



Providence

FALL • 1968

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Much has been written and printed about the confused state of the world in which we live, and *Providence* now adds a few comments on one source of this confusion----- the new generation.

President Haas explains the reasons for the apparent lack of student unrest on this campus in the face of the world student situation; and Father Hesburgh, President of Notre Dame, speaks to members of this generation, the 1968 graduates, urging them to become involved.

In allied articles, Charles Duffy of the English Department discusses the four thinkers who are vying for the position of spokesman for the generation and comes to some interesting conclusions about education based on the thinking of all four; and Providence College shows its continuing involvement as it plans for the future, so that it might continue educating and working with this generation and many more to come.

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Student Unrest

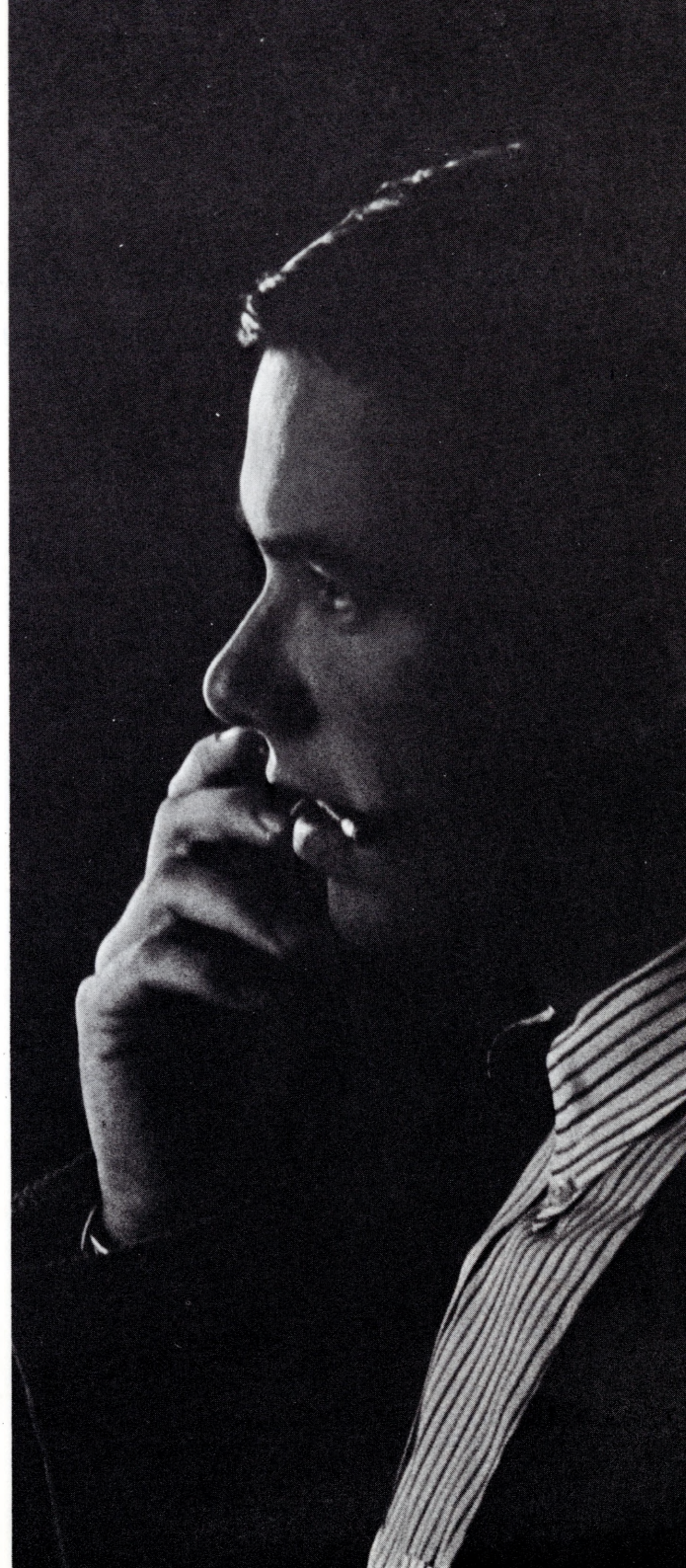
BY WILLIAM P. HAAS, O.P.
President, Providence College

What have we as a community of Dominican Friars to offer the academic world at a time of its greatest crisis? Are we so tradition bound and committed to an inflexible system that the struggle now confusing universities all over the world has not touched us because we are totally irrelevant to the contemporary scene?

Where were the Dominicans while Paris and all the other universities of France were closed in a battle over archaic educational practices as well as over political ideologies? The greatest Catholic university in Europe, Louvain, was closed for similar reasons. Another Catholic university, Sacred Heart in Milan, is in turmoil. Madrid is closed. The Free University of Berlin, a supposed bastion of democracy, is torn asunder. On the other side of the Iron Curtain, the universities of Poland are the scene of a profound struggle as was Charles University in Prague before the overthrow of the old guard communists.

To get closer to home, we have witnessed with considerable embarrassment the recent confusion at Catholic University in Washington and at Dayton, and before that, the great scandal at St. John's. Even our sister college, Albertus Magnus in New Haven, was not untouched by temporary madness. The situation at other proud and strong American universities is no better, as you all know.

the seeds are here



“... do not be deceived by the external tranquillity into believing that all is peaceful on the inside.”

And here sits Providence College practically undisturbed, except for a minor confrontation last year over some long hair. What is the reason for this? Is it because we are tough and resolute enough to dismiss anyone who disagrees with us? Is it that our philosophical and theological tradition is impregnable? Is it that all of our students are in complete sympathy with everything we do? Or is it that we compromise every time trouble rears its head?

In other words, why do we Dominicans seem to stand aloof from the worldwide academic upheaval and how do we remain unmoved by the domestic confusion surrounding us? The answer to these questions is as complex as the situation itself. I will not insult you with an oversimplified answer, therefore. We at Providence College are no better or wiser than the rest of man. In humility we must begin by thanking God for having spared us thus far from the trials which have beset Catholic and non-Catholic universities far greater than Providence College, with more capable administrations, stronger support and equal fidelity to faith and morals.

First of all, do not be deceived by the external tranquillity into believing that all is peaceful on the inside. We face an endless series of challenges to everything we stand for or thought we stood for. Within the administration itself there are widely divergent views of the world situation and how we should meet it. The healthiest thing is that we encourage the clear articulation of all views. We are, for example, seriously studying the problem of trusteeship with a view to establishing the strongest and most representative governing board for the College. While we are not rushing madly to add “showcase” laymen to the board, we are considering every source of qualified leadership. While we definitely want to strengthen the lay component in the administration and

governance of the College, we have no intention of disregarding the contribution from ecclesiastical sources.

