

Table Talk



News and Views of the Student Body of The Lutheran
Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

Vol. 1 No. 14

February 10, 1965

THE CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT
by David W. Schneider

FEB 11 1965

Sometimes I think that we Lutherans take our separation of church and state too far. For we not only want to separate them but also want to make sure that neither sphere even thinks about the other one. Perhaps I am overstating the case, but I do feel that it is high time that the Lutheran church became concerned about what Christianity has to say in local, national, and world government because we do believe (I think) that Christianity is meaning for all areas of life and not just the so-called spiritual ones.

On January 29, I was able to attend an Interseminary United Nations Seminar with three other seminary students from Gettysburg. This program was sponsored by the Church Center for the United Nations, a center less than two years old. In small ways, perhaps, and yet in valuable ways, the Church Center is attempting to close the gap between the church and world government. This center is housed in its own, new building directly across from the United Nations Building.

The basic aim of the center is awareness. On one hand, the center attempts through the use of seminars and printed material to inform a wide variety of Christians on the work and purpose of the United Nations. On the other hand, the Church Center in consultation with various United Nations' missions and the Secretariat attempts to make them aware of the church's position on many issues.

The central program of the Center is run under the auspices of the National Council of Churches. However, many of the larger Protestant groups also maintain offices and contacts at the Church Center. In some ways, it is significant that no Lutheran bodies maintain such offices.

For the sake of those interested in the content of the seminar in which we participated, I will briefly summarize the day's activity. There were five lecture and discussion periods. The first three were strictly intended to be factual presentations of the United Nations in various aspects. They included "The Place of the United Nations in the Struggle of World Order," by a man from the office of the Secretary General, "The Role of the New Nations in the United Nations," by an ambassador from Sierra Leone, and "The United States in the United Nations," by the director of the news service of the United States mission.

The fourth speaker, a member of the Secretariat, works in the technical assistance field. In his topic, "A Missionary Concept of the United Nations," he attempted to relate the United Nations' aims in this field to the aims of concerned Christians. His most significant statement was that through the United Nations Christianity is not taught, but perhaps caught instead.

The banquet speaker, from the World Council of Churches, discussed the Church and the United Nations. He outlined a number of areas where the church is working in world government, but it was quite obvious that there is much yet to be done.

(cont. on p. 5)

FEATURE EDITORIAL

by
Ed Vogel song

Even within an institution where there is such a great spectrum of theological diversity, there are few who will not admit to a certain degree of individual freedom of choice. The very idea of man being a puppet on a string or of having no part in the decisions that shape his life is repugnant to anyone who has even a minimum amount of ability to think for himself. Each of us has his own pet way of revolting from such an idea and asserting his individuality. Students of the social sciences would probably tell us that the degree of one's revolt is somewhat proportionate to the intensity of the threat which he feels to the expression of his own personality.

I am assuming that everyone who is at seminary is here because of a choice that he made for himself. I am not disparaging the nature of a "call" from God, but merely saying that the acceptance of this call was itself a choice that had to be made. We also take occasion to revolt from this calling from time to time, and this revolt is manifested in a number of ways; you can enumerate them as well as I can. However, it is a poor reflection on an institution and the individuals in it when a majority of students try to assert their freedom every day by absenting themselves from a service of worship.

But poor attendance at chapel is more than a conscious or an unconscious revolt--it is a lack of understanding the nature of our calling. Can anyone dispute that a person who chooses to study or teach at a theological seminary has no excuse for intentionally and repeatedly refusing to worship? When we decide to become affiliated with this school we thereby choose to become involved in a certain discipline, not the least part of

STAFF OF TABLE TALK

Managing Editor: Dick Graefe
Junior Editor: Fred Krautwurst
Senior Editor: Jim Mummert

Feature Editors:
Ed Vogel song Bob Richards
Dick Graf John Hagedorn
Fred Reisz Jr.

