

# TABLE TALK

Vol 1 No 2

STUDENT BODY NEWSLETTER OF THE SEMINARY

SEPTEMBER 18, 1964

THE PASTOR AND RACE RELATIONS TYSBURG.

LETTER FROM STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT

One Sunday about a month ago during my summer assistantship I was asked to teach a Sunday School class, and the lesson which happened to fall on that Sunday in the text they were using concerned the Christian's view of race relations. To bring up to date the out-dated lesson material, I began the session with a discussion of the LCA statement on race made at the Pittsburgh convention; "Who knows what the Lutheran Church has recently said on race relations, and what do you think of it?" I asked. One man answered immediately, "We all know, and we think it stinks!" The man continued by expounding his distorted views of what he thought the church had said, and although I'm sure he didn't express the unanimous opinion of the class, he had enough force of presentation to stifle and thoughts of reply by the others.

This man's feelings do not represent an isolated viewpoint. Many people are genuinely disturbed by the convention's statement on race, especially the section having to do with civil disobedience believing that the church is openly condoning lawlessness and consequently irresponsibility. We as seminarians and professors will meet this opinion repeatedly whenever we leave "the hill" and enter into the layman's world where our opinions will be sought after as authoritative. How are we to answer?

Several points deserve consideration with regard to the church's statement. (1) To make no statement at this time would be a disasterous evasion of issues, for other Church bodies are taking various stands, cf. the National Baptist' president's statement in this week's Time, that no-one has the right to "break any law, even if it is morally wrong." (2) To make a statement that Christians may disobey a law which is contrary to the demands of their conscience is merely to reaffirm a principle which has governed the actions of men since the Biblical time of the prophets and the apostles to the modern age of totalitarian states. When I countered the statement of the man in the Sunday School class with the observation that to climb the Berlin Wall is as

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While September is not the customary time for a "state of the union" message, events in the life of the student body during the past week call for our review.

The orientation program is now in the past, and the Junior class has settled back and is being kept busy with Karl Barth. Those of us who comprised the orientation committee, both student and faculty, wish to thank all those who helped, participated or contributed to the 1964 orientation program.

Could we possibly hope that Chapel attendance will remain as it has been for the remainder of the year? Chapel services and attendance have been excellent. There can be no greater inspiration than seeing a good percentage of the student body and faculty worshipping together each day.

"Table Talk" has appeared as the official news reporter of the student body. Jim Mummert has given many hours of his time for this publication--give him your support by contributing articles, news, reactions, etc.

Activity is also seen in each of the Student' Association's standing committees: Athletics, Ecumenics, Lecture, Missions, Retreat, Social, and Worship. Won't you help to make this a successful Student Association year by giving a fraction of your time for the benefit of the entire community.

Stan Trout, President  
Student Association

## TOUCH FOOTBALL PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

Once again the intramural football season here at Seminary is with us. The past few days have seen the respective teams preparing for this annual activity. It has been interesting to note that the Junior class has shown unusual interest this year and appears to be ready to make things rough for the Middlers and Seniors. The schedule begins on Wednesday, Sept. 16. Two games have been scheduled for each week on Mondays and Wednesdays. It is desired that the games will be played at these times for the sake of convenience. However, if conflicts do arise, it is

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## 2. FEATURE EDITORIAL

I sat through the whole circus with confounded logic and only laughed occasionally through my nausea. After all, it is my country (for which good fortune I am thankful). However, the prelude of the political conventions has sung its threatening theme, and the campaign ahead no doubt will develop a fugue of discordant tones to the theologically sensitive ear. Our musings here will be little noted (believe me!) but the roar of simple rhetoric may well haunt our churches for years. Do you want to know where theological understanding in America stands? Well listen carefully this Fall because politicians delicately tap out the pulse of mass America. Dirksen's irresponsible use of Biblical passages, the often heard appeal and open eyed prayer to "God" that came from the lips of many of those platform elevated men are not finally comical but threatening. The seeds of our theological problems in the parishes are being deeply sown.

Three specific reflections:

"Extremism in the cause of liberty is no vice; moderation in the cause of justice is no virtue." It sounds solid but sinks in the sands of ambiguity. Most, if not all, "extremism" works toward the establishment of its own freedom of existence and/or control. As Christians existing in America let us not smoke the opium of "liberty" but rather seek the content of our existence within the community existent through the creative action of God sustained in love. Justice? Can there be any real justice in our complex society that does not grow out of the soil of moderation? Perhaps both liberty and justice vanish when they become equated with the deals of one group of finite men and their exclusive possession. The doctrines of Creation and the Fall certainly have vital things to say at this point.