Consider the state of our faculty, please. Though on the surface there are no tensions, the fact of the matter is that we have been consistently confronted with demands for the improvement of the faculty's lot as to finances, tenure, freedom and self-determination. If these demands have not erupted into some form of conflict, it may be because they have been met openly and sympathetically, with the consequent that we now have a Faculty Senate, truly representative of every interest in the College. This body promises to be the forum in which all problems, desires and creative impulses of the faculty can be expressed and faced constructively.

Consider our students. Surely they have treated controversial guest speakers with courtesy. Some have protested the visit of representatives of chemical manufacturers and government agencies which they thought were uncivilized, but they did it in a civilized way. They have argued openly against and for the Vietnam war. The COWL has been sarcastic, in error and critical, but not nearly as devastating as some college newspapers have been. Yes, the seeds of unrest are present among our students just as they are found among students the world over.

But the lid is still on. Why? Surely not because our students are made of another stuff, nor because they are immune to the influences that effect their fellows elsewhere. Nor do we enjoy a mimicry of peace under the threat of expulsion.

I would submit that whatever order and peace we enjoy is related to our policy of openness. The openness I am talking about is neither permissiveness nor passive indifference. It is

rather expressed in a search, which we must understand if we are ever to teach them anything, for the more profound implication in the experience of our students. We must understand to what degree they are subject to the confusion of senses which comes from the sterile banality of our cities' most manufactured things and in contrast with the explosions of sensuality they experience in magazines, films, hurried trips to the mountains or to Daytona Beach. We must understand what happens to a young man's faith when the strongest attacks upon it come from theologians who insist that whatever the word God used to mean is dead and over with. We must understand how students can consume their energies and emotions on such rightful causes as peace and social justice while squandering thousands of dollars on entertainment, extravaganzas and self-indulgence. How important, too, it is that we understand what is their view of history without heroes. All those figures of great stature that convinced us that the world was under wise management have disappeared with the conviction that they all suffered from the same basic weakness. And finally, we must calculate their suspicion that everyone who speaks on behalf of religion, patriotism, modesty and law is simply protecting his own interest.

It would take a book to explain why these feelings exist. The important thing is to acknowledge that they do indeed exist and that the students did not invent them out of thin air. They inherited the cynicism, the ambivalence, the doubt and the self-indulgence from us.

Here is where I think the peculiar genius of the Dominican mentality is extremely significant. Look at our history and our heroes. St. Dominic himself was an innovator of the first rank, conceiving a totally new form of flexible monastic

life to cope with the problems, philosophical, moral and political, of his age which were not being faced by the static monastic structures and were being further confused by the roving bands of self-appointed evangelists that flooded Europe. While a student in Spain, he sold his books, even the most valuable of them, to buy food for the poor, remarking as is recorded in the process of canonization: "I could not bear to study these dead skins (or parchments) if in consequence men die of hunger." Need we draw any agonizing parallels with the relationship of academic life to our own families.

Consider the rise of Thomas Aquinas in the early 13th Century when the University of Paris was on strike over a battle between students and an inn-keeper, the reading of Aristotle was forbidden, and theology was held in very low esteem. He saved Philosophy and Theology by daring to be an innovator and through his understanding of the spirit of his time.

Think upon the profound adjustment made by Cardinal Cajetan, the most profound Dominican intellect of his time, who changed his whole approach to Theology as a consequent of his confrontation with Luther in the 1540's. Having written some of the most profound commentaries on the works of Aquinas, he dropped the project and turned to the study of scripture because he realized that this was the area where the Church had to confront the new mentality of the Reformation.

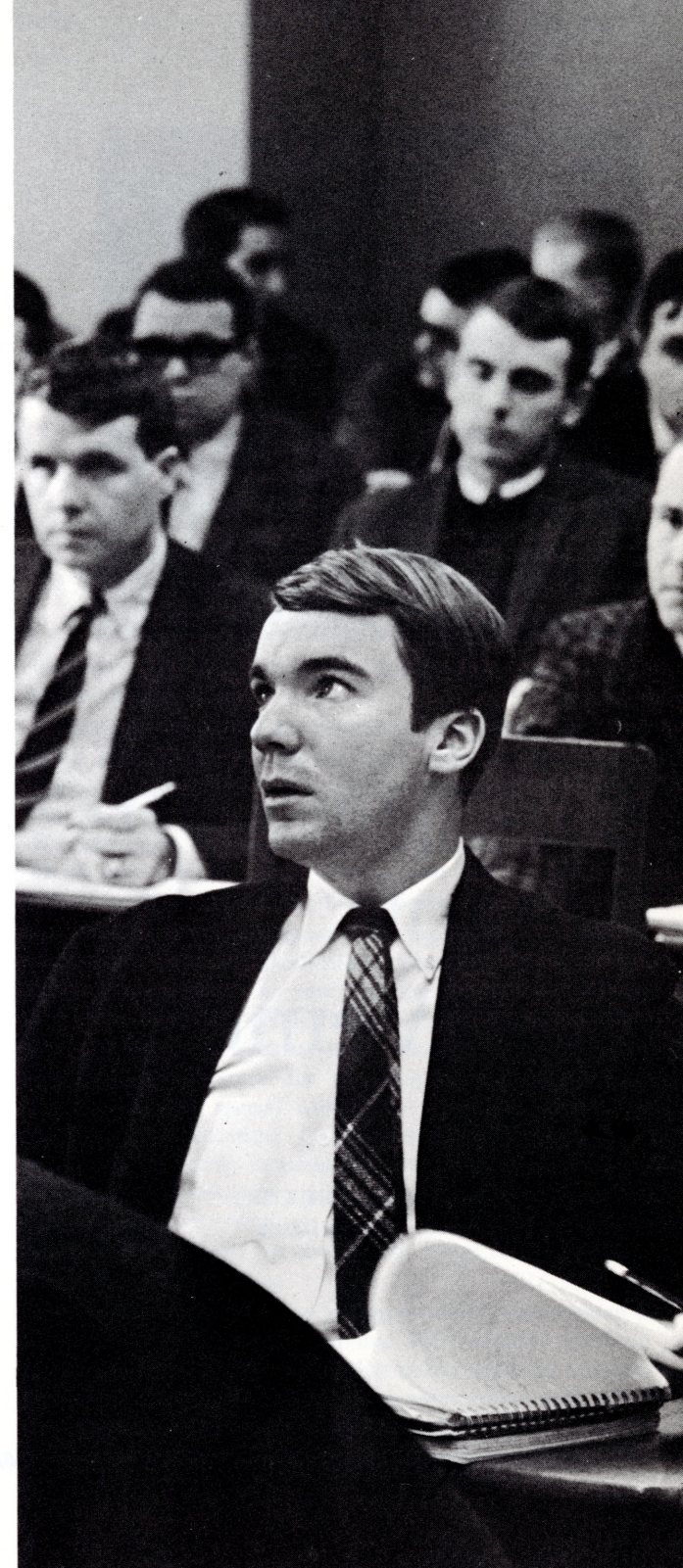
Remember the suffering of Joseph Marie Lagrange, who, at the turn of the century, endured the restraint of ecclesiastical pressure, having dared to assert that scriptural studies had to meet the implications of modernism, anthropology, archeology and linguistic studies.

