be heard from at this point?

Dean Bell: Well, this touches a little bit on what I meant to be asking about universities a moment ago, exactly the kind of (this is Aldon Bell at the University of Washington)--exactly what Joel is saying, quoting McCarthy, about the national administration. I must say that same sort of approach at universities has begun to creep about--I think the personal corruption--at least I don't think we have that--has begun to creep into university administration as well. That's exactly what I was troubled about a moment ago.

Fr. H.: Would you put it in terms of values?

Dean Bell: Or lack of.

Fr. H.: Or lack of--that is what bothers me too.

Dean Bell: Precisely--lack of. I can't see the values or long-range attempts--exactly what Joel was saying. That's exactly what I'm troubled by.

Fr. H.: I get the impression again, being with the Carnegie Commission for so long, and these were a quite distinguished group of persons--we always after long hours of discussion on one or another pragmatic point of education--how are you going to finance it, you know, how are you going to arrange the curriculum or what are you going to do about this or that, or the time schedule--we finally always got down to a point of "What is the value to be preserved or to be enhanced in this particular decision?" And it's at that point that I find a great weakness in the whole educational establishment today, that there really isn't the kind of concern about values as there is about money, or as there is about prestige or there is about taking chances, if you will, which I think we have to do from time to time. I think it creeps down into the students, I hate to say, but we did get rid of in loco parentis, and that was probably a good thing to do, because after all if you can vote at 18, you ought to be able to start developing very serious life values at 18--how you want to live, what things, what values you want to live for. But that is one thing--to get rid of in loco parentis--it's another thing to say you don't care what

happens to a student on a campus--whether he is stoned half the time or whether he's not getting to class, or really not learning anything or whether he is emotionally upset or whether he has real problems but nobody to talk to about them, nobody that really cares. I was at a point a year ago when someone said to me "If you could wave a wand have one thing true of your campus, what would you have it be?" and I said "Very quickly I can answer that. I would like it to be said that this campus is an academic community in which people care about each other, where the young care about the old and vice versa, and where people always have someone they can talk to or bring a problem to, where you don't get in trouble and everybody says "Hom hum--that's his problem, or her problem,' but I would like it to be a place where from the guy at the front gate up to the President's office, everybody cares, you don't just push people around, brush them off, or put numbers on them, but you really care what happens." A student said to me, "It is none of your business what I do on the weekend." I said, "It certainly may not be my business, but if I were to tell you I don't care what you are doing on your own time and I don't care what effect that is having on your life and your development as a human being, and I don't care what that reflects in regard to your attitudes toward other people, if I didn't care about any of these things, I don't think I ought to be where I am. Because I have to care about everybody here.

RJC: Fr. Hesburgh, I'd like to share with you and the other campuses a couple of sentences from a book that was put into my hands yesterday, written by a man much admired in the Northwest, namely Senator Ernest Gruening, 86 years young, and you are mentioned on page 536 and I wanted to read this mention.

Fr. H.: I hope it's good.

RJC: It reads: "After the November 1972 landslide hope was expressed in various editorial comments in newspapers that had opposed Nixon's reelection that with no more electoral battles to wage, with the opportunity to rectify some of his past questionable acts, he would move to diminish discord, bring our people together, to end his public career nobly, and now write a shining page in history. Most Americans shared that hope and wished President Nixon well for such prospect. But that hope was soon shattered. President Nixon's first move after victory was to demand the

resignation of Fr. Theodore Martin Hesburgh as chairman of the Commission on Civil Rights, to which he had been appointed by President Eisenhower fifteen years earlier when the Commission was created. This distinguished educator, for twenty years President of the University of Notre Dame, and a Director of the Chase Manhattan Bank (and I wasn't aware of that questionable side of your activities, Fr. Hesburgh, but anyway, he goes on) had been unswerving in his stand for equal treatment and fair play regardless of race or color. Firing Fr. Hesburgh following Nixon's mistaken support of Harold Carswell would but lead to the depressing conclusion that the American people had placed a racist in the presidency." Now would like to comment on that situation just about a year ago, as you left the Civil Right Commission?

