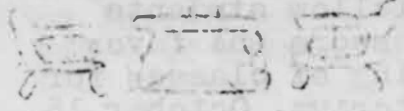


Table Talk



Lutheran Theological
at Gettysburg, Pa.

VOL V NO 1

God might be Dead,
but Apathy isn't.

I suppose that I should have expected as much but only 46 out of a possible 130 students (35% filled out their poll for Table Talk, only 1 MAR student, only 4 members of the 16 staff and administration, only 9 of the 16 faculty members, and only 15 of the approximately 80 faculty and student wives. I had hoped to find out how the seminary viewed the war. It seems that for many the war does not affect them or a poll like this has little use. Basically it goes down to, "what can I do?" The answer was nothing. I have heard people complain, "oh they are bringing up that subject again." I thought that maybe Sen. McCarthy, if the only contribution he made last year, was to show that we all have a voice and if united we can do something. Possibly President Nixon's meagre attempts to end the war satisfied many people, yet the Harris Poll, from Oct. 6, 1969 issue of the Washington Post, page A6 reports that President Nixon's attempts at peace (or war) in Vietnam has lost popular ground. In June, 47% of the nation (cont'd on page 3)

The War in Vietnam -
Is it Moral?

Is the U.S. involvement in Vietnam moral? There are quite a few values that enter people's judgment on its propriety. A lot depends on which one you place at the top of the hierarchy of virtues. --"Make Vietnam safe for democracy" is a value which means much to those who find the U.S. engagement moral. --"Live up to our commitments" is (cont'd on page 3)

War

No one approves of war any more than he does of sin. The Vietnam war is the most unpopular one in our history, though none of our wars has been without protesters. Most of us who deplore the whole ugly business remained strangely quiet when we began slipping into it. Could it not just be that by virtue of various political and other pressures exerted in Congress and elsewhere everything possible is being done by the authorities to bring this war to a conclusion? When you have a lion by the tail you do have to exercise some caution as to when and how to let him go. (cont'd on page 3)

VIETNAM: Shibboleth for American Christianity?

Vietnam has become the shibboleth of American foreign policy; the world is beginning to judge this nation on the basis of its predicament in Southeast Asia. At the same time, Vietnam has become a test for American Christians. Is this a war which protects the "national interest"-- like World War II, or even Korea? Does involvement in Vietnam signify American political responsibility for the welfare of the world? (See the State of the Union Message of Jan. 12, 1966). Or does Vietnam represent the predicament of a nation whose blessings on all levels of existence have become its own curse? The answers to these questions are legion, posed by men who represent anything from dedicated love of mankind to sick minds entering the tough arena of world politics. But whatever the answers, an academic community-- and I assume this includes professional Christians-- must approach the issue in terms of reasonable argumentation based upon solid evidence, and strive for a settlement which will result in the establishment of peaceful human relations.

It is my opinion that neither reasonable arguments based upon solid evidence nor a forceful communication of a desire to establish peaceful human relations have been
(continued on page 3)

Regardless

To fellow students and professors who favor the closing of classes for the Moratorium, October 15.

Regardless of our position on the validity of the moratorium, I personally believe that certain questions must be raised in regard to the halting of classes.

Since, no doubt, there will be those individuals who would laugh and sneer at someone's desire to attend classes I openly admit that I welcome a cancelled class now and then for any valid reason.

But what is a Valid reason? A personal desire to be doing something else that is not a necessity?

The question to be raised is this (among others): Is being involved in the moratorium something which should be done on one's own time or should be done using the class hours of an institution (in which, perhaps, not all the members agree with this use of time)!!

I would grant that there is a learning experience involved in the moratorium but should this learning experience be substituted for the learning experiences of the classroom or should it be in addition to the classroom experience? (cont'd on pg 3)

Regardless
(cont'd from page 2)
Finally, I believe I have
an investment in this senior
year--if nothing else, my
\$100 tuition fee. I did
not pay this tuition for
the purpose of ringing
dorbells!!

Charles L. Stetler

God - Apathy
(cont'd from page 1)

approved of his policy, but
since the cut backs, only
35% in September agree with
Nixon's war policy. Pres-
ident Johnson's lowest
point was 27%, and this was
just prior to when he dec-
ided to withdraw his nom-
ination as President. Maybe
President Nixon will also
get the idea that the
people elected him, and are
not going to put up with
his policies much longer.
Apparently here on campus,
tucked away from the world
the war is not a factor in
our lives. Possibly since
we are draft exempt, we do
not care either way about it.