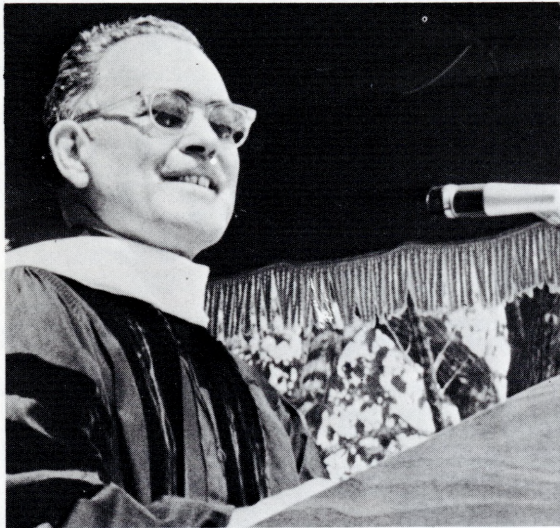
In our own day consider those outstanding Dominican theologians who so profoundly influenced the directions of contemporary Theology and the Council-Congar, Chenu, Schillebeeckx - again, all of whom suffered for their proclamation of the new ecumenism.

Finally, keep in mind the name of Fr. Paul Banquart, a French Dominican who presently is a leader in the Marxist-Christian dialogue which may very well prove the most important confrontation in this century. It may very well be that all the unrest in universities reflects a need for an honest view of socialism.

What this adds up to is this. The Dominican genius is that of the open mind and heart. We have been at our best and served the Church and mankind most effectively when we were in the vanguard of Christian intellectuals, putting our books aside when the needs of others required, daring to study sympathetically what others mimicked superficially, conceiving new structures to preserve society and to communicate the message of Christ. Thank God our students are asking of us precisely what our vocation as Christian scholars prepares us to provide - new insights, deep, clear, generously shared, courageously proclaimed.

If Providence College looks a little different from her sister institutions, it may be because this spirit is still alive, and that our lay colleagues and students chide us with a plea to be faithful to our heritage. It is this openness of the mind and heart which comes through the beautiful act of the young Dominic Guzman that assures our future. Our students ask love and honesty of us first. Having shown them that we understand the suffering they endure, we can be sure that they will readily imbibe whatever of the truth we have to share with them.





Compassion means involvement

BY THEODORE M. HESBURGH, C.S.C.
President, University of Notre Dame

*(Address given at the Commencement Exercises,
Providence College, Providence, Rhode Island, June 4, 1968)*

*“Nothing has really happened to you
if you are today a colorless,
neutral, or uncommitted person . . .”*

I should confess to you that last Thursday I was flying from London to New York along the Great Arc, and as the clouds seemed to pass endlessly far beneath me, it suddenly occurred to me that time was running out. In a few days I would be here with you, and, following the tribal custom, I would be expected to say something more or less significant to you on this important occasion.

When one thinks of all the thoughts that crowd the minds of graduates and their parents on a day like this, it is difficult to say something relevant to each one of you and the times through which we are passing.

Maybe the easiest way out is to get you to say something to yourselves. Let's start by asking a leading question? Are you happy that you are living where you are and when you are and as you are today? Did you ever think that you might have been someone else at a different period in history? You might have been born in a Neanderthal cave, or somewhat later in a Malaysian rain forest. You might have been born in an iron or bronze age village of the Middle East, or in the Egypt of the Pharaohs, or along the great pre-Christian migration trail somewhere between the Bering Straits and Tierra del Fuego. You can speculate yourself about other possible times and places, but the point is, however, that you are here and that whatever your preferences in the matter, you don't really have any choice. You can only be happy or unhappy about what is. I had an old priest friend who used to say — especially to married couples — success is getting what you want and happiness is wanting what you

get. That may have more relevance to marriage than to life in general, but it does lead me to speculate that while you are in a sense stuck with yourself, your times, and your present location, you can do something, with the grace of God, about all three of these realities.

This is not where I swing into the usual graduation routine about your remaking the world tomorrow morning, or by next week at the latest. I only ask you to ask yourself again if you are happy about you, and Providence, and June 4, 1968. If you answer "yes" in any unconditional or absolute sense, then I suggest that the present ceremony and the four years of education preceding it are lost on you. Maybe we should argue a little with each other. My point is that if Catholic higher education does anything, it should make you somewhat unhappy with yourself, and your situation, and your times. Not that I came here to advocate unhappiness as a goal or an ideal or even a permanent state of mind, but perhaps more clearly to combat smugness, the false and facile happiness of those who really do not appreciate what they do not yet know, who would rather compromise with a half-way decent situation than work to make it a little more decent, who accept the enormous blessings of our times rather than see the challenge of making the world better for the great majority who do not enjoy any of the blessings of our developed world.

You've heard the expression, "I'm happy as a clam." This is generally a fairly good description of those who use it. If a clam is happy, it is because he knows nothing and has no

vision beyond the confining, though secure, walls of a shell. As long as the shell is closed, the clam is safe and secure, happy, if you will, and stupid and useless, too.

I know a young man, recently graduated, with two jobs, neither of which he really wants. He really wants to be a doctor. Unless he went to medical school, which means harder work and no pay for a few years, he would be unhappy with himself and his situation. I recommended to him that he read a life of Tom Dooley, which I suspected would make him very unhappy indeed.

It seems silly at first glance that one would be happier doing something harder, leaving a secure situation for years of insecurity. But that, thank God, is the way we are really made. It is only by deceiving ourselves, or better, allowing ourselves to be satisfied with half visions and half goals that we can enjoy what I called a false and facile happiness, and thus rid ourselves of that divine discontent that drives men and women to press forward towards all the greater possibilities that life offers, possibilities that lead to a deeper and more meaningful, indeed, more human and less clam-like kind of happiness.

Back to the question now. Are you really happy with yourself, your situation, or your times? I hope I've made it a little more difficult for you to answer the question for yourself. Again, what I am really asking is: did your education take? Did you just go through a prescribed list of courses, for a number of years, to acquire a few letters after your name, without anything really happening to you inside? I'm

not assuming that it did happen this way, but for too many, this is the sad story.

All of us who spend our lives in Catholic higher education know that we are wasting our time unless something happens to you, in a sense, that you find yourself in the process, that you somehow confront the really important questions in life and death. The answers to these questions have to show up in your life as values — what you live for, what you should be ready to die for, if necessary.

Nothing has really happened to you if you are today a colorless, neutral, or uncommitted person, if you drift with the crowd, let others do your thinking and form your opinions for you, if you simply fit comfortably into the mold of what is, instead of seeking and working for what ought to be. In a word, beyond the maturing of the mind and the growth in some special competence which is true of any valid higher education, Catholic higher learning should make you especially conscious of those spiritual and moral dimensions of your personal life, the spiritual quality of your goals in time, the relevance of these to your eternity, or as St. Thomas so nicely put it: the right things to have faith in, to hope for, and to love.

