

Table Talk

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

Vol. III, No. 16

February 7, 1967

VIETNAM--THE CLERGYMAN'S DILEMMA

THE JEWISH-CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

"A time comes when silence is betrayal. That time has come for us in relation to Vietnam. As members of American churches and synagogues, we voice not only our own convictions, but seek also to articulate the unexpressed fears and longings of millions of Americans.... We speak in full awareness that no easy answers are available. But we believe that issues must be pressed and questions forced, if new answers are to be forthcoming. For the old answers no longer satisfy us."

Thus committed, over 2,000 Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish churchmen, most of them clergymen, met in Washington last week to express their concern with the Vietnam situation. At least 45 states were represented. Seminary faculty and students attending the mobilization from Gettysburg were: Dr. Wilken, Dr. Neiting, Dr. Hefner, Dr. Bream, Gerald Miller, Tim Hoffman, Ted Tatman, Bill Novak, and Bill Avery. A group of Gettysburg College faculty and students and several pastors from the area also attended.

Major activity of the mobilization took place on Tuesday. The group, organized by the Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam, met in order to "alert government officials of the serious concern of many citizens about the way the war in Vietnam is being prosecuted." The meeting, then, was not a pacifist demonstration against the war, but rather "an education-action mobilization." Although many different opinions and ideas were expressed during these few days, rarely if ever was a purely pacifistic position heard.

Registration began Tuesday morning in the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. Among the items of business opening the day was the presentation of a position
(Cont'd on page 4)

The plaudits and laurels usually bestowed on the officials and participants of such conferences, in this case, just happen to be well deserved. The information, but overly long, presentations and responses were extremely provocative. Perhaps the tempo of the whole day was set by the few questions which followed the first series of speakers. They were frank, to the point, and revealing of the basic concerns which Jews feel in their relationships with Christians. These conferences are always in danger of degenerating into superficiality, resulting in a cheap and temporary acceptance of each other without a true recognition of the serious differences. Last week's conference, thankfully, avoided this banality.

Simply stated their concerns (and, of course, ours too) can be boiled down to two: (1) disdain for the Christian accusation that Jews are guilty for the death of Jesus, as reflected in the polemical parts of the New Testament and in Christian Theology, and (2) disdain for the "conversion impulse," fed by the erroneous belief that only Christians possess the truth and are thus "saved." No one can question the validity of these concerns, and the fact that they were expressed was, in itself, indicative of the conference's success.

One of the major sources for these and other problems is the appalling ignorance each has concerning the other. The conference did not end this, but at least it served to make many of us aware more of it. Dr. Wilken's announcement that the seminary will, in the future, offer a course in contemporary Judaism will be a first step in ending this ignorance.

Perhaps the most important result of all is symbolic in nature. The fact that a Christian seminary, as an official organ of the Church, is willing to take seriously
(Cont'd on page 3)

TRUDY TIEKKEN COLUMN

STAFF

Dear Miss Tiekken,

I am confronted with a very perplexing problem. Since last Tuesday, many people have been antagonistic to me. Among other things, Dr. Herb won't let me ride on his motor scooter, Dr. Wilken refuses to shake my hand, Chuck Miller and Sandy Taylor have joined forces against me, and Mrs. Gritsch scowls at me whenever I pass her on the street. Can you help?

Ben T. Z.

Dear Ben,

Perhaps penance would be your best recourse. I suggest you say three "Our Great Scoutmaster's" and ten "Hail Baden-Powell's."

Sincerely,
Trudy Tiekken

(The following letter was received as a hand-printed note, obviously the work of a small child.)

Dear Miss Tiekken,

I have a problum. My Daddy and us are leaving Getysburg next yeer. We are going to New York. I like it at a Luthern skool but he doesnt. Make him stay.

Gregory

Dear Gregory,

You must remember that your Daddy (Father) has a job to do. I'm sure that his students are glad to see him get a better job. Who knows, some day he may be an archbishop.

