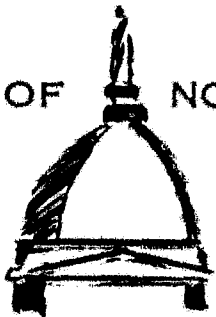


RELIGIOUS BULLETINVOL. XLIV, NO. 14
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1964REV. LLOYD W. TESKE, C.S.C.,
UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN - EDITORREFLECTIONS ON A RAINY AFTERNOON IN SOUTH VIET NAM

From Father Hesburgh's mailbag, a letter from a former Notre Dame student whose reflections might serve as a stimulus to some present-day students who are finding football excitement a distraction during mid-semester examinations.

Viet Nam
October 28, 1964

Dear Father Hesburgh,

Here it's the rainy season, the "Autumn Monsoon." At times it rains so hard that one cannot but think of a water fall. It's hard to believe that so much rain can fall on such a lovely but troubled country.

I have been here since May. Before that I was in the Philippines for four months, and before that, the Army language school for one year. Prior to joining the Army, I was a student.....

No, Father, I didn't graduate. Twice I was suspended for academic reasons -- twice, mind you, and for good reasons. My grades were so incredibly horrible that I'd have a hard time getting into a second rate high school, let alone a first rate college.

War is so much simpler than college, Father. Here they say, "Go take so many men and patrol this or that area, and don't get killed." Here flunking is so disastrously simple. No pink slips, just a bullet. And if you do flunk over here, there's no feeling of loss, no sense of shame, no heartbreak -- only death.

I've felt that loss and heartbreak twice before. I don't want to feel it again.

Sometimes I think ahead to going back to school, and I feel so damned afraid, even more afraid than I am here. I'm afraid I'll louse up again. Here you are afraid to die. But once you die you'll never be afraid again, whatever consolation that may be. If I louse up in school, then I'll be second rate the rest of my life. The only thing I can do to fight this fear is the same way I fight it here, be careful. Fear, I suppose, is a good thing to have if it can be helpful. No, I'm not brave, but, at least, I have found the courage to do my job and do it the best I can. This is something I didn't have three years ago.

Three years is a long time to be in the Army. My father says I'll get out the worse for it. I hope not. To me these three years may be the most important span of time in my life. I think I'll be the better man for them. I hope so. It would be nice to have something on the credit side of the ledger for a change.

(continued on page three)

THE DEAN'S DUNCE CAP

The Dean of the Cathedral Church in William Golding's new book, The Spire*, has had a vision in stone -- that of a new steeple for his ancient cathedral -- a steeple springing, projecting, erupting upwards from the heart of his building -- its crown and its glory. "In this house for a hundred and fifty years," the Dean says, "we have woven a -----
rich fabric of constant praise. consider this."
Things will be as they were; only better, richer, the pattern of worship complete at last." The fact that the cathedral lacks a foundation which will support such a construction is only a challenge to the dean's faith. "What is the good of a small dare?" he says. All my dares are big ones... Those who refuse to see things my way have no vision. They are blind."

Like many rulers of nations with their visions today, the Dean says to himself, "I must put aside all small things. If others are brought to ruin by my project, well, they are merely part of the cost. So be it... I can't help what happens to others, so what's the point of brooding over it. I have too great a work on hand."

As the venture proceeds, however, even he at times has some small doubts about the wisdom of his undertaking. "I thought it would be simple. I thought that the spire would complete a stone Bible, be the apocalypse in stone. I never guessed in my folly that there would be lessons to be learned at every level... I had to build in faith, against advice. That's the only way. But when you build like this, men blunt like a poor chisel, or fly off like the head of an axe. I was too taken up with my vision to -----

The parable of the novel, of course, is widely applicable to our world today -- this world in which national leaders have visions of towering edifices which when built cannot possibly stand. Of many such a construction today it might be said, "Sooner or later, the four columns which support the tower will open apart like a flower, and everything else up there, stones, wood, iron, glass, men will slide down into the church like the fall of a mountain."

The dean's dunce's cap of a steeple, nevertheless, hundreds of feet tall continues to go up, stone by stone. "Our spire," says the Dean, "will be a diagram of the highest prayer of all. God revealed it to me in a vision, his unprofitable servant. He chose me. He chooses you, to fill the diagram with glass and iron and stone, since the children of men require a thing to look at."

These "children of men," of course have no choice. They cannot escape. They are caught in the builder's net, which is their signed contract, their "social contract". The vision of the leader makes the building an overriding necessity -- and the work, an unstoppable thing, goes on implacably.