Beware the "Great Society". Although no doubt the finitude of man's efforts and the frustration of his constructed morality may be given initial nods, it is becoming

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## ----- THE STAFF OF "TABLE TALK"

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This newsletter feeds upon the intelligent contributions of all members of the seminary community. The paper will not appear weekly upon the sole desire of the editors to publish on a predetermined basis. Henceforward, therefore, this paper may not appear when professors call our bluff and put our minds to the good fight of ignorance vs. wisdom. We would hope, however, that when these challenging moments flip our way the professors and administrative staff would contribute extra constructive bits of info for our consumption.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FORUM DISCUSSIONS

( See Dr. Jordahl's article )

Church-State relations

Theology and Politics

The Lord's Supper

Commercialism and LC.

Congregational Calls

Prayer and Worship

Trials and Tribulations

Student-Faculty-Synod Relationships

The American Way of Deadly Funerals

or "Put Life into your Funeral"

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evident that a resurrection of the Social Gospel could again become a temptation within the ranks of anxious Christianity.

Finally, it would seem to me that Christian theologians would be cautious concerning the appeals to local and individual responsibility and control.

Certainly the Civil Rights issue is showing us the necessity of legislation in our society for the effective manifestation of what would appear to be the right. The righteous heart of man is rarely voluntarily laid open to the world. The plea against federal legislation in these areas would seem to be a political and a theological mis-apprehension.

F.R. (with gratitude for the stimulation of Richard Wentz).

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CONGRATULATIONS to the Carl Franklin family on the arrival of their first-born child - a daughter. This past Sunday was the long-awaited day of blessing and joy.

## POLITICS AND THE PULPIT

To preach or not to preach to our present political predicament—that is the question. Seminarians have the same responsibility to educate themselves along political lines just as those of other callings, but should they in their unique role as preacher express a preference for a political party or exegete a Biblical passage that would be favorable to a particular political persuasion?

In as much as there can be no "pat" answers to the problem at hand, we do feel strongly that while the preacher should make it his business to soak up nuggets of wisdom in politics (as well as practically all areas of life), he should not abuse the pulpit or congregation by presenting a topical sermon comparing Goldwater and Johnson (for instance).

We do highly recommend, however, that if the pastor as preacher wishes to "turn topical" for just a bit of variety this fall, he should encourage his fellow-Christians to read further than the headlines and beyond campaign pamphlets in order to come to some intelligent explanation of the vote they shall cast in November.

If we may borrow a few objectives from the Parish Education curriculum, we should emphasize that everyman should (1) educate himself about the political issues at stake today, (2) maintain a proper attitude toward the whole question of politics and its value in our society, and (3) deliberately plan certain patterns of action - one of which is to vote in Nov. (as well as at any election.)

Taking this approach, we shouldn't be tempted to "take sides" in the pulpit, nor will we make the grave error of simply encouraging people to "register and vote." It appears that the casting of a vote has been elevated to a status symbol, or that it has become one of those mechanical procedures that "everybody is doing," or more simply, it has become an end in itself. The question we might pose is, "When are the American people going to realize that voting is something that requires and implies by its very nature great study and preparation, and that to vote is simply one of many steps involved in self-education and participation in the political arena?"

Indeed, it is disgusting to hear a woman (to select a vulnerable subject) say, "politics is all bunk," and in the next  
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breath to hear her announce her ignorance by declaring in no uncertain terms that Mr. Smith is much better qualified than that Jones fellow to hold a political office, etc., etc.

Women (and men) like this we should either keep from the polls by sponsoring an all-day, baby-booby sewing fair on election day or we should inspire them to read as much as possible about the issues and candidates before us. Although the former suggestion would be easier (and provide a few chucks - especially when the women would come home in the evening to find that the nation went to the polls that day), the latter suggestion, in spite of the great odds against us, would be a noble task.

If we adopted this approach, I doubt that we would be guilty of abusing the intended purpose of the pulpit. A sermon of this nature would probably be topical, and if we presented one of these this fall, the textual sermons should occupy the remainder of our preaching program and thus keep us away from Lyndon and Barry.

J.A.M.

Touch Football -(Cond't from page 1.)  
permissible to reschedule games with the agreement of the two teams involved.

Of additional interest in this football season is the fact that our Seminary has made tentative arrangements to play against a team from Mt. Airy Seminary. All that remains to be done is finalization of dates. It is hoped that two meetings can be arranged, one here and one at Philadelphia. This, of course, offers the additional possibilities of communication and fellowship with their student body - or, at least - a part of it.

### FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

( All games begin at 4:15)

Wed. Sept. 16 - Juniors vs. Seniors  
Mon. Sept. 21 - Seniors vs. Middlers  
Wed. Sept. 23 - Middlers vs. Juniors  
Mon. Sept. 28 - Seniors vs. Juniors  
Wed. Sept. 30 - Middlers vs. Seniors  
Mon. Oct. 5 - Juniors vs. Middlers

Fred Eichner  
Athletic Chairman

### CLASSROOM BELLY LAUGH

Prof. Hafner said in all seriousness: "This course (Christian Ethics) is to develop into a love affair - between you and your books."

Thursday Sept. 10, 1964

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. (Psalm 19:14) This is the text Dr. Heiges used to address the Seminary community at the first celebration of the Sacrament of the Altar in this academic year.

The key note of the sermon was "acceptability." It was applied on three levels, (1) God's acceptance of man, (2) man's acceptance of his fellow man, and (3) man's acceptance of himself. Acceptability was described as "one of the most persistent and poignant concerns of the human heart" and was applied directly to the Seminary community. The point was made that acceptance of the individual into the community as a qualified student does not necessarily mean that he will be accepted by the community.

After two examples of acceptance from the Old Testament, Dr. Heiges pointed out that the longing of man for acceptance by others and by himself is made possible only because of God's acceptance of each of us through the good news of Jesus Christ. By Baptism we enter the fold and by the Sacrament of the Altar we are sustained and strengthened in mutual fellowship by communion with God.

With a vivid example of the inability of two students to accept one another, the potential problem of our Christian community to accept its own constituents as brothers and sisters "in Christ" was considered. The statement was made that one does not need to agree with everything that a person says in order to accept him as a fellow-worker for Christ. Only God's acceptance of us is complete; ours can only be limited. Because God's is the only perfect and definitive acceptance, it behooves each of us to allow a margin of grace in our acceptance of one another.

Finally, as each person participates in the Sacrament of the Altar, he acknowledges his shabby sonship and places his confidence in the promise of his acceptance by God that will not be broken: an acceptance that enables each of us to love one another in this life together.

By Robert J. Richards

#### SPOT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Don't forget the lecture scheduled for October 21 which will feature Dr. Eddy Asirvatham, of Jabalpur University, India.

Dr. Heiges must be given credit for having concluded his 1958 - Knobel-Miller Lectures with the "Said Who" quote of last week.

Dr. Folkemer and Dr. Gritsch will lead the community in worship on Monday and Thursday, Sept. 21 and 24, respectively.

#### PRESIDENT HEIGES' INAUGURATION REVEALED

Mr. Kauffman of the Lutheran Theological Seminary (Philadelphia) has announced that Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, LCA president, will be the speaker for the inauguration of Dr. Donald R. Heiges, President of the Lutheran Theological Seminary (Gettysburg), on October 21, 1964 at 2:00 p.m.

The Gettysburg Seminary Community will not be invited to this event, in as much as the chapel currently used by the Mt. Airy Seminary personnel would be too small even if our own faculty were invited.

#### SPOT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Bertha Paulssen will be returning to her home from her tour through Europe on September 25, 1964. The upperclassmen know her as the past professor in the department of Psychology and Sociology.

Mr. Russell Campbell was honored Thursday afternoon, September 17, 1964, with a surprise birthday party. This party was held in the newly redecorated coffee shop.

The Junior Class will encounter a Group Work Institute on September 25, 26, and 27.

The Gettysburg Seminary faculty and wives will entertain their Mt. Airy counterparts on October 3.

much a case of civil disobedience as engaging in a racial demonstration, he agreed saying, "Yes, but they're doing that for freedom." It's ironical that he chose the same word which has become the watchword of the civil rights movement. (3) The stand which the convention took is not new in Lutheranism but is merely a re-statement of what is said in article XVI of the Augsburg Confession. (4) The statement includes definitely stated limitations which in effect outlaw Christian participation in spur-of-the-moment demonstrations without first seeking legal recourse or in acts of any kind.

But people will not let you talk in such abstractions. If your going to discuss the propriety of the sit-it or picket line, you've got to be ready for the inevitable question, "That's fine, but would you do it?" And I think with regard to civil disobedience the only answer we as Christians can make, at the acknowledged risk of being accused of straddling the issue, is to say that it depends on the situation. The church's statement says that we will engage in civil disobedience in any instance only "after earnestly seeking the counsel of fellow Christians and the will of God in prayer!" This does not mean that we will approach every case of injustice with a preconceived plan of action based on a set of idealistic principles, but rather that we will weigh the particular circumstances in each case. Neither must we, as was brought out at the convention, be ready to accuse others of blasphemy, but rather as St. Paul said, "Seek to restore... (them) in the spirit of gentleness." Just as our Lutheran heritage tells us that there is a time for civil disobedience, so it also tells us that there is a time to endure injustice temporarily in the interest of Christian love. Luther's views on reforming the abuses of the Lord's Supper are not inappropriate here: "You must not throw these weak consciences into confusion, but bear with them and instruct them". "It is still too early to begin this practice, because the conscience of the people will not follow me until it has been preached and understood better."

