

Table Talk

Vol. III No. 2

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URBAN POVERTY

Recently, the Junior Class, accompanied by Professors Hale, Hefner, and Shenemen, visited Pittsburgh for two days. The purpose of the visit was to study the poverty situation of a large city and what role the Church is playing in correcting this situation.

Thursday evening saw the departure of students from the campus. Several hours later, upon their arrival in Pittsburgh, they came face to face with the first of several unusual experiences which were to confront them in the next two days.

The group was provided lodging and several meals for the trip at the Lutheran Social Services Agency. To the majority's surprise, after the initial shock of the place had worn off, it was found to be quite comfortable and the meals were perhaps the best of the entire trip.

The next morning, after breakfast, the seminarians were taken on an interesting trip of the Jones and Laughlin Steel Plant after which there was a period allowed for discussion. Although the tour was an experience for many who had never seen the steel making process before, the discussion period afterwards was a little disappointing when the group proceeded off on a tangent about religion in a steel mill. As one of the panelists Mr. Walter W. Skillings puts it, "J. & L. is here to make steel at a profit."

As the day wound on, the group next heard from an official of the United Mine Workers and then broke into smaller groups for a trip to the poverty areas of the city. The more interesting of the two trips was to what is known as the "Hill District" in which 50,000 Negroes live in a poverty ghetto. Along with a discussion group those who visited the "Hill" got a special treat. The young
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FEATURE EDITORIAL

"To Merge or Not to Merge--
That is the Question"

Ever since I arrived at this institution, the possible merger of Mt. Airy and Gettysburg has been debated heatedly. While it is true that the level of rationality and objectivity of the arguments seldom exceeded that of a teenage, female Beatle fan, people were, nevertheless, taking cognizance of the problem. However, in recent months a strange silence has replaced passionate debate. No doubt there are many reasons for this change of events most of which are outside the ken of this observer. Yet, there is one symptom which is clear even to someone with vision as myopic as mine. I am referring to the ostrich syndrome--ignore a problem long enough and it is bound to go away--which is so popular at Gettysburg this fall. Unfortunately, this particular methodology has never solved a problem in the past and, therefore, I see no reason why we should expect it to do so in the future. The fact of the matter is that time is running out. Either we make up our mind to merge with Mt. Airy (where we do it does not seem to be as important as that we do it) or we decide to stay in Gettysburg and invest the money necessary to really make this a top flight seminary. However, if we continue to ignore the question, we will suddenly find ourselves classified as a third or fourth rate seminary.

The Lutheran Seminary at Chicago will move to its new campus next fall. If their program is as successful as they think it will be, and I see no reason why it should not, Gettysburg will be faced with a serious challenge. The best faculty and students will, over a period of time, be attracted there while Gettysburg
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ON INVOLVEMENT

A little girl once asked her daddy if he needed "Mommy" as much as she did. "Of course," he said, "we all need one another." The Church of today is anxious to show the world, particularly the "Big Cities," how much they need her. The problem often arises that, like the Old Lady who didn't wish to cross the street with or without the Boy Scout's help, those that the Church would woo don't even wish to say "good morning."

Certainly in one real sense of the word we do need one another. The community type of "Life Together" here at the Seminary can be a healthy, constructive, intregal part of our experience. The Church at large in the world does have something to say to a secular society. It is necessary to be able to communicate this message in new forms for whom the old forms have lost meaning. These in themselves are all truths shared by those concerned.

The first question that this writer would raise is simply, "How can we express the need which we feel is present?" Is there a utilizing of our time interpersonally and scholastically to maximum effect? Does this imply jockeying for position in terms of who's who? Does the answer lie in constant intellectual agitation through dialogs, debates, interesting speakers, or factional professors? Will we as a community finally "see the light" when we pick up and relocate to the biggest, dirtiest city we can find in order to discover what the other half lives like? Will proximity to a source of intellectual stimulation necessitate secular dialog? In other words, will the scientist finally open up and pour out his heart as we share cafeteria space with him? This writer feels that such academic questions should be pondered upon rather than assumed true or false.

If the Church hears the death rattles of it's own social existance then maybe it deserves to die. The transcental function of the Church in miniature, namely social excitment of the Secular City with the community, lies not in its forms, but
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Table Talk will regularly appear every Tuesday morning. Anyone interested in writing for Table Talk is encouraged to do so. Articles should be placed in the Managing Editor's mailbox no later than noon on Friday for the following Tuesday's edition.

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in it's deeds. The old cliché "Your actions talk so loud, I can't hear what you're saying," has as it's basis motivation. If our Christian motivation is the love which hounds us from above, and convicts us to action, then I believe the horizontal dimension will always discover avenues of communication, social interaction, and heart before accepting with the mind what it is ultimately concerned with, then the "old lady" will want to go across the street when we speak to her heart.