Sometimes when I see a young graduate whose vision is circumscribed by a local job that only requires seven or eight hours a day of routine undemanding work for a decent salary, a comfortable house with a comfortable wife and a comfortably-sized family, the usual good measure of fun and games, the comfortable companionship of only comfortable



people like himself, with a comfortable spiritual outlook and a comfortable moral commitment to everything mediocre and bourgeois, I am somewhat appalled by this modest, flaccid, unimaginative, unimpressive, and really uneducated result of Catholic higher education. We have no monopoly or copyright on such products, but each one that exists represents time and talent and dedication wasted.

This is why I ask each of you: Are you happy with yourself, your values, your goals, your character, your mind and heart and your use of both, your ideals, and your vision of what you can be? If you are both a saint and a scholar, you can afford to be happy with yourself as you are — but you won't because saints and scholars never are. If you are less than a saint or scholar, you will at least be a little wiser if you know that you still have work to do, to be all that you personally might be. I would hope that you probably have grown intellectually, morally and spiritually in these past years. I believe it was Faulkner who said that man is immortal not just because he expresses himself endlessly, but because he has a soul and a spirit capable of compassion and dedication and sacrifice.

The second test for you is your reaction to the actual situation in this world. Are you willing to settle for that kind of life that is safe, secure, unchallenging, really unproductive in time and eternity? I realize that not everyone can pioneer can lead or inspire, or sacrifice greatly - but still in every life there must at least be the hunger for deeper meaning.

A few years ago, I visited a young couple working with the Peace Corps in Chile. I had known them before in graduate school. He was in business — very promising — and she was a graduate nurse. Then they decided that they should dedicate a few years of their early married life to something beyond themselves. So they joined the Peace Corps and were sent to a Chilean town named Los Andes,

in the foothills of Cordillera, on the road to the great pass where one sees the statue of Christ of the Andes.

They did many things there — started cooperatives and health programs, organized community development in a slum of 6,000 people. If the tourist crowd on their way to ski in Portilla had seen Pat and Joe in their slum, they would have been shocked to see them living and working of their own free will. But it was off the main road. And tourists would probably have thought them foolish. But Pat and Joe told me that their lives will undoubtedly be richer because of their two years of poverty; their marriage more secure because of the insecurity they had taken upon themselves.

If Catholic higher education does not inspire young people to dare, to be different, to give of themselves, to court insecurity for a higher end, then it will have no serious reason to survive. Christ, our Lord, did not come to proclaim the easy way; he came to cast fire on the earth. Education that presumes to describe itself as Christian must somehow generate this spark in the lives of those who study under its auspices.

The third and final test that I propose to you is to ask yourselves how you view our times. If you say, as you correctly observe the contemporary scene here in America, "We never had it so well," you would be quite delinquent as members of a world society. Earlier, I observed that you might have been born in a different age where ignorance, disease or poverty or homelessness prevailed. What is perhaps more relevant now is that you know none of these realities — but they are still the lot of the majority of the people living today. This is the fact, though it need not be, for now, thanks to modern science and technology, man can be liberated from these ancient bondages.

This liberation will not happen just because it is possible,

any more than justice in the whole matter of civil rights will come to be in America just because justice is possible. We still need persons who do not simply accept the world as is, but are willing to do what can be done in these our times. One would hope that Catholic higher education would inspire at least a few who would be willing to challenge the times, to attempt to change that which is into that which should be.

Each day as you get up, you face this moment of truth. I have no concern about the intellectual quality of the education you have received. What I am concerned about is the something else that you have or have not acquired here. The something else transcends knowledge, technical competence, and even ability. It is of the heart, rather than the head. It is a special Christian quality hinted at by St. Paul when he described the pagans as being "without affection." Our Lord put it more directly when in answer to Cain's ancient question: "Am I my brother's keeper?", he said, "Whatsoever you do for one of these My least brethren, you do for Me."

You can call it human love, or charity, or compassion, or concern, dedication, involvement; but whatever you call it, if Christian higher education gives you everything else, as it should, and lacks this special quality, this yearning to contribute something of human love to the world, then in the end every other fine quality you possess will sound and fade away like "echoing bronze and clashing cymbals."

I do not know where your paths will lead each one of you in the days ahead. The place to which you go is nowhere near as important as what you do when you get there. My prayer for each of you today, which is also a prayer for all mankind, is that you have a happy and productive life ahead, that all you have learned and will yet learn will profit others as well as yourself, that whatever your work or your place of work, something else happens because you are



there — because you suffer with all who suffer, hope with all who hope, seek justice for all who suffer injustice, give of yourself for the better world aborning, and find in all of this a fuller, happier life. I pray that none of you may be as happy as a clam.

Once more, let it be said that heroes, heroines and martyrs are not produced wholesale, but if none are produced, then something is wrong with an educational system that for centuries needed them to exist. So I challenge you today to ask yourself — am I one such? Am I willing to give all I am and all I have to help balance what is and what ought to be?

As I came to this point in my writing, we were arriving at the John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York. The place is not important. The name and the person are very important for the first Catholic President was ever unsatisfied with himself as a person, with his situation, and his times. This led him to do something about all three.

A psychologist from Berkeley recently outlined the qualities that a creatively mature person should possess. I quote him to you today, because I believe that his description fits President Kennedy and outlines a kind of ideal that one could and should expect of graduates of Catholic higher education:

“These (qualities) include self-respect and good sense, personal courage, independence and a sense of humor; good taste, a certain innocence of vision and spontaneity of action; honesty of thought and behavior; social responsibility, and democracy in interpersonal relations. These mature ones should be persons who assumed responsibility for themselves, who treated others decently, and who felt friendly with their own past and unafraid of their future. Finally, they should be able in their own lives to contribute something of human love to the world.”

One could comment on each point of this analysis, but

you will forgive me if I confine myself to the last point — the matter of your contributing something of human love to the world.

First, a word about the world and you. One of the great central ideas emerging from Vatican Council II is collegiality which, among other things, means that every bishop is responsible not just for his local diocese, but the whole world. One might extend the idea to every Christian. Our concern cannot be restricted to the narrow confines of our own personal life and the few people our life immediately touches. Our interest, our concern, indeed our Christian commitment to justice and charity must encompass, insofar as possible, the whole world.

Centuries ago, Terence wrote of himself in a far less complicated world, “nil humanum mihi alienum” - nothing human is alien to me. How much more should educated and dedicated Christians embrace this idea today, in a world vastly more populous, more complicated, yet shrunken to a point where no person on earth is more than a day away by jet, a split second by phone. We are witnessing today unprecedented world revolutions; for human dignity and equality, for human development un hoped for during all previous centuries. Man no longer need be a slave to ignorance — but almost a billion people, a third of the world’s population, suffer the mental blindness of illiteracy. No person need be hungry with today’s new agricultural technology, yet about half the people in the world are hungry and undernourished. No person need endure the debilitating diseases that have plagued mankind since his birth — yet, at this moment, hundreds of millions of people are needlessly trapped in the half life and early death that these afflictions bring.