Fr. H.: If there's any interest in it, I would--it's a little personal, but if you'll excuse the personal reference, I'd be happy to comment on it.

RJC: Right.

Fr. H.: I felt pretty much as Senator Gruening did when this was over, because I felt here was a new chance for a new page and to really recover what I thought was a lack of momentum in the whole area of equality of opportunity. And I thought perhaps I was a fly in the ointment, because I had been obviously bugging the administration pretty hard about their own lack of concern. We had done a six-months internal study over two years' time, four complete studies as thick as thick as the New York telephone book, which prove without any question of doubt that there wasn't a single of the 40 large agencies of government in Washington that could be given more than a mark of poor on their performance on equality of opportunity as it exists in that agency, be it justice, or housing, or HEW, or whatever. As a result of that, I didn't have many friends around Washington and I thought, well, I'd been around here on the scene for fifteen years. It might be a good idea to get out of the middle of things here and let some new fresh face with maybe more imagination and creativity here--we had finished up the revolution of the 60's, and needed a new one in the 70's. And so I approached a very good friend of mine in the White House whom I had been dealing with off and on and who know the situation very well, and I said, "Why don't I go in to see the President and tell him I am perfectly willing to resign and get off the team, but under the understanding that he will get enthusiastic about equality of opportunity and that he will

then hopefully start pushing things along in a way that they haven't been pushed during the first four years, show some real concern for the minorities in this country and their plight, show some new and constructive programs for the poor, not just in our country but in the world, and I think it would be a perfectly psychological thing for me to get out of his hair and to have him put someone in here who would be strong, hopefully, and courageous and imaginative and creative and bring in new ideas. And this would be a great thing for him--it would make him a great President. He could then do on the domestic scene the kind of imaginative things he is doing on the international scene. And, well, the advice I got from my friend was, "Forget it." A few days later there was a phone call from a secretary of an assistant of an assistant of an assistant of Mr. Ehrlichman, about four times removed, just saying that I should get my resignation in by 6:00 o'clock that night. And this lady called up a staff director for the Commission who was working for me--didn't even call me, just called the staff director--and told him to tell me that my resignation should be in that night by 6 o'clock. I told him I would get it in when I got back home--it would be a few days later.

RJC: So that's the way it was?

Fr. H.: That's the way it was.

RJC: I presume you and Archibald Cox have formed an "I was fired by the President Club?"

Fr. H.: We have an alumni association.

RJC: Well, now, Fr. Hesburgh, Prof. Zahn of the University of Massachusetts wants to put another question at this juncture.

Fr. H.: Fine.

Prof. Zahn: I think this relates back earlier to your discussion of academia, as a place where dissent occurs with this exchange of opinions, sometimes controversial opinions. And I'm wondering if maybe we aren't at a position with Watergate, with the end of Vietnam, if you can call it that, where something more definite is possible and probably necessary, whether this might not be a good time for a general assessment to discover how things did get as bad as they are, and more important, something like a university self-study of values to find out to what extent they may have contributed either by omission or commission to this state that we are in. Now I have

my own, as you well know, bete noire on this type of thing in connection with the ROTC programs on college campuses, for example, which I intend to turn to again rather shortly. It troubled me intensely to think that some of those pilots who conducted the bombings at Christmas time may have gotten a start in their military career at Notre Dame or Catholic U. or some place like this under the ROTC program.

Fr. H.: Well, let me say two things about that--not specifically on ROTC but on your first proposition. It seems to me that one has to be concerned about the fact that all of these people involved in Watergate are all products of our universities. I don't know a single one, off hand, that isn't a product of one of our universities. The second thing I'd like to say is that if you read Halbertstam's book on the Best and the Brightest, it really says something very important. It says that you can put together a group of the best educated, brightest people in the world, but if they don't have a human concern or a concern for the total moral dimension of life, of humanity, of humanity's concern, then you get into this terrible box where the very brightest people get us into the worst box we've ever been in from a national, moral point of view, if you will--the Vietnam thing and all the sequelae of that which I think are not unrelated to Watergate. Well, at that point I quite agree with you. We've just finished a year and a half look at the priorities of the university here, and I think that every university has to establish its own identity in this matter, and its own set of values, and its own concerns, and I think that's terribly important and I think one has to look at--there are no sacred cows in a university--one has to look at every aspect of university life, includin ROTC, and come up with some good opinions. They may differ, but in any event one can at least say this is an institutional concern at this point and we are going to do this or that.