Sincerely,
Trudy Tiekken

Dear Miss Tiekken,

I am a newly ordained Roman Catholic priest. I am much concerned that Christianity be relevant so I have thought about having madras chasubles made. Do (Cont'd next col.)

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TRUDY TIEKKEN (Cont'd)

you think this is a good idea?

Father Young

Dear Father,

I'm not so sure this is the best way to be relevant, but a friend of mine predicts that you will have the only vestments which bleed furing the sacrifice of the Mass.

Trudy Tiekken

WOTS NEWS

On Tuesday evening, January 31st WOTS and the Seminary community was privileged to witness the presentation of Edward Albee's "The Zoo Story" by the Chancel players of St. Matthew Church, Hanover. The cast of two included Ned Rutledge as Jerry and Bob Sheffer as Peter. The play was directed by Jean Rutledge, the wife of the leading character. For those of you who attended I'm sure the play provided you with enjoyment as well as a great deal of food for thought and room for personal interpretation. For those not in attendance--you really missed something!

Don't forget our next WOTS meeting on Thursday, February 16. Dr. Myers will be our guest speaker and once again we will be privileged to be the guests of Dr. and Mrs. Heiges in their home for the meeting. Hope to see you there.

Lanie Nagle

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

What kind of face does Lutheranism present to the rest of Christianity? What need is there for us to get to know the life of other churches? We can't answer either question unless we've made serious efforts at communication on a person-to-person basis. When students from Mt. St. Mary's Seminary visited here in November both questions became alive for all who took part. But they insisted they benefited far more than we did. And it's true. Visiting a seminary and breathing its atmosphere mean much more than encountering a seminarian away from his home ground. This Saturday we can take advantage of what was available to them on their visit here. From noon until after the evening meal we are invited to be their guests for conversation, worship, and fellowship. If you plan to attend give your name to Steve Yelovich or Jere Hock by 3:30 Wednesday, Feb. 8.

Mt. St. Mary's image of Gettysburg Seminary and of Lutheranism will be significantly influenced by our response to their invitation. Likewise, our own view of Catholicism depends upon taking advantage of such opportunities. Remember the Wednesday 3:30 deadline for registration (this is necessary so that we can pre-inform them of the number coming).

Jere Hock

VIETNAM.. (Cont'd from page 4)
service was to be used for The Committee of Responsibility to Save War Burned and War Injured Vietnamese Children.

There is no doubt that the mobilization was a success in that it accomplished its stated goal of making congressmen and the nation more aware of the complexities of the Vietnam situation. Although most participants came with their own position clearly established, the insights presented at this meeting opened the minds of everyone.

"We who are so deeply involved in the immensity of the present war must have the courage to initiate the steps that will lead to peace. If we do not take those steps, we firmly believe that God will (Cont'd next col., this page)

PICTURE OF THE WEEK

No romance surrounds the labors of the man with the hoe on an archeological dig. He humbly scrapes up the debris left from the swift flashing arc of the pickman. He is a sort of scavenger, picking bare the ancient skeletons. If there are treasures, it is usually not his to dig them out. Most of the time he only rescues pieces of broken pots from the stones which he pulls into the rubber basket along with the dirt. It is sweaty work, and only the glamor of hard cash would induce an Arab to take it on.

No doubt none of the men of Deir Dibwan in this picture realized that they were working away at a spot where some four thousand and six hundred years ago other men had wrestled rocks up into walls, building a city for the Egyptians. This was perhaps six hundred years before Abraham, during the early bronze age, when the tools of iron that our Arabs were using would have been more precious than gold.

The third man from the left side of this picture is filling a basket by means of his hoe. Another worker stands to the right of him, holding a basket in his hands behind his back. He is talking to a hoe man who illustrates perfectly how to act between the small, controlled bursts of action proper to his job.