Have these basic hopes of mankind ever reached your heart? One can be a lifelong inhabitant of this world, alive,

but like the idols described by the Psalmist in Psalm 113:

They have mouths but speak not
They have eyes but see not
They have ears but hear not
They have noses but smell not
They have hands but feel not
They have feet but walk not
They utter no sound from their throats.”

Is not this the opposite from what I described earlier as the creatively mature person: “They should be able in their own lives to contribute something of human love to the world.”

Human love in this equation is akin to compassion — the unwillingness to be a mere spectator. During the past Holy Week, an Eastern newspaper carried a cartoon showing a modern man walking away from a crowded street down which Christ staggered under His cross. Someone asked him, as he turned away, “Why?” The answer was typical, if not inspiring: “I just don’t want to get involved.”

Compassion in today’s world means involvement. Where? Wherever educated Christians are needed and wherever they can contribute. In every community in America, and more deeply throughout the world, the struggle for human equality and human development is in progress. Needless human suffering and anguish are a sad reality everywhere here and, especially, abroad. There is a new hope burgeoning on all sides, a new spring for mankind long sunk in hopelessness — but the new hope will be empty, forlorn, and frustrating unless larger numbers of educated Christians open their clam shells, cultivate compassion in their inmost hearts and begin to weigh the contribution of human love that they can make to the world.

History in search of a poet

BY CHARLES F. DUFFY
Instructor in English

History, as usual, is in difficulty again. Ancient societies idealized it, early medieval times ignored it. Renaissance potentates wielded it as propaganda, and Henry Ford called it "bunk." But today it suffers from claustrophobia - we huddle earnestly around the good deal of it we have, and expect a lot more of it. At critical turns in the history of the West, great men and great cultures have been presented this fate.

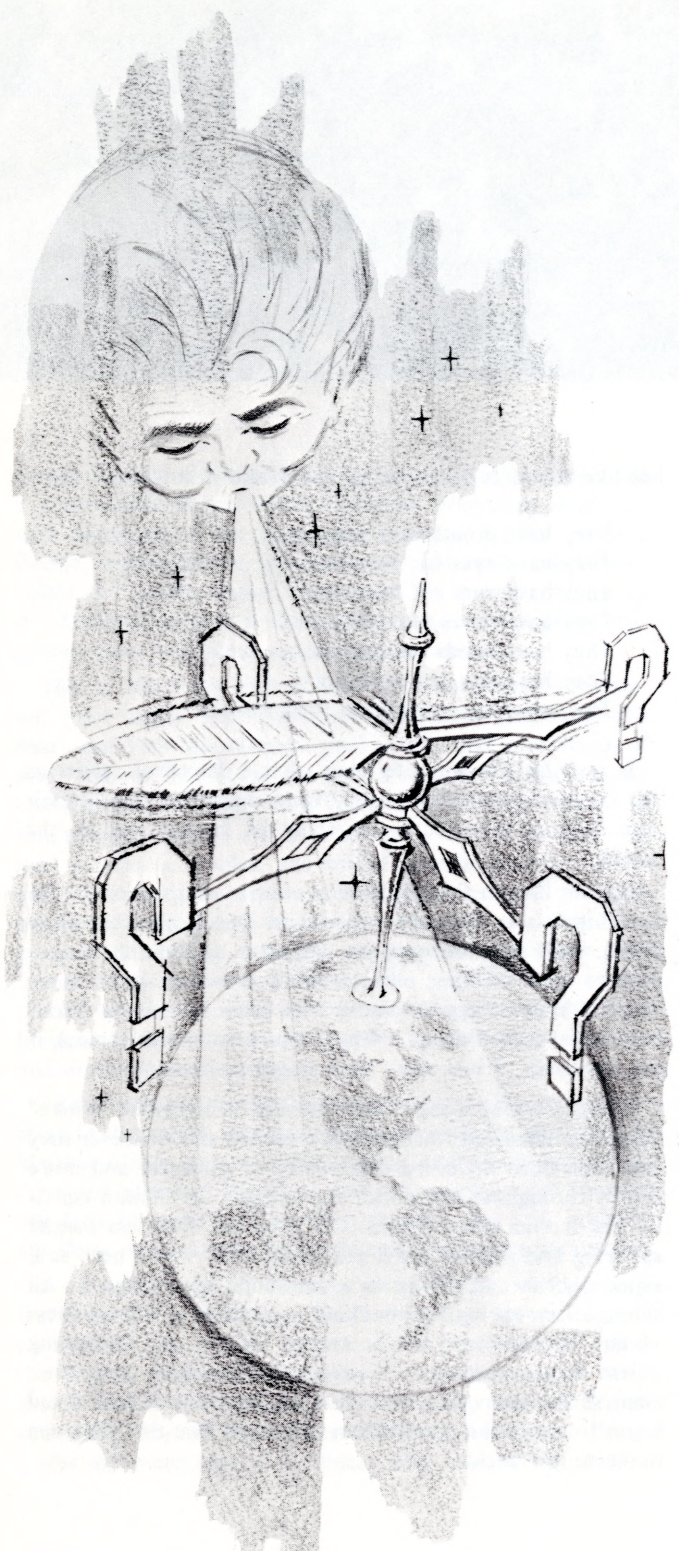
At many of these critical turns there have arisen artists who have confronted bewildering change and even incipient chaos and yet have given the world incredibly comprehensive views of man and the universe and have restored man's confidence by a final vision of hope. We are beginning to understand that such men appear because of these critical turns rather than in spite of them.

At the dawn of Greek history, Homer recorded the savage conflicts of tribes destined to become sophisticated city states. But whereas he portrayed men in war in *The Iliad*, he turns to men in search of peace and stability in *The Odyssey*. Wrathful Achilles spreads dissension and death in his own ranks in *The Iliad*, but the resourceful Odysseus lives to find wife, home, and the promise

of further adventure in *The Odyssey*. Odysseus is a man who bridges the two worlds of rule by force and rule by mind, and became Homer's greatest model for heroic human action.

Centuries later Dante gave to the world in *The Divine Comedy* his record of the great struggles of his age between Guelfs and Ghibellines, Christianity and Christendom, the individual's excellence and the inertia of triumphalist patterns of living. Although assailed on all sides as *The Inferno* opens, the narrator, by complicated sets of intermediaries and faith in his own vision, attains to the Beatific Vision where human language fails. Pedants still argue whether Dante's worldview was medieval or Renaissance; they have yet to see that it was both, the vision of a man looking backward and forward at once, but ultimately an affirmative vision.