On the question of
whether we should be in
Vietnam, 72 out of 78 (92%)
said wh should not be there,
(2 middlers, a faculty
member, a wife and 2 staff
members believe we should
be in Vietnam) On the
different options on the
further course of the war,
by far the most popular cho-
ice was the 6th, all troops
out by the end of next year.
(52 out of 75 - 70%) Added
with the other choices
beyond Nixon's withdrawal
not contingent upon Hanoi,
which had 5 1/2 votes, added
(cont'd on page 4)

Is it Moral?
(cont'd from page 1)
another which, if placed
high in the scale, tends
to render the verdict "pro"
--"If we don't take a stand
there, we'll soon have a
Communist invasion here"
is a viewpoint in favor of
the U.S. commitment.--
"The balance of power in
Asia makes the U.S. mil-
itary presence a neces-
sity." This aspect, if
prominently displayed, det-
ermines the pro-war attitude.
--"The containment of China
requires a U.S. military
bastion in Vietnam." Mr.
Dean Rusk forwarded this
defense for the offensive
in Vietnam. Many are of his
opinion. --"Stopping now
would be betraying those
who have died and been woun-
ded so far." Not a few argue
this war on the morality of
the Vietnam war.
(cont'd on page)

War
(con't from page 1)
The general public, inclu-
ding the writer, is unfam-
iliar with the background
of the war and totally ig-
norant of current moves
and countermoves behind the
scenes to end it. Then, too,
there are two sides to every
question. We hear little
if any criticism of the
atrocities on the other
side perpetrated against
those of their own people
who disagree with them.
Solutions will hardly yield
to demonstrations which are
really a surrogate for the
imposition of demands with-
out risk to life or too
hard, patient work. They
might yield to participation
(cont'd on page 4)

God - Apathy

(cont'd from page 3)
to the above choice means that 75% of the seminary disapproves of Nixon's Vietnam policies -- 10% higher than the nation as a whole. The breakdown on the class was Juniors, 75% Middlers, 78%, Seniors 77%, the faculty 66%, the staff 50% and wives 58% voted for complete withdrawal by 197. Only two people (both staffmembers) voted to accelerate until we win. No one voted for continuing like we were before the withdrawals. So 92% say we should not be in Vietnam. Surprisingly almost 67% say that they will either march to the peacelight or participate in some other way.

Of the questions where you would still vote for H H H over Nixon today, if he was your choice and vice versa proved really to be of little value because out of the 76 polls, 20 answered both questions, since the question was ambiguous. So of the people who answered only one every one (36) who voted for H H H would still back him. Of the 21 people who answered just the 2nd question 18 said they would still vote for Nixon over H H H today. That shows that H H H is preferred over Nixon 39 to 18. Of the remaining 20 who answered one yes and one no 13 were affirmative of Nixon and 7 with H H H. So today by all those polled, H H H was preferred 46 to 31.

Since the national average had 60% approving of his presidency, I would assume that many Nixon supporters did not fill out the poll.
(cont'd on page 5)

War

in the democratic process of rational discussion of all sides at issue. Perhaps there ought to be a bit more unspectacular demonstration by us church enrollees of the meaning of life in Christ and a more evangelical concern about the souls of men, including our own. Only when we are subject to the control of the spirit of Christ will wars cease and men desist from forcing their will on others whether by the violence of war or of demonstration. Men of good will have worked at this business for thousands of years and we have not yet shown ourselves to be wiser than they. I am afraid the way to peace in Vietnam and elsewhere is far more rugged and demanding than the fitfully easy one of demonstration. It requires sacrificial living over a long period of time.

J. M. Myers

VIETNAM: Shibboleth
(cont'd from page 2)
presented by the Administration--despite the recent diplomatic search for peace. For this reason, I think the following issues need to be raised, investigated and possibly resolved reasonably.

L). A long-range policy concerning relations with China and the various governments in Asia. Why is it that both long-range military, as well as diplomatic policies were avoided, when such policies
(cont'd on page 5)

God - Apathy

(cont'd from page 4)

On the list of preferred candidates, out of 67 42 1/2 were for democrats, 18 1/2 were for republican candidates and 6 were for others. The list went McCarthy 15 1/2, Muskie 12 5/6, Nixon 11, Kennedy and Lindsay 4 each, Julian Bond 3 1/3, H H H 2, Norman Mailer 1 1/2, Nixon-Percy team 1, Dick Gregory, Fullbright, Rockefeller, Cronkite, Eric Sevareid, Goldwater, Snoopy, Channing Phillips, Proxmire and Mark Hatfield 1 vote each. McGovern with 5/6 of a vote, and Percy and Ginsberg with 1/2 a vote each.

This poll shows that if the sample is representative on Nixon's policy about the war, that the seminary is just a little more critical of Nixon than the nation in general. I do have a feeling that more people interested in the moratorium filled out ballots since such a high percentage said they would participate in it, also because the seminary seemed more adverse to the Nixon administration than the nation. Last year's table talk poll on the election had Nixon ahead by a hair. I detect that the overriding issue is the war. No one has taken up the cause against the war strongly enough to unite much of a backing, so maybe a solid front against the war is needed for peace efforts to be effective.