Prof. Zahn: I think that's excellent but I was wondering--might it not be possible at this particular juncture to, you know, have some of our major universities begin like a series of convocations or consultations <u>publicly</u> to explore this, just within the range of Notre Dame or within even our own university which is too new, I think probably, to have anything like this. It certainly serves a purpose, but I think something now should--sort of a public purging of where we are, might be helpful.

Fr. H.: Yes, it could well be. We have never been very successful, I must say, in that king of thing. What I try to do in this--we had an across-the-board group on the priorities committee. We had students on it, we had faculty, of course, we had a few administrators, we had alumni, we had people who were just interested in the university, and then we had several task forces. We have a final report coming out--now that report will be distributed to 80,000 people, all the people that get our Notre Dame publication--it's out quarterly--it will carry the whole report and anyone that wishes can have the task force report. And then we go on from there just looking at the total university with no holds barred, and now I'm asking those 80,000 to come together with whatever positive suggestions they have. This will be worked through the various bodies of the community that legislate--like our Academic Council, Board of Trustees, etc. I find that--I guess I'd have to say--I do favor public discussion of these matters, but I've never been able to find a very good way of doing it. It is just awfully hard to have a discussion with 10,000 people.

RJC: Fr. Hesburgh, I'd like to ask you at this juncture, since we have raised the question of academic values--and they may well differ from campus to campus. But you have a course, or did have and I hope you still have a course on non-violence that two good friends of mine taught--Jim Douglass and Basil O'Leary.

.....

(RJC At this point "sinister forces" caused a 9-minute gap in our tape. However, to capsule what I remember of Fr. Hesburgh's reply to the question, he said that he had to go out and raise the initial $100,000 to fund the course, and that it was duly offered to students at Notre Dame for credit. Now, as I understand him, there is a need to raise more funds if the course is to be offered on a continuous semester-to-semester basis.)

.....to set up an urban institute in the University, and put one of our best people from the law school in charge of it, who has been working with O.E.O. in Washington for two years and knew the ropes...
--That I think has been a good force in this community. But especially it has done something which I think you are pointing out which I agree

with, that it is terribly hard for young people at least to see everything simply in a theoretical context. I think they have to go out and get their fingers into the community so to speak. They have to in a sense practice what they preach. They have to find some outlets for concern and for putting into practice the kinds of high principles we talk about. Now we are trying to do that at the international level as well. We are trying now desperately to get some money together and we have the organization. Wherein a number of our students drop out for a year and spend a productive year. In other words, have a definite job waiting for them somewhere in the third world, Latin America, Africa or Asia where we can put them into a concrete situation where there is some job they can do, they can handle, they can contribute to this job, and we feel that this is part of their educational context. We are perfectly willing to give them credit for it. Apart from the credit, we think it will add a dimension of reality to their education. They will come back not just refreshed and tired at the same time, but also inspired to learn more, to be able to do more, because the one thing you find when you get into these situations is that they are not a place for happy amateurs. They are places where you really have to be able to analyze and prescribe solutions.

RJC: Father, I would like Bill Guppy to enlighten the other campuses about the way Seattle University makes some of its facilities available to kids in the Central Area--their gym, their pool, they supply instruction, etc. Bill, could you do that?

Dr. Guppy: Well, you have named some of the more important efforts, but we also have an urban affairs committee. We are offering courses in continuing education to various occupational groups. What we do is sort of sound out what the educational needs are and attempt to put together a program, for example, in alcohol studies or drug addiction, or rehabilitation, and to serve according to our mission in a primarily educational way. We haven't done the sort of things that Fr. Hesburgh says Notre Dame has in their relationship to the Small Business Administration.