Many events of the twentieth century make Dante's *Inferno* seem homely, and our self-consciousness may seem unique, but James Joyce, like those brave men before him, looked at our tense age and could still connect it to patterns of life as far back as Homer. After dutifully recognizing the bitter satire, difficult ambiguity, and baffling obscurities, many readers sense that at bottom Joyce saw life optimistically. After all, he



himself thought comedy to be the highest form of literature, and his biographer Richard Ellman draws our attention to the last word of *Ulysses*, "yes."

Now, two thirds of the way through our century, and a generation after Joyce, a significant area of contemporary thought seems to be working with assumptions and methods not unlike Joyce in particular, and the other great synthesizers mentioned in general. Hardly a "school," and not even that more amorphous thing, a "movement," the foremost people in this group nevertheless share certain attitudes towards knowledge which may have a profound influence on the structure of liberal education. It is not too early to anticipate these directions; indeed, to prevent the very real spectre of a "The University is Dead" slogan in the near future, it may be a necessity to implement them.

Four names can be singled out among the most influential: Teilhard de Chardin, Northrop Frye, Marshall McLuhan, and Claude Lévi-Strauss. They seem to have little in common: a Jesuit scientist, a student of literature, a communications theorist, and an agnostic anthropologist. Furthermore, they are dealing with areas of knowledge

which at first glance at least do not seem to touch; in fact, they are opposed to each other on a variety of issues. But we are concerned here not so much with the message expounded by these men as with the ways they reevaluate old areas and strike out so boldly into new ones. It is the easiest thing in the world to debunk McLuhan on any number of points or to reveal the gaps, inconsistencies, and even contradictions in Chardin. It is quite another to enter sympathetically into their minds and return the same as before.

Chardin's most important work, *The Phenomenon of Man*, is an attempt to see the "inside" and "outside" of evolution by using the tools of the physical sciences and the vision of religious faith. Starting from the "stuff of the universe" and tracing evolution to the phenomenon of Christianity and even projecting a parousia of ecstasy where a grand thesis awaits the phenomenon of man, Chardin has covered an area almost unimaginable in its extension in space and time: from creation to apocalypse, now seen in the light of religion and science together. And the conclusion? There *is* progress, even if at the moment it is hard to believe it. This is an enormous shift from theories of a static or declining

state of the universe which so pervaded European thought in the Middle Ages and through much of the Renaissance, and takes considerable courage in an age of atomic bombs.

Northrop Frye is the most controversial person in literary criticism today, after publishing in 1957 a remarkable book, *The Anatomy of Criticism*. In it he attempts to systematically unite squabbling "schools" of critics - the historical critic, the archetypal critic, the "new" critic - into a comprehensive, pluralist view of literature by breaking down what he sees as largely artificial barriers between them. He does this by describing a process of modulation whereby literary characters, tones, genres, symbols and so forth all participate in a complicated five-part structure which seems to embrace all literature. Thus a given work or any part of it can be placed on an intricate cross-referenced scale and hopefully be better understood. The result is to see the common nature of all literature created by men who have a common human nature. Far from reducing literature to any one formula such as "influences" as the older historical criticism was wont to do, or "paradox" as some new critics still do, Frye, in a breathtakingly bold leap

assembles all theories into a vast and rich whole. A conservative as far as anything new in the arts is concerned, Frye nevertheless does say, "What does improve in the arts is the comprehension of them, and the refining of society which results from it." His optimism is more cautious than Chardin's, but real and creative still (as his own work demonstrates).

Marshall McLuhan may be adulated or despised today, but cannot be ignored. Although his central thesis may not be original with him, he has unquestionably expanded and fructified it in a way which makes incredibly fascinating reading. Briefly, McLuhan describes himself as a student of media - all ways in which humans communicate with each other: the electric light bulb, money, television, automation. It is his contention that when studying man's behavior at least as much can be learned *by focusing on these "extensions of man"* as on the actual content of them - "the medium is the message." Such a realization, McLuhan claims, is born of our time's electric technology which creates profoundly new and yet old patterns of living. He writes in the introduction to *Understanding Media*: "We are suddenly eager to have things and people declare their beings totally.

There is a deep faith to be found in this new attitude - a faith that concerns the ultimate harmony of all being." Our electric technology and self-consciousness may be new, but they only serve to establish more firmly the older pre-Gutenberg world of men speaking to men; this time on a global basis: "With electricity we extend our central nervous system globally, instantly interrelating every human experience."

Professor Claude Lévi-Strauss of the Collège de France is the man most closely associated with the new "structuralism" in France which has supplanted existentialism in intellectual circles. Lévi-Strauss is an anthropologist who maintains that all human activity from primitive to sophisticated is a response to certain situations in life so basic that the human mind has been perforce "structured" to think in certain ways. Taking a small body of primitive myths, those of the Bororo Indians of Central Brazil, and doing that most difficult of all tasks, entering into its very life, Lévi-Strauss claims to have found basic laws governing the body of world myth. The result, again, is a measured hope: "Identification with all forms of life, beginning with the most humble - this principle, in a world where overcrowding makes mutual respect more difficult and much more necessary, is the only one which can permit men to live together."

What follow are some tentative conclusions on education culled from the implicit or explicit epistemological assumptions of our group. One curious

trait found in the lives of some of these men is that they share a sense of exile or withdrawal from their societies. Apparently such a state is necessary for radical thinking. Chardin was isolated in China by World War II and found it a time of severe mental trial. Yet during this period he wrote *The Phenomenon of Man*. Marshall McLuhan has always enjoyed his position of living on a "frontier" at the University of Toronto so that he could observe but not become enmeshed in the technology of the future to the south of him. Lévi-Strauss found important clues to life in the jungles of Brazil.

All this, though, should not greatly surprise us if we think back to Joyce. "You have to be in exile to understand me," he once said, and took great pains to create an aura of exile about himself. And yet his subject was ever the same - his homeland, Ireland. This detachment probably explains his great attraction to Odysseus, Dante, and Hamlet, all intellectually gifted men who in separation from their rightful homes understood them all the better. Today we live in an age of "involvement". But one cannot be involved all the time. To preserve a genuine depth without surroundings, it is apparently necessary to retreat from them at least occasionally. We have learned to shun the ivory tower, but this does not mean that the university should become merely a center for socio-political formation and agitation. And "service to the community" can come dangerously close to domination by it which means the extinction of true education.

A second characteristic is that the work of our four is almost impossible to classify in any known category of study, and therein probably lies their value. One might object and point to Frye's work on literature. But even here we have a work which eludes the category of "literary criticism." Frye is deeply aware of the fallacy of objectivism in pursuing any line of inquiry. The mind is to a large extent the container of reality, not vice versa (compare Chardin's "noosphere"), and the stuff of our dreams is worthwhile. Writing of great mythopoeic literature, he says: "Nature is now inside the mind of an infinite man who builds his cities out of the Milky Way. This is not reality, but it is the conceivable limit of desire, which is infinite, eternal, and hence apocalyptic." Criticism of literature by Frye becomes almost important and in some cases more important than the literature itself. Looked at in another way, criticism becomes poetry. Again, Lévi-Strauss at first glance looks like an anthropologist. But actually he is concerned with using anthropological techniques to arrive at an epistemology. And in a way typical of the primitivist strain in romantic thought, he even has a good deal to say on the similarity between myth and music. Since he is investigating the fundamentals of language or the science of signs, it is also inevitable that literature should fall under his eye.