A community involved is a community in dialog with the world. But let the dialog begin in action that touches the world. Let it begin by helping old ladies out of their wheelchairs, or prisoners to a hope of personal dignity and social worth. Let it begin by being a small person in the eyes of the World, that the bigness of God might be seen. Accepting the local Peyton Place with it's high rate of unmarried mothers, immoral and poverty stricken migrant workers, or festering getto may be a long step on the way toward bringing Christ down from the Hill.

When our words of involvement become incongruent with our actions; when the social excitment of the Secular City with its theatre, and general culture causes
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THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY TO THE DEAF

The Student Body is invited to attend next Wednesday, September 28, at 3:00 P.M. in the Aberly Room the presentation of the documentary movie "Beyond Silence." This movie has been acclaimed by the United States Information Agency as being a highly significant contribution to the understanding of the world of the deaf. Accompanying this movie will be a brief discussion of the church's ministry to the deaf and in introduction to basic sign language by Pastor Eugene McVicker, a full-time professor of religion in the world's only college for the deaf, Gallaudet College in Washington, D.C. and Pastor Kendig Bergstresser, the pastor of a deaf congregation in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Since about three per cent of the total population in the United States is totally deaf, the Lutheran Church has become increasingly interested in this unique and necessary ministry. In fact, there are at the present time seven deaf congregations in the Central Pennsylvania area.

Throughout the next quarter, a course on basic sign language, the manual alphabet, and the problems of the deaf will be offered each Wednesday from 3:00 to 5:00 by Pastors McVicker and Bergstresser under the sponsorship of the Board of Social Missions of the Central Pennsylvania Synod. The course will be highlighted by specially arranged trips into the classrooms of the Frederick School for the Deaf and Gallaudet College. We are indeed fortunate to have this opportunity to learn about the world of the deaf from such experienced men and urge all students to take advantage of this opportunity. I will be glad to answer any questions you may have about either the church's ministry to the deaf or the course to be offered.

Mark H. Gruebmeier

WHAT'S WITH WOTS

The Women of the Seminary "got acquainted" and reacquainted at their first meeting of the new year, on September 14. Our new members learned the purpose of WOTS and had an opportunity to meet our officers. A preview of the annual Christmas party was presented, and the group agreed to work with the Holiday Bureau during the Christmas season. Janet Fitch led the program for the evening and treated us to a variety of games designed for getting to know each other better.

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday evening, September 28, at 7:30 p.m., at Dr. and Mrs. Heiges' home. The President will speak to us on "The Seminary and You." This program should be of vital interest to every WOTS member. We hope to see all of you Wednesday evening!

Lanie Nagle

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social worker, in charge of the meeting, led a walking four block tour of the neighborhood. Although it was a shocking experience to see this slum area first hand, it proved to be in bad taste, for the young social worker was rebuked by a leading member of the community for the racial tension which he had created.

That evening a discussion was held with three leading members of the community of Pittsburgh. And again after the presentation, a heated debate developed. Much to the disappointment of many, this came to an end much too soon and the leading question of "What the Church can do about this" remained unsolved.

Perhaps the most dynamic personality of the entire trip was presented the next morning. A leader in the Negro community and member of various committees on poverty, Mrs. Frankie Pace, easily developed the enthusiasm of many students in her battle for the poor.

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Last stop on the itinerary for the trip was a meeting with the pastors of several Lutheran congregations within these poverty areas. Here it was shown how the Church as a parish could develop methods for helping these distressed neighborhoods.

The trip was designed to acquaint the young seminarian with the problems of the urban situation and what the Church could and was doing in helping to find a solution. The purpose was fulfilled in all respects and many of the group came to the self realization that this was a definite and pressing problem.

Harv Weitzel

To Merge... (Cont'd from page 1)

will have to pick from the leftovers. Now, some faculty and/or students might argue that this is the case at the present and there is no need to get steamed up. Yet, I must reject this interpretation. While it is true that we do not have the "best" seminary in the country, the thing that has impressed me in my short stay at Gettysburg is the desire on the part of both faculty and students to raise our standards of excellence as far and as fast as possible. Much time, money, and individual effort has already been invested in the enterprise. Therefore, it seems extremely foolish to let all this hard work go down the drain simply because the institution cannot make up its mind whether or not to merge.

Like most of you, I have mixed feelings about merger. On the one hand, I can see the advantages of being stimulated by the university and urban setting. However, I believe that the group which would gain the most from such a move would be the faculty. On the other hand, I know from present experience that one can receive a fairly decent theological (Cont'd next col.)

To Merge...(Cont'd from col. 1)

education in a non-university and a semi-rural setting. Yet, the threat of provincialism is never very far away. However, the time for debating the pros and cons of merger is rapidly drawing to a close. The time is almost upon us when we will have to stand up and be counted. The powers that be will simply have to make up their minds and commit us to one course of action or the other.

J. William Novak

ON INVOLVEMENT (Cont'd from page 2)

us to pine; or when the pointing fingers of the tourists make us feel that we are the remenant of the Union Army, then maybe a second look would be helpful.

And Jesus said to his disciples, "Which of these two brothers did the will of his Father?"

C. Pohlhaus