RJC: Father, did you hear that?

Fr. H.: I did, and I want to put in one little plug for students here. Last Sunday night I met with a group of students who had been out this summer working in these very kinds of situations overseas that I mentioned. Some of them working in hospitals in the Carribean that served a large black

population in St. Lucia where the hospital is very underdeveloped and needs a lot of help. Some in other countries in Latin America. Well, we had a mass Sunday night and I sat around talking with them, and I found a very nice thing on their part. They said that this was a great break for us to be able to do this and most of the students don't really realize or know that it is possible. You scramble around and find a place and scrounge up a little money. As soon as we finished our little private session with maybe 40 of these youngsters, they then had set up a meeting with the whole residence hall where this was taking place, one of our larger ones. So there were about two or three hundred students who came in right after that in the lobby where we have our meeting place, and we went on for over two hours, and I must say that practically all of their questions reflected at least a concern about first understanding what the problem is and then doing something about it. Just this very noon I had lunch with about 30 or 40 students over at one of the houses near the campus where they congregate, and again their questions were all about this kind of concern and I thought, this gives you heart. One of the girls asked after the session Sunday night, "How can you keep going when things look so black?" And I said, "That is precisely the time you have to keep going, but one big reason I can keep going is seeing you and seeing your concern and seeing the fact that you really do want to do something about it, and as long as that spirit is in the student body, I am not going to worry about it and I am not going to stop going.

RJC: I think I can agree with our friend Morris up at Western at Bellingham, and with Ben Franklin that "better well done than well said." But I think you will have to do both. You will have to explore the problem theoretically and then get around to implementing it in an intelligent active way. But before I put Joel back on, or anyone else for that matter--Aldon, I presume you are still there--there are a couple of students that are writing term papers on a matter I think you raised, I think it was at Harvard this summer. You have made the suggestion, and I think a rather interesting one that the people that use passports and visas have the option of not only having their own passports but some kind of an international passport that they would acquire through some international agency, and these students have insisted that I put that question to you, so you in effect are helping them write their term papers.

Fr.H: Well, I would be happy to send them the talk at Harvard--which was at their commencement this year--but let me say very briefly what I had in mind. It seems to me that the one great reality that comes through the world today following the space age and a trip to the moon, is not that we know more about the moon, but that we have seen the earth from afar. And we have seen it as it really is, a small space ship with limited resources and a limited population aboard. And that we have somehow to make it together. And the sad situation is that if you could shrink this world just to be able to think about it aslittle more easily as being five people aboard the space ship Earth, and that one of those people represents us and the western world mainly, who are white and Christian and wealthy, affluent and technologically advanced and developed. That that one person on the space craft that represents us has the use of 80% of the total life resources on this earth. And the other four guys or gals or the other four members of the crew, if you will, have to split the 20% that is left. They get 5% apiece, and that wounds rather piggish, but the worse thing is the 80% is growing to 90% and their 20% is shrinking to 10%, and this has actually happened--not my dreams or my nightmare.

Now what I said is that the one thing we should learn from that view of the earth afar, and from an analysis of the kind of world we are living in, the kind of unitary small craft in space which it really is, we have to realize that we are very interdependent today. The day that one can be a pig and the rest have to starve to death is gone. Our problem is overweight, and their problem is getting enough food to keep body and soul together. And so what I would say is that we've got to find all kinds of ways of illustrating this interdependence on each other, and our concern for each other, and the one thing that militates against that even in the Third World is the terrible growth of nationalism. You just look out for yourself and let everybody else make out as best they can, and you can't get any kind of a unified compassionate world that way. Now I don't think you are going to obliterate nationalism over night. I mean, we are all proud to be Americans, I assume, and the French are very proud to be French, etc. But what I said is that everybody in the world, especially the young people who are going to be remaking the world, should have a chance of dual citizenship, one