It is harder still to categorize Chardin and McLuhan. Probably because Chardin was a priest, Harper's paperback catalogue classifies *The Phenomenon of Man* under "Philosophy

of Religion" which is like describing the Bible as a geography of the Middle East. Chardin states in the preface to his work, "This book deals with man *solely* as a phenomenon; but it also deals with the *whole* phenomenon of man." That is a daring statement in an age when lesser lights scoff self-importantly at any possibility of studying the "whole man." Chemistry, biology, the social sciences, philosophy, religion - all of these and more make up Chardin's great work. McLuhan's *Understanding Media* meets a similar fate at the hands of McGraw-Hill which classifies the book as "sociology." This in spite of the fact that McLuhan maintains that compartmentalized disciplines seriously retard education, and that moreover his own work is, like Chardin's, a synthesis of many disciplines. He writes: "Automation is information and it not only ends jobs in the world of work, it ends subjects in the world of learning. It does not end the world of learning . . . Any subject taken in depth at once relates to other subjects."

If today's most creative thinking is interdisciplinary, then the university, to avoid one of its greatest dangers - a "thought-gap" - will somehow have to match this approach. (A few good ones already are, at least on the graduate level.) There is no simple formula for accomplishing this end. Courses will have to be renamed, reworked, and juggled around, but all of this will be to no avail unless the instructor himself has the interdisciplinary spirit and can be a model to his students of that approach. Dilletantism is by all means to be

avoided; but faith in specialization (with the all too often smugness that attends it) will only deter the best students from creative work. Each discipline can keep its own integrity paradoxically only by realizing that it exists with and interpenetrates many others.

A third common trait is that intuition and analogy are given a new importance, having been neglected or despised by intellectuals for two centuries by their blind faith in rationalism. Chardin forwards his book by stressing the importance of "seeing" and "vision" to any adequate theory of man, and postscripts it by calling his book an "intuition." The book itself works by a careful step by step analogy between the within and without of all being. Frye, by stressing the importance in human thought of the archetypal symbol, insists on the real world of literature which is not the world of life, but a world analogous to it. McLuhan claims that the printed page was a powerful but temporary phenomenon which structured thought into a linear sequence where one concept at a time came to be thought of as "normal." But now that is over with, he continues, and "pattern recognition" is the tool of those who best understand our age, people akin to the artist who sees with the prophetic imagination. Finally, Levi-Strauss claims that the small area of myth structuralists study is chosen by an intuition (but *not* an arbitrary selection) that it is "promising and productive."

We see, then, a consensus that knowledge to be vital is exploratory and

not merely conservative of the truth. Even a skeptic about originality in the arts like Frye, we have seen, is quite hopeful about improving our understanding of them. Chardin's noosphere is not a final stage by any means, but rather produces itself the evolution of an even greater consciousness. McLuhan refers to himself as primarily an explorer of media, not an explainer, and sees man today living "a fate that calls men to the role of the artist in society." Levi-Strauss' method is to explore the whole by concentrating on a part of the seamless web of myth.

The consequences of all this for education are formidable, because educational systems are usually conservative, more interested in passing on knowledge than discovering it, and our universities are no exception to this. To imagine how our schools would function other than they do requires a strenuous effort of the imagination, and cannot at any rate be given here. But for one thing, it is terrifying for many teachers to find out that some of their students may know more than they do, or that they *know how to know more*, an even more real prospect for the future. But as long as the assumption remains that education is essentially the transference of the teacher's information to the student, such a prospect will always seem threatening, and not promising as it should be.

Two other related characteristics of our group remain. As we saw at the opening, history to all these men does make sense. To them, it is not static,

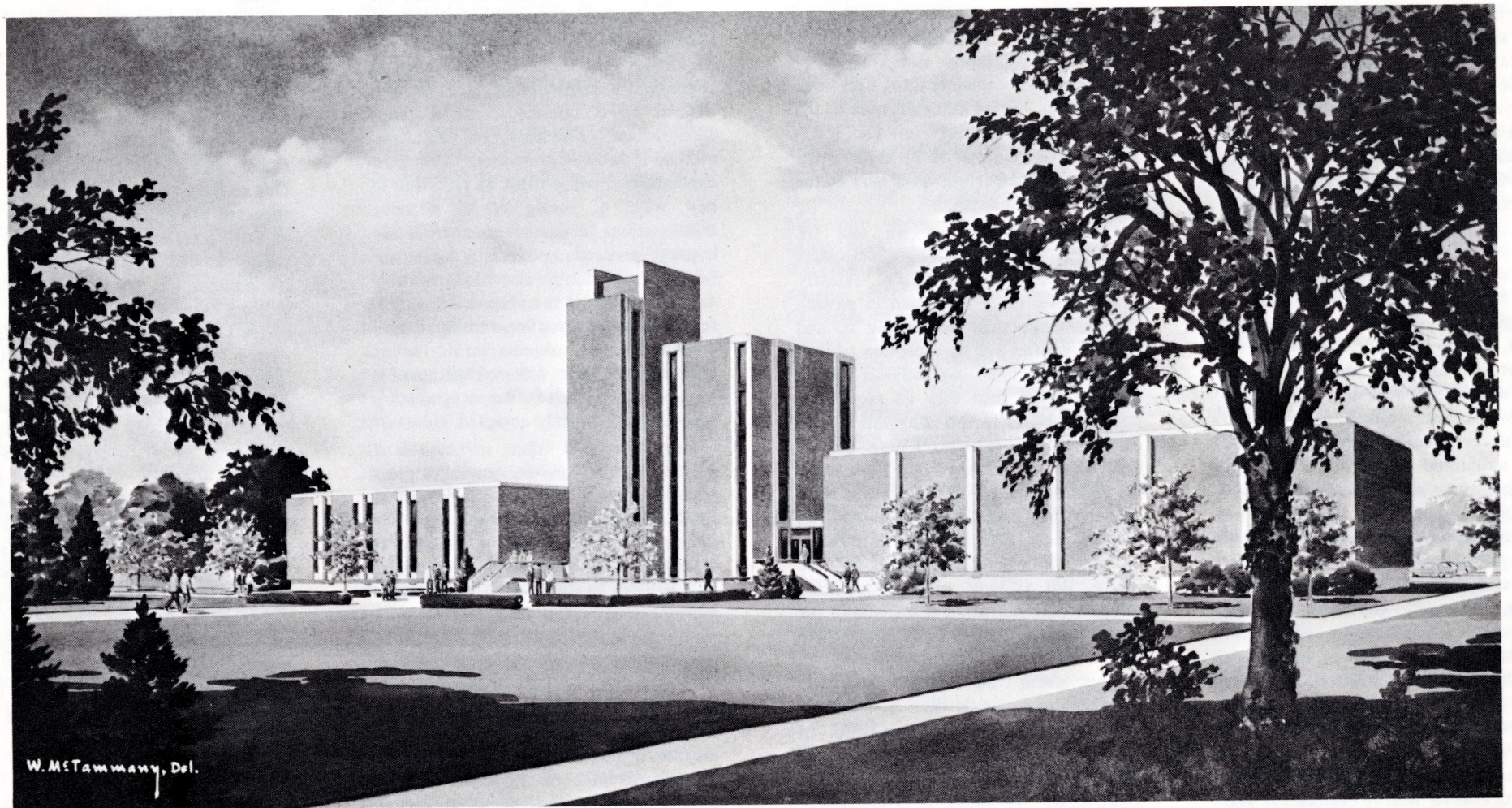
not regressive, and least of all linear. Rather, they seem to conceive something like a spiral movement in history, and the affinity to Joyce is again noted. Chardin's evolution, constant and necessary, posits at this stage a "convergence" towards what he calls the Omega point, and that "evolution is an ascent towards consciousness." McLuhan sees the world returning to communal tribalism once more, but this time a highly conscious one. Perhaps Lévi-Strauss' comment on his own method is most illuminating: "They (the explanations) will do this by resorting to new ways of seeing or by coloring cross-sections in another manner. If the inquiry proceeds according to these hopes, it will not develop along a linear axis but rather as a spiral: it will return regularly to the earlier results; it will embrace new objects only when knowledge of them will make it possible to understand better the fragmentary knowledge previously acquired."