Dr. Howard Bream

VIETNAM.. (From col. 1, this page)
judge us harshly, and will hold us accountable for the horror we continue to unleash. But if we do turn about, if we seek to undo whatever measure we can of the wrong that has been done, then we also firmly believe that as we walk that long and hard and often discouraging road, God himself will be with us, to guide and chasten and sustain us, and that he will deign to use seven us in restoring some portion of the divine creation we have so grievously misused.

Ted Nelson Tatman

JEWISH-CHRISTIAN (Cont'd from page 1)
the concerns of the Jews (without attempting to "convert" them) is extremely significant. Maybe now more Jews will be less apprehensive of such meetings. And maybe more Christians will undertake such self-examinations without that disdainful ulterior motive. (After all, aren't we both really of the same faith?)

Bob Pielke

VIETNAM.. (Cont'd from page 1)

paper prepared by the executive committee of the Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam. Dr. Robert McAfee Brown of Stanford University was chiefly responsible for writing the paper, which is quoted briefly at the beginning and end of this article: (1) the U.S. should assure the Communists that it is genuinely ready to negotiate and does not expect to gain diplomatically what could not be won militarily. (2) The bombing of North Vietnam should be halted. (3) The NLF, the political arm of the Vietcong, should be accepted at peace talks. (4) The role in ending the war and maintaining peace should be increased for the UN and other agencies such as the International Control Commission. The paper was subsequently presented to the President and to other government officials.

After these preliminaries, the group walked to the White House where a silent, placard-less, one-hour vigil was held. The tenor of the group was well-disciplined, thoughtful, and respectful. Rallied by the American Council of Christian Churches, a few hundred "Churchmen for Victory" marched across the street. Both groups walked without incident. At this time Gettysburg seminarians met three students from the Maywood campus of the Chicago seminary, and several pastors and a deaconess who were friends of our seminary students and faculty members.

The group then proceeded to the Capitol. Since their police permit recognized them only as "predestrians," the group moved four abreast along the sidewalks of 15th Street and Constitution Avenue. Most of the participants had made an appointment with various senators and representatives, and the afternoon was taken up by visits with these officials by individuals and groups.

About 20 citizens of the Gettysburg Congressional District met with Congressman George Goodling. Mr. Goodling agreed with the group in wanting peace, but his primary response to the question of the group was, "Don't you think we should stop Communism?" (Cont'd next col.)

VIETNAM.. (From col. 1, this page)

Congressman M. Gene Snyder (R., Ky.), who is a member of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod and an ultra-conservative, was not interested in pursuing the Vietnam matter too deeply. However, he did say that he is not satisfied with President Johnson's position, and he believes that the war could be won, "in two or three weeks, if we bombed the right targets." He pointed out that this could be done without the use of nuclear weapons and without killing civilians. He did not seem to be able to define what the right targets might be.

Between 160 and 180 citizens from Pennsylvania attended a meeting held in the Labor and Public Welfare Committee room in the Senate Office Building late in the afternoon. Both Pennsylvania Senators, Joseph Clark (D.), and Hugh Scott (R.), were present. Sen. Scott maintained that the administration knows what it is doing, and that Americans should trust the President and his advisors. Sen. Clark, on the other hand, was very much for stopping the bombing of North Vietnam. Sen. Clark indicated that more and more senators have become dissatisfied with the progress of the war, and advised us to watch his fellow senator for indications of the pulse of the Senate. "As Hugh Scott goes on Vietnam, there probably goes the Senate," he said. He further pointed out that President Johnson is under terrific pressure to change the course of the war, because "if we aren't out of Vietnam by the spring of 1968, we'll have a Republican president in 1969." Sen. Clark advised those present to continue to do as they were doing that day, "only louder."

Other participants in the mobilization were likewise busy meeting their congressmen at this time. It is apparent that some of the more lively meetings were those with Sen. Dirksen and Sen. Fulbright.

Tuesday evening, a service of witness was held in the church. Speakers included Dr. Brown, Rabbi Abraham Heschel, William Sloan Coffin (chaplain at Yale University), Father John Cronin, and Rabbi Jacob Weinstein. The offering received at this

(Cont'd on page 3)