to be a citizen of their own country where they were born, which I assume most people enjoy being, but in addition to that, to be a citizen of the world. And to be a citizen of the world, you should have to demonstrate in some what that you have done or are doing something for the good of the world, not just for the good of your own country. That could take a variety of forms depending on the capabilities a person had available to him. Even just in some cases, trying to educate our own people to have more concern for the rest of the world, the other members aboard this space craft who have so little. Now on a positive side, I said if a person could make that profession that they believe everyone has dignity and everyone should have an equal chance to develop himself or herself, that one could apply for this, to give some evidence of his interest or her interest in doing something about it in the world at large in the years ahead, and then in addition to this, that person should on receiving this passport, if you will, of world citizenship, be able to move freely anywhere in the world as a kind of symbolic thing that he belongs everywhere, he is accepted everywhere, and that it would be a proud thing to arrive in a country and hand in a world passport rather than just an American passport requiring visas and all kinds of international conventions. It was something to symbolize, something much deeper of course, is what I was trying to get at.

RJC: Well, Father, if you would be good enough to send that address you have at Harvard to my home address (your secretary has it) I will in turn pass it on to the two students writing papers on that, and I am sure I can thank you ahead of time from them. They will be most appreciative.

Fr.H: Glad to do it.

RJC: Now Aldon Bell, are you still there--do you have anything on your mind at the moment?

Dean Bell: I don't think so. How about Western? We are doing fine and listening here, Dick.

RJC: Father Hesburgh, Joel wants to come back on again...

Joel Connelly: Father, you very clearly enunciated in numerous speeches in the past and in your opening remarks here to us today what you feel the values of the university should be. You have talked about rational and civil discourse and caring for each other, of the value of dissent and how dissent should be tolerated. I would like to ask

tional and civil discourse and caring for each other, of the value of dissent and how dissent should be tolerated. I would like to ask you really whether you think that society as a whole and the country as a whole should have essentially these same values, first particularly in terms of tolerance of and appreciation of dissent, and secondly, whether you feel that society as a whole, or at least the United States, is losing these values and specifically is getting a little less civil and a little less tolerant of dissent and specifically more inclined to persecute either subtly or openly the dissenter.

Fr.H: I would have to say yes to both of those questions, Joel. I'd say a university par excellence should have this attitude. I think it is not just important for a university, but it is also important in a democracy, because presumably everybody in a democracy is important and everybody's point of view is important, and everybody's concern is important. I would have to say that there is a tendency in our kind of democracy, I think largely because we have such highly developed communications, to try to homogenize everybody and to say that everybody has to agree on everything, and that if you disagree you become a kind of bete noire and people scorn you, and I think that is a very unhealthy thing in a democracy, because a democracy is a kind of institution that must constantly revitalize itself by the actions of its members. And those who govern a democracy must somehow be in tune with what the people they govern want to do, and that it is not enough to say--as someone said recently--I got a great mandate and I still have one. You have to everyday create your mandate by creating confidence and acceptance of your program by the people who are being governed. I would say in a university there's no department head, there's no dean, there's no president who can do his job unless he has a reasonable respect and confidence on the part of those who are concerned by what he is doing--by his job. And that is something you earn each day. I think politicians tend to think, "Well, I got that election won, now I've got my mandate, I'll go out and do what I want to do--I don't have to pay attention to public concern or public interest or whatever." I think one has to be terribly concerned about this in a democracy.

Joel Connelly: I'd like to follow up on that very briefly, namely whether you think that it is a healthy thing that we are developing or that we would develop

a system whereby people will perhaps emulate the example of Elliot Richardson in resigning where they have policy disagreements with the government, rather than remaining and acquiescing to policies with which they cannot abide; and secondly, whether you think that we should move to a position where we would be a little more willing in this country to think the unthinkable, say, about removing people from public office when they claim to have a mandate and in fact they are abusing that mandate and are in fact displaying an unwillingness to tolerate the revitalization and the change in society?