So the church's statement really does little more than announce that we are concerned Christians making the only legitimate answer to a problem of our time. It condemns neither the one who practices civil disobedience nor the one who refrains from  
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"A Sense of duty pursues us ever. It is omnipresent, like the Deity. If we take to ourselves the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, duty performed or duty violated is still with us, for our happiness or our miseries. If we say the darkness shall cover us, in the darkness as in the light our obligations are yet with us." - From Argument on the Murder of Captain White, 1830

These all-too-precise words of Daniel Webster take on monumental stature for us of the Seminary community in its contemporary setting. The calling we have accepted, the life to which we have dedicated ourselves, requires us to also don the mantle of responsibility, the garb of duty. For those of us beginning our Seminary lives the acquittal of such an obligation is just beginning to take definite shape in our system of values. For those now preparing to sever day-to-day connections with the school, such a responsibility must now become a reality if one is to fulfill the role of pastor.

No closer example of this responsibility can be found than the fast approaching national elections to illustrate this bounden duty, for this event must  
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it. There have always been three kinds of men; those who feel compelled to act pointedly in the face of any wrong, those who can endure wrong with the inner freedom of knowing that their cause is just and will gradually prevail, and those who close their eyes and ignore injustice. The Pittsburgh convention's statement on race and civil disobedience recognizes the rightful place of the first two, and repudiates the third position. Luther, while sometimes advocating delayed action in reforms, never advocated delaying to state your point. "Preach on the subject with confidence," Luther said, and this is what the church has begun at Pittsburgh. It's now our job to continue, each in his own way. - By Richard Gracfe  
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Editor's note: We are thankful for Dick's perceptive article and we welcome critical evaluation of it from any member of our community. We are also thankful for Dick's insight in contributing the name "Table Talk" for our newsletter.

The 1964-65 WOTS ( Women of the Seminary) began on Wednesday evening in fine style. Following devotions and a business meeting, Judy Turley let the group in "get acquainted" games. The attendance was one of the best in the history of WOTS as 41 wives of students and faculty and several women students participated in the evening of fun.

Plans for future meetings were discussed and it was announced that on Sept. 30th the faculty wives will entertain and we will hear a panel discuss "Entertaining in the Parsonage." In October we plan to "blow the lout" as the wives invite their husbands to an evening out--dinner, a play and socializing. The details for this trip will be announced later.

Let's keep us the enthusiasm and WOTS will serve you with a rich full program and we will make the job of "Putting Hubby Through" an enjoyable experience.

P.A.M.

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 QUOTES from the "Introduction" to NOBODY KNOWS MY NAME by James Baldwin.

"In America, the color of my skin had stood between myself and me; in Europe, that barrier was down. Nothing is more desirable than to be released from an affliction, but nothing is more frightening than to be divested of a crutch." .....

"It would seem, unless one looks more deeply at the phenomenon, that most people are able to delude themselves and get through their lives quite happily. But I still believe that the unexamined life is not

worth living: and I know that self-delusion, in the service of no matter what small or lofty cause, is a price no writer can afford. His subject is himself and the world and it requires every ounce of stamina he can summon to attempt to lock on himself and the world as they are." See pp. 11-12.

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A Sense of Duty  
 (Cont'd from page 5)

surely intertwine the threads of previous secular experiences with those of our theological education. Just as the businessman must continually adjust his methods to keep abreast of the times, the minister must gear his preaching and teaching to the world in which he lives and works. He must show by word and deed that Christians are bound by their very existence on this earth to be a part of the society in which they live. In the forthcoming election mentioned above, in past elections, and in those to come no minister has been granted the authority to use the influence of his office in any attempt to sway voters in his congregation toward a particular candidate. However, it is his responsibility, nay, his obligation, to direct his flock toward intelligent contemplation of men and issues. Herein lies the nucleus of the pastor's duty of relating Christianity to the secular institution of representative government. If he is to attempt to instill in his listeners a Christian conscientiousness toward worldly affairs, his only function in such an endeavor is to preach to them diligent study of the issues, unbiased reflections on these issues, and choosing that which they then feel is just.

By. R.O.S.

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 The open space below is for your benefit for here you can doodle, write reactions to the articles above, and outline the article that you will submit to the editors.