Artist: Eileen Cooper
Printer: Chuck Hartbauer
Typist: Cheryl Trout

February 8, 1965

To the Faculty, Staff and Student
Body of the
Lutheran Theological Seminary
at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

We would like to thank each and every one of you personally, for all your kindness, in the form of economic help and concern, which you have freely given to us in our period of crisis.

We cannot solve this problem alone and it is your help, stemming from your generosity and from Christ being manifested within you which has aided us at this time more than words can fully express.

We feel that we owe a debt to you, that can only be understood and in part repaid, when in God's time, we in turn hope to help others in His world.

Yours In The Hope of Christ,

RICHARD AND EILEEN COOPER

STUDENT ASSOCIATION MEETING

Tuesday, February 23 at 10:30 a.m.
Room 206 - Old chapel

Purpose: To discuss and vote on constitutional amendments regarding election of officers. A quorum is necessary. Plan to be there.

(cont. on p. 5)

AN INSTITUTIONAL INTERNSHIP

By James Crowfoot

By way of continuing the series describing internship experiences, I would like to do two things. First, I will state briefly what in my experience I consider to be the value of an internship; and second, I will describe the internship setting in which I made these conclusions.

I found that internship offered me the opportunity to live and work with people outside of an academic setting and more particularly outside of a Seminary setting. In this situation I found that I possessed a whole set of favorite assumptions about people, the ways in which they live, and the relationship of the Gospel to their lives. I learned that most of these assumptions were in error; and due to the fact that I relied so heavily upon them, I could not tell people nor share with other people via my life the very message and way of life that I have found to be of paramount importance. To me this experience was more important than words can convey because it challenged me to overhaul my understanding of myself and of other people. This led me to examine more deeply than ever before the nature of the vocation I had chosen and the circumstances and background which played a key part in my choice. This experience also led me to ask key questions about the vocational preparation I had been pursuing and about the denomination in which I planned to utilize this preparation. In relationship to these questions about seminary education and about the current state of the church, I have come to conclusions very similar to those stated very succinctly by Fred Reisz in his recent article summarizing the effects of his internship.

The internship setting in which I came to the above conclusions as to the value of my experience was a six thousand patient state mental hospital. I say something about my training in this hospital in order to inform you of another type of internship possibility that exists and not to offer an expose of internship in this type of setting. In interning in this setting I participated for one year in a clinical training program. This program was conducted under the auspices of the Protestant Chaplain's Department of the hospital. There were two parts to the program. One part was the actual training which had its center in the chaplain's department, and the other part was the work assignment as a chaplain in a particular section of the hospital. In the training aspect of the program there were academic seminars, group discussions, and individual counseling. All of these parts of training had as their goal the examination of the way the trainees worked with people and the appropriation of measures to improve each trainee's performance. In the work assignment as a chaplain, the trainee became a member of the therapeutic staff in the section of the hospital to which he was assigned. In this role he took part in the team approach to the treatment of patients. In this sort of approach the leading of worship services and Bible studies were a very small part of the chaplain's work.

Having given only a brief description of the setting in which I interned and the conclusions growing out of this training, I would be glad to talk at greater length to anyone who might have questions about the details of the training or about my conclusions as to the values of an intern year.

DR. HEIKKINEN ON SABBATICAL

Dr. Jacob Heikkinen left last Thursday from Dulles Airport, Washington, D. C. on the first leg of his sabbatical travels. The day before he left he wrote to the senior editor of Table Talk, outlining his plans. Following is an excerpt from that letter:

The purpose of my travel is to extend my sabbatical study to the missionary and ecumenical frontiers of the Church, beginning in Japan. I have been invited to make presentations at the Japan Lutheran Theological Seminary on "Contemporary Discussion of Hermeneutics in the West". Arrangements have also been made to meet with certain Japanese theologians on ecumenical Faith and Order studies.

From Japan the route moves southwest, touching Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, with stops at the theological schools. At the oldest of Christian colleges at Serampore (through which the theological degrees of all the schools are granted in India), I shall spend several days and deliver lectures. My longest period in India will be spent at the Andhra Lutheran Christian College, where a very significant ecumenical experiment in theological education is under way.