REFLECTIONS (continued from the front page)

I've talked to people over here who knew Doctor Dooley. He is still highly thought of. I remember in one small village north of Hue I asked an old Vietnamese woman if she had ever heard of him. Yes, she had, she said. She even showed me an old scar on her leg which, she told me, Doctor Dooley had sewn up. I told her that I had gone to the same school as he had (my only claim to fame). When was he coming back, she asked. "He said he would." Then I told her I didn't know, but some day he would. Then she showed me her child who was covered with open sores. "Here," she said, "you have come to take his place until he returns." I finally explained to her that I was not qualified to -- yet. Some day I would be qualified and some day I would come back to treat her child or her child's child. But such is the love the people have for Doctor Dooley. He and his kind are loved and honored far more than the Khanh's, or the Johnson's, or the Ho Chi Minh's. I couldn't tell that woman that Dooley was dead. I didn't have the right to shatter her images and dreams. No one has. And Father, some day I will come back and maybe that old lady will still be here, and then maybe I can be her Doctor Dooley. I dearly love these people and at last I have a goal worth working towards and a goal worth fighting for.

I realize, Father, that to even think of applying for re-admission is out of the question although, at times, I would give all that I have just to set foot on campus and feel that I belong. I'll get into some college, but for the rest of my life I'll know that I will not be half the doctor I could have been had I graduated from Notre Dame.

We have never met, Father, although I can remember saying hello to you a few times as you left the Administration Building. I don't even know why I wrote this except that I thought you would be interested to learn what has become of one of those faceless, nameless prodigals.

May God be with you, Father,

(Name Withheld)

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THE THIRD EXCELLENCE

At Notre Dame we hear a lot about academic and athletic excellence. We take pride in being No. 1. We are committed to the Notre Dame spirit, and that commitment is not only emotional but also solid, based upon honest endeavor and unshakable conviction. If we claim to further that excellence as a Christian university, then our commitment to excellence must be found at the heart of the Christian community in public worship. If study and sport can draw our corporate enthusiasm to overcome any indifference or complacency in being mediocre or second rate, then

worship should likewise receive that same commitment to excellence. Just as that unfathomable spirit of Notre Dame is nourished and kept alive by a personal commitment and social consciousness, likewise that same spirit as embodied in the worship of our Christian community will exist only to the extent that everyone appreciates the meaning of his presence here in Sacred Heart Church at Sunday Mass and makes this assembly a living reality through a corporate effort to worship God.

(Father Leon Mertensotto in his Sunday sermon, November 8, 1964)

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF ECUMENISM

Paraphrasing the old dictum that war is too serious a business to be left to the generals, John Cogley, free-lance writer for many publications, former executive editor of The Commonweal and now a member of the executive staff of the Fund for the Republic, says that Christian unity is too important a goal to be left to the theologians alone. Only the laity, he says in his article in The Critic (August-September, 1964) can create the climate of mutual trust and charity necessary that the dialogue be effective. To that end he drew up what he calls his ten "commandments" for the age of ecumenism, ground rules for Catholics and Protestants alike for the more effective promotion of Christian unity. These are the commandments:

1. Remember that saints and sinners are to be found in all branches of Christianity.
2. Do not look to conversion as the proper result of ecumenism.
3. Do not attempt to achieve charity at the expense of truth.
4. Do not attempt to serve truth at the expense of charity.
5. Do not question the sincerity of others or lightly impute superstition, ignorance or fear in order to explain why they believe as they do.
6. Respect what others deem holy.
7. Don't defend the indefensible.
8. Work together for the common good, as citizens equal before the law.
9. Pray together.
10. Leave theology to the theologians.

Mr. Cogley explains and elaborates on each one of his "commandments." The article is worth looking up to read in its entirety.

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IN YOUR CHARITY please pray for the following: Deceased -- father of Pat Cahill, C.S.C., of Moreau Seminary; grandmother of Joseph Della Maria, Off-Campus; aunt of Rafael Colmenares, Off-Campus; aunt of Steve and Mark Weidner, Off-Campus; mother of Father William Brinker, C.S.C., and John Brinker, '33; father of John Hribar, '58; father of Bruce Prangle, '61; sister of Joseph A. LaFortune, Board of Lay Trustees; aunt of Col. (Rt. Rev. Msgr.) Frank Sampson, '37; Patrick Meegan. Ill -- friend of Brother Jonas, C.S.C.