Following are the comments written by students on their ballots. Throughout this issue are articles by, Dr. Hoffman, Dr. Myers, Dr. (cont'd on page 6)

VIETNAM: Shibboleth

(cont'd from page 4)

were made for Europe? Do Americans care more about Europeans, their intellectual "grandfathers", than they do about Asians? Or is it the intension of the government to involve itself in the problems of other nations only when the government of such a nation asks it to? Is this really the case in Vietnam? Why then the suggestion that involvement in Vietnam serves the "national interest" or that it is based upon the "moral obligation" to create democratic governments around the globe?

2). A balance between political and military objectives in Vietnam. Why is it that the Pentagon cannot do better than to react to the military maneuvers of North Vietnam, thus "escalating" the war? Could not a military blockade, similar to that of Cuba, have been imposed long before it became necessary to debate the number of soldiers required to match the forces of the other side? Or is it the position of the Administration not to use the threat of full military might against aggression? Why then the moral argument against a political position that has made no effort to take the moral issues seriously, as seems to be the case in Hanoi?

3). Finally after the arguments have been presented and fully communicated to the world and its political representatives, (cont'd on page 6)

God - Apathy
(cont'd from page 6)
Gritsch, and Charles Stetler. I would like to thank these people. Dr. Gritsch's article was printed three years ago in Table Talk but he feels it is still pertinent.

Junior-Neither H H H nor Nixon was my voice last year, but I must admit that Nixon is doing a better job than I expected; therefore he has my support."

Middler-"I felt we should not be in Vietnam in 1965, but I feel we should be there in 1969."

The following all are to do with choices for action in Vietnam.

Junior "Stop bombing for a month and if peace talks don't accelerate then increase bombing until peace has to be sought."

Junior-"Unilateral and immediate withdrawal!!"

Junior-"I favor giving S. Vietnam 30 days notice and then withdrawing all military personnel from that country except for a small contingent which would be assigned to guard our embassy in Saigon. The withdrawal of our troops should not take more than 30 days from the beginning of the withdrawal to the end. After all of our men are out of S. Vietnam we can negotiate to get all of our men out of N. Vietnam.

Middler-1. "Set a deadline for negotiations. 2. Pull our ground forces out. 3. Use the Air Force and Navy in a more efficient manner. 4. Using conventional bombs, Bomb the Hell out of North Vietnam!!"

(cont'd on page 7)

VIETNAM: Shibboleth
(cont'd from page 5)

Christians still face the question of whether war is able to provide the solution to the human problems existing in Vietnam--and elsewhere. (See the Policy statement and message of the National Council of Churches New York Times, December 4, 1965.) This is the issue squarely presented in the parable of the good Samaritan, which indicates both the predicament and the glory of the Judeo-Christian way of life: it is the question of whether or not someone will "go and do likewise" namely care for him who lies on the road because he was victimized by his fellow men. Perhaps the President of the United States has to reach a different solution

to how he must act than a Semanarian or a soldier. But we can expect at least a reasonable justification for any action. Unfortunately, a great majority of Americans have not justified their actions or feelings through reasonable argument. When on January 2, 1966, veterans of World War II and Korea marched for peace in Vietnam in Gettysburg, local citizens charged them with "atheism" and "communism" (contrary to investigated evidence). When soldiers died in Vietnam, their families received telephone calls from fellow citizens expressing pleasure for this death in battle, and adding that it was the wage of sin against the peace of God. This is the predicament; and this is the shibboleth for American Christians.

Eric W. Gritsch

God - Apathy

(cont'd from page 6)

The following are in answer to whether you will or will not participate in the moratorium.

Junior - "Pending the type of action suggested, i.e. memorial services, discussion, panel debates engaging speakers, marches to the Peace memorial, advertising, etc. -- Yes. Ringing doorbells -- No. (I feel that this would tend to evoke antagonism to our moratorium)

We should proceed on positive, demonstrative, optimistic methods (this, however, does not imply we must be passive or that our actions will thus be ineffective!!)."

Middler - "Depending upon the definition of that action."

Senior - "Depends on the quality of the "action" a candlelight service, for example, is insipid by itself."

Thank you all, again for your participation in the poll and for all comments.

Ken W. Hilston jr. (ed.)

MORATORIUM - Against

(taken, with permission of author, from Letters to the Editor, The Gettysburg Times)

Dear Sir:

On October 15 a small group of people unhappy with the war in Vietnam, with the President and in some cases with democracy itself, will stage a national demonstration attempting to force their will on our government.

Unfortunately, these (cont'd on page 8)

Is it Moral?