From India I shall fly to Jerusalem and there plan my studies and observations in the biblical world. The next stopping and study points are at the University of Thessalonica in Greece, in Rome, Geneva and Oxford.

Table Talk hopes to continue to follow Dr. Heikkinen's sabbatical activities. We urge other professors, both those on sabbatical and those who are retired, to use Table Talk to keep the rest of the seminary community informed of their activities and travels.

RFG

It was announced in last week's Table Talk that the Rev. William H. Keeler would participate in a colloquium on the Vatican II Constitution on the Liturgy. This session is open to all, students and faculty alike. Because of the fact that this is the first time that a Roman has spoken at the seminary and because of the importance of his topic, this colloquium should attract a large crowd. Father Keeler will speak this Thursday at 7:00 P. M. in Room 206 of the Administration Building. A discussion period will follow.

The Seminary Community extends its best wishes to one of its favorite people, the beloved Enza. She took last week off from her job in order to be united in Holy Wedlock.

CONGRATULATIONS!

The Church and Govt.

(cont. from p. 1)

Just what does the above discussion call forth? First, I think that we as members of the seminary community must question how aware we are of world affairs. We sometimes laugh about the clergymen who withdrew from the world into the monasteries of the Middle Ages. Yet I would dare say they knew as much about their world as we know about the complex world of today.

Secondly, I think that the clergyman is called into active participation in present problems such as world government. Too often we seem to feel that salvation is contingent upon worshipping exactly as the early Christians did and not on active involvement in today's world.

I am in no position at the present time to indicate specific steps for the Lutheran Church to take in rectifying its rather back-seat position in governmental affairs. I do feel that there are several factors which do not particularly advance the Lutheran cause. We often lament the fact that there are few Lutherans in Congress. While this may be an outward manifestation of an inward problem, I do not think election of more Lutherans will solve the problem. Furthermore, our theology today often seems to justify programs already launched rather than to indicate new areas of concern. Finally, I do not think that the Lutheran Church can claim political involvement by jumping on the band wagon of a moving political program that seems theologically correct, e.g., the Civil Rights Movement.

As I said above, I am not sure of the exact direction we should take, but I am convinced that the Lutheran church must involve itself in government. We see dialogue in religion and science and in religion and art, cannot the same thing be done in government? I do not, however, envisage church domination of the state; we do not want that. However, we should want Christianity giving its meaning of existence to all areas of life--including government.

Feature Ed.

(cont. from p. 2)

which is worshipping. Whether or not we attend chapel is not a choice that we make from day to day; it is a choice that we made when we entered this seminary.

It also behooves us to take upon ourselves the obligation of responsible chapel leadership. Those students who are too lazy to preach or to spend more than an hour preparing for an opportunity which they have once a year to lead a daily chapel service certainly do not thereby say much about their integrity as an individual or about their understanding of their responsibilities to this community.

Students who refuse to attend chapel by using the excuse that they get nothing out of it have perhaps the most plausible excuse, but it ultimately is only another rationalization. We are responsible to each other not only to encourage our classmates to attend worship services, but also to lead them to understand that their discipleship in Jesus Christ obligates them to do their very best in every situation.

(cont. on p. 6)

Since we began weekly communion in January, our Friday attendance has averaged 60, while the other four days have seen a considerably lower chapel attendance. Whether or not one attends chapel does not reflect his high or low church tendencies (if these categories are even legitimate), nor should it reflect his class schedule for most students, nor his denominational affiliation, nor his personal feelings toward the officiant or preacher. Your pattern of chapel attendance ultimately reflects your degree of understanding and response to God's call. You are a free man!

An academic institution is by nature critical. Well-intentioned criticism always has a place. Can we honestly overlook the lack of responsible faculty and student body attitude toward our worship services, and thus make a farce of seminary publicity which declares that the chapel stands at the center of our community life?