Fr.H; Yes, on the first one. I think that what Richardson did was a good thing, and I think in a very real sense those tapes would not have been handed over without him having done what he did. I would say one shouldn't be captious about this; one should not have such a short fuse that the first disagreement makes him run for the wings. I think you have to stay in there and fight up to a point, but it seems to me you get to a point where it becomes obvious that that is where you stand. Martin Luther said, "Here I stand, I can go no further." I think there comes a time in everybody's life where you are pushed beyond the point where you are just going to take it lying down. I think in a large organization like the government there is bound to be disagreement. And the man in charge has to give the leadership and has to have a certain amount of support from the people he is working with, whether he agrees with them or not. I think there is some function--I have always felt as chairman of the Civil Rights Commission that we were specifically organized to criticize--that was our job, to publicize inequities, to get something done about them. We reported to both the president and the Congress. In a sense, if you weren't critical you weren't doing your job. But that was a special kind of independent agency, so-called. But I would think in a case of a man like Mr. Richardson, he served in a variety of functions--Undersecretary of State, Secretary of HEW, Secretary of Defense, Attorney General--I think the Attorney-General job was the one he probably felt most companiate in, because he is a lawyer and that is the kind of job he'd been doing in state government before. For example, he was responsible for passing a law authorizing bussing in the State of Massachusetts, and yet when the president made a big phoney issue out of bussing to get the votes of people--he got

the votes of people by fanning their prejudices and fears--Elliot Richardson went out to San Clemente, talked to the president, gave a press conference where he attacked bussing. I think I would have to say he certainly did not agree with it, but he went along at that point. I had to make a stand on that--I don't think he judged that he did. So w when it really came to the crunch in his own matter as Attorney-General, on a matter of justice, a matter of an agreement he had with the Senate (his whole approval as Attorney-General and confirmation by the Senate had hinged on that agreement)--when he came to that point and had to go back on it, I think he said, "I can go no further--here I stand." And I think at that point one honest man standing up and Bill Ruckelshaus coming right behind him and standing up--I think those were the two things that really turned the crisis around and made it a crisis of conscience and really showed the president he had to give up the tapes--he had no alternative.

So I think there are times when dissent will lead you to temporarily either give up your position or do something fairly drastic because it is a question of conscience and courage. I don't think one should do that arbitrarily or captiously or just to make a show. I don't believe in constantly threatening to quit just because you disagree with the man you are working for. On the other hand, in the society at large I think there is a certain cleansing action, there's a certain example given there that goes back as far as Mr. Thoreau going to jail because he wouldn't pay his taxes because he didn't want that money used to return runaway slaves, or Mahatma Ghandi going to jail because he believed his people should be free, or Martin Luther King doing the same thing in this country--those are all great symbolic acts that I think educated the country in a way that words could never have educated.

RJC: Father, I think I hear a voice from Outerspace. Did I hear somebody a little while ago that wanted to come in?

Dr. Guppy: Yes, this is Bill Guppy at Seattle, U. It seems to me that one of the recent remarks of Fr. Hesburgh had to relate to one of the items contained in the letter that was sent by Dick Carbray to Fr. Hesburgh on July 19, namely the problem of commending authority rather than imposing authority. It seems to me we have a situation that is basic now where we have imposing authority--the president certainly on university campuses--in the sharing of governance the university

campuses--in the sharing of governance the university administrator must always be concerned about whom he has consulted and whom he has informed, and it seems to me that there is a real problem here, because given the times he must operate very rapidly in response to situations, and that does not lend itself to the consultation process, that commending authority would have to rely upon. Perhaps Fr. Hesburgh would like to comment on that.

Fr.H: I would be happy to. I think there is a real dilemma there, Bill. I would think, for example, that when you are in the middle of a Mid-east crisis the President has to have enough flexibility to negotiate and people have to have enough confidence to let him negotiate and when the thing is over, if he's done it badly, you are probably going to have a very tough discussion about it and he will lose confidence, and if he loses confidence, the next time around it will be harder to act that way. On the other hand, I think that the normal, routine thing you should probably have a good deal of consultation about because the more people that are involved in a decision in a good sense--responsible people who are going to have to carry it out--the more enthusiastic they will be about carrying it out. It is a question of the democratic process operating on various levels of urgency. As I mentioned earlier, if I had gone to the faculty on setting up a course on non-violence, we would have been discussing it yet, and yet on the other hand, there is no question about it, it was against the spirit of things to just say, here is the money for it--let's get going, let's do it--I asked the academic vice-president to get it moving. I don't think you do that sort of thing every day in the week. You don't do it every year in the calendar. But there are times when there is a certain urgency that requires action and I think that is also a part of administration--to be able to tell the difference between that and a kind of dictatorial action that would just turn people off.