(cont'd from page 3)

The complexion of a moral compound depends on the way in which you distribute the ingredients. That's why there is a case for patience and tolerance in the Christian community in the face of people who take the opposite view. Much depends on which value is allowed to rule the hierarchy of moral values.

I have come to the conclusion that those who let one of the above evaluations rule the roost are letting the wrong moral value in as a guide to the other values. I am not saying that some of them are not important in a world of economic-military balancing. I am saying that in relation to the 25-year old conflict in Vietnam other moral modes should surge to the surface.

First there is the aspect of social justice. In this particular instance social justice cannot be promoted by a military effort. Consequently democracy will not be introduced this way. The U.S. is deeply involved with the land-owning status-quo groups in Vietnam.

Or take national freedom as a moral value. At least in relation to China the Vietnamese have always been nationalistic. At the very outset of the post-French era in Indo-China John Foster Dulles, in his unstatesman-like ideology-bind, had no sense for the possibilities of Vietnamese national ambition. All he saw was a crusade against world communism. He never signed the (cont'd on page 8)

MORATORIUM - against
(cont'd from page 7)
"irresponsibles" will produce far more noise than their numbers indicate. The great tragedy is their actions will encourage our enemies and result in increased violence and death.

I for one will display the United States flag that day, not as an endorsement of war, for we all oppose war, but as a vote of confidence in our President and our democratic system. I wonder how many other Americans will back our government's efforts to achieve peace with justice in this manner?

It is indeed the only answer that reasonable people can make to this destructive and juvenile movement.

A.L. Price - New Oxford Pa.

MORATORIUM: an answer
(also sent to The Gettysburg Times)

Dear Sirs,

In the October 10th issue of Letters to the Ed. there was a very cutting letter on the subject of the October 15th Peace Moratorium. This is my answer to A.L. Price, and all who feel like he does--

You say you are opposed to war--and yet by doing nothing you support it.

You say you will fly the flag to support the democratic system--and yet by your condemnation of the "other side" you destroy that democracy.

You say we "demonstrate to force our will on your government"--except that it (next col.

is our government too, only many of us have never had a vote.

You call us "irresponsibles"--and yet you work with us, and let our children go to the same schools.

You say you love your country--we love it too, we only want to see it remain for our families to love also.

Paula M. Hilston (middler's wife) A-9 Baughman Hall

Is it Moral?
(cont'd from page 7)
Geneva Accords, 1954, and left the negotiations in a huff. Instead he went to Asia and committed the U.S.A. to a new U.S.-dictated organization, SEATO. History will probably be hard on Dulles whose ideology led the U.S.A. away from the more human concerns involved in a natural love for country. Pragmatism would have been more moral in that case than ideology.

A third point. The suffering inflicted on millions of simple folk year after year cannot be defended. Mercy sometimes overrules contingencies of other hues. This is a case for mercy. If precisely that were not indirectly felt by the rulers of the U.S.A., the TV films of the impact of the war among Vietnamese people would not have disappeared half-a year ago. Mercy can be a danger to those who wish to continue the battle.

(cont'd on page 9)

Is it Moral?
(cont'd from page 8)

Fourthly, the morality of concession should take precedence over the morality of victory. This war cannot be won. I don't know for whom Richard Nixon thinks he speaks when he asserts he will not be the First American President to "preside over a defeat". I suppose there is a group on which he has his political eyes. But his statement is naive. In the case of Vietnam it becomes immoral to insist on victory. Concession can be more moral.

Fifth, the subterfuge employed by military, industrial and political leaders in order to keep the war going has hollowed out the moral ground for the American people. Johnson's Tonkin Bay hoax (I don't use that word lightly), the propaganda build-up for the bombing of North Vietnam, the equally unbelievable defense of the "Pacification Program"--all has in large part been designed to lead the American public astray. Colonel William Corson's book The Betrayal makes it clear that hiding or distorting facts in order to promote a cause may disintegrate the cause.--- There are other moral values to be placed ahead of those that back up the war, social needs in America, for instance.

What do we put first in our scale of moral values concerning the war in Vietnam? I know that morality should also be demanded of the "enemy". I won't deny anyone
(cont'd next col)

the right to say that he or she can still morally defend the war in Vietnam. But I would take the liberty to doubt that he or she is in the best moral tradition.
Bengt R. Hoffman

Staff

Most of the staff has not yet been appointed. However, anyone wishing to contribute an article to Table talk is free to do so and such would be welcome.

Managing Editor: Ken Hilston
Sports Editor: Henry Shilling
Typist: Paula Hilston

ATTENTION: Seminary community

W.O.T.S.

October 14, 1969

7:30 - Social Room

Ad. Building

Dr. Sandstedt and the returning middleers "tell it like it is"

Discussion of C.P.E.

Also Tues. October 28,
Halloween Parade and Party,
Get your costume.