Here we find that message and medium merge. Lévi-Strauss takes great pains to explain his methodology, and to show that the method must be in the same spirit and even form as the subject it explains. He writes, "Our undertaking . . . will try to imitate the spontaneous movement of mythic thought . . . As a result this book about myths is, in its own way, a myth." McLuhan believes that now "we actually live mythically and integrally" and has forged a most unacademic style which, although exasperating at times, at least preserves the spirit of the book. Perhaps Chardin's style is the most engaging, alternating as

it does between carefully controlled scientific prose and sudden energetic flashes of insight when a number of points build up pressure; such a method is itself a reflection of the synthesis between scientific analysis and religious vision.

Once again education has a lot to learn from all of this. The perpetuation of old methods to handle new material may seriously retard their understanding. In an age of rapid change, the gap between method and subject has to be constantly narrowed. One striking tendency of our four is that they are prolific neologizers and phrase makers, precisely because the conceptual tools handed down to them were incomplete. Yet today students by the millions are still being taught closed systems of knowledge in practically every field. Large "blocks of information" are presented as the essence of knowledge, whereas any sound educational theory would see education as discovery. The Socratic method, after all, had its good points; and Socrates was an optimistic man who seemed to take joy in what he and his students were doing. Perhaps a student makes his greatest intellectual advance when he discovers that in studying any object he is studying himself. Most of all, it is hoped that he comes to see that history, or what men do, is a fascinating and highly necessary study. The human race will be in difficulty as long as its view of history is.

Forward Thrust II:



The College Union Building

Providence College is cognizant of the need of this and future generations for more and better education. To do its part in providing that education, the College has already announced a major development program to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary, The Providence College Second Half-Century Program. The program will help the college develop itself and its facilities to where it feels it can educate, counsel, and bring intellectual and moral maturity of the highest quality to young men.

Most of the problems surrounding education reflect the problems of our society, and to produce students with a broad enough education to survive and flourish in this society is the work of the College. Training in subject areas is not enough to provide this broad base. Facilities have to be provided to expose the undergraduate to those forces necessary for his personal and cultural growth — art, drama, recreation.

To meet this end, one of the features of the development program will be a College Union building, the need for which has been explained by the President, Father Haas: "The Union is intended to become the center of non-academic student life. Extra-curricular, social and recreational activities are as essential to a college community as its strictly academic pursuits, for we are dedicated to the development of the whole man.

"There is a particular need for lounge and study areas for our commuter students because of their relatively large numbers. The Union will house student government, extra-curricular activities, lounges, recreational areas and a particularly crucial need — a modern auditorium-theatre."

By gathering all of the non-academic pursuits which Providence College has to offer under one roof, the sense of community which should be transmitted to the students by

the Dominican community is strengthened, and traditional social college activities so essential to a broad education are provided a common background.

Today, there is no activities center which students and faculty can call their own. Student organizations are scattered about existing campus buildings. The *Veritas* yearbook office is in Aquinas dormitory. The campus radio station, WDOM, is in Alumni Hall with the cafeteria and the gymnasium. The Student Congress meets in a temporary war-time emergency building called Donnelly Hall, which will be torn down when facilities are provided for its occupants. None of these, because they are serving double duty, possesses the informal atmosphere that a building built particularly for recreational purposes would have.

The College Union's main function, then, should be to stimulate and deepen extracurricular undergraduate interests. The very existence of the building should create experiences for the student different from his academic, dormitory or athletic activities.

The new building will be in its most logical location — adjacent to Alumni Hall where the majority of recreational facilities now exist. It will be functionally related to and physically connected with the southerly side of Alumni Hall. A brick and reinforced concrete structure, it will contain approximately 86,000 square feet and is estimated to cost approximately \$3,000,000.

The form of the College Union will consist of a three-story rectangular base with twin concrete towers rising an additional five stories.

The westerly portion of the base will contain a "Communicative Arts Center" which will provide complete facilities for drama, speech, music, motion pictures and radio and presentation of these activities in a 500 seat audito-

rium-theatre. The auditorium will have a flexible arrangement of space and seating configurations. Support facilities such as carpenter shops, dressing rooms, practice areas and projection booths will be provided, along with new facilities for the campus radio station.

The central area of the building's base will contain a new barber shop, new post office facilities, an office of Rhode Island Hospital Trust Co., for on-campus banking facilities, a travel agency, lounge and game areas.

The westerly portion of the base will contain a large multi-purpose room which can be used for meetings, conferences or receptions; a new, modern bookstore; a vending lounge, and an administrative area.

The twin towers will contain much-needed commuter meeting and lounge areas; a student congress assembly room; student publications offices for the *Cowl*, the student newspaper, the *Alembic*, the literary magazine, and the *Veritas*, the yearbook; music and TV rooms, club rooms, and conference rooms.

Construction is tentatively scheduled to begin in the spring of 1969 and will take 15 to 18 months.

When completed, the building will contain the full range of recreational and service facilities with enough multi-purpose meeting rooms to allow for the development of other facilities later.

This is one of five new structures to be built in the building phase of Providence's 10 year master plan for development, all of which are designed to strengthen the quality of the education provided. In this particular case, the extra-curricular and recreational hours necessary for a broad, well-rounded education.



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