RJC: Any other campuses to be heard from?

Dr. Sodt: Dick, this is Bellingham. Dr. Dick Bertell from our Philosophy Department at Western.

RJC: Can you hear him, Father?

Dr. Bertell: Hello, Fr. Hesburgh. This is Dick Bertell. I'm a philosopher here at Western. It struck me in some of the earlier questions--you were saying that

at Western. It struck me in some of the earlier questions--you were saying that there was a lack of ideals or a lack of plan or purpose that lead to some of these things...what struck me about Watergate is that it is a distorted kind of idealism--the idea of anything can be done for my country, the sort of thing we get in popular form from James Bond and from Mission Impossible, and so forth,--it is in the national interest, so we can go ahead and do it. Now it seems to me we sometimes have to look at ourselves in this light too, and ask ourselves if we are falling into the trap with regard to our own enthusiasms or cliches or something that we are letting ourselves go over the line of what is morally permissible in achieving some end just because it is so good and so urgent and so forth.

Fr.H: I think you are quite right, and again, I think it is one of the nuances that we probably slipped over in that. I think Joel asked the original question on that. It did strike me that there was not a kind of consistent and even persistent policy of what were the top priorities of this country except possibly some of the priorities that probably were not or shouldn't be the top priorities. But again, that kind of attitude is what came through in the Watergate thing I believe...that this was a good cause and therefore you could do anything to achieve it. Well, that is the oldest gag in the world about the end justifying the means.

Dean Bell: Well, there's a distinction, it seems to me, between impulse and value, too.

Fr.H: Yes, that's right.

Dean Bell: After all, frequently as soon as the administration responds by impulse it has to track that back. You can talk about values, but I think we were using that word at a different level.

Fr.H: Yes, if I could just again point up an interesting episode--at least it was interesting to me and I've never forgotten it. I remember years ago when I was very young and just getting on this job, I was progesting because I didn't really know enough about doing it and I thought it was a mistake to be given the job at that age. The man who was passing on the baton, my predecessor, said, "Look, it is not really that complicated--the whole question of administration. Administration is really making

decisions. And when you are making decisions, there is only one question to ask. You don't ask what it is going to cost, either personally or financially; you don't ask whether it is going to be popular or not; you don't ask whether it is easy or hard; what you really ask is what is the right thing to do--which assums you have some principles--and then you do it, and you take the consequences. If your own body--the body politic, if you will--that you are administering doesn't share your values, you are down the drain, but that's worth going down the drain if your values are right, or if you are convinced of them.

RJC: Any other campuses to be heard from?

Fr.H: Sounds to me like we've worn them all out.

RJC: Well, now, Fr. Hesburgh, a few last-minute observations. As you well know, President Odegaard is no longer in our midst. If he were, we certainly would have invited him aboard, but I hope the new president, Hogness, works on you to come out and pay us a visit. And we haven't recovered--speaking of violence and non-violence--you were rather violent with a west coast university last Saturday* and I wanted you to know that the only reason you won was because Joel Connelly was about three feet off the floor in the station.

Fr.H: That would have been worth seeing.

RJC: In any event, I want to thank you on behalf of all of us for taking this time because we know you're a pretty busy guy. Reading Joel's book, I think you sit on more boards than anybody I know. We are also glad that you have made dissent and affirmation, which is what our course is called, that you have spoken eloquently to what we have been trying to say in this course, and we hope to make it once again respectable--intelligent dissent--and also even normative, and I think that your remarks today will help us along that course.

Fr.H: Thank you very much. And as far as I know, we're not taped!

RJC: O.K. Father

Dean Bell: Thank you very much.

Fr.H: You're welcome. God bless you all.

*Southern California