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Lancaster, Pa.

REFLECTIONS ON THE BEGINNING OF AN ERA

A few years ago Reinhold Niebuhr wrote a book entitled Reflections on the End of an Era. Those of us who were privileged to be in Cleveland last week feel that we witnessed the beginning of an era - a new day of united Protestant witness in America and the world.

Despite the unprecedented blanket of snow which virtually smothered Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and adjacent areas, large numbers of people made their precarious way to the Constituting Convention of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. The latest report I heard indicated some three thousand registered delegates and visitors, and there must have been a good many more who came in for some of the general sessions in the gigantic arena of the Cleveland Public Auditorium.

Ten years of difficult and tedious negotiations came to a triumphant culmination on Wednesday morning, when the actual act of constituting the new National Council took place. Arrayed in clerical and academic garb, the official delegations of twenty-nine Protestant communions marched into the arena, following in each case a banner bearing the name of the denomination in question. These banners were carried forward to the platform, and arranged in symbolic fashion in unbroken lines flanking the high altar. Then a representative of each delegation affixed his name to the charter of the new organization, and a spokesman for each of the eight merging interdenominational agencies presented a document signifying the desire of his agency to unite in this inclusive effort. A new era had begun!

The statistics of the National Council almost stagger the imagination. The proposed annual budget of the new organization is in excess of four million dollars. The combined staff numbers about one hundred and fifty persons. The constitution and by-laws for the Council, with its various divisions, commissions, and departments, cover exactly two hundred pages. But

these are only the outer marks of a great spiritual advance which one could not help but feel at Cleveland and which holds high promise for the future.

For the first time in history, divided American Protestantism - the greater part of it, at least - will be able to speak with a single voice. And there is reason to believe that voices will be listened to, as it should be. If the world situation had not been so exceedingly desperate, the President of the United States would probably have thought it worth his while to journey to Cleveland to address this gathering. As it was, not even the Secretary of State could come in person to address us, but he spoke by radio in a carefully prepared speech which was picked up by the public address system in the arena, and also carried over major national networks. If we Protestants have a word to utter in our country and the world, we can utter it and it will be heard. If we have a distinctive influence to exert, we can now exert it and it will be felt.

Furthermore, for the first time in history the major part of American Protestantism is in a position to project one unified cooperative program as broad as the Christian gospel itself. Foreign missions and home missions are no longer separate entities, housed in separate offices and promoted by separate organizations. They are an integral part of the life and work of the Church itself. Christian education is no longer a specialized interest, cared for by its own specialized agency. It is a Division of the National Council itself. As one of the speakers put it, we now have a Church which is itself missionary, and educational, and evangelistic, and everything else that is good and proper.

These are some of the larger meanings of the formation of the National Council. A new era has begun for American Protestantism. We hope it is not too late to be used of God in this time of grave peril.

Dr. Harner

AS I SEE IT . . .

That history is a never-ending stream is no debatable question. That often the same water courses through the banks of life is another hypothesis that can easily be proven inductively. As empires have risen and fallen, and great men have had their hey day and their Waterloo, and political systems have had their flood and ebb, so historical events follow remarkably similar patterns.

Almost a century ago the southern and northern parts of a nation were at war over ideological differences. Hostilities began in the South, a major offensive pushed vast numbers of men over an all-important parallel, overpowering numbers forced the war back to the South. The same series of events has taken place again today halfway around the world. Once more our troops are actively involved. Once more American blood is being spilled in a war between South and North.

The advisability of our participation in this bloody conflict is a matter open to question. Daily one can hear heated discussions favoring one side of the issue over against the other. We are not concerned herein with sitting in judgement of this issue. It is much easier to sit in the seat of the historian.

But one fact remains when we have cavalierly cast aside the first problem. Our troops, along with those of our allies, are sitting in an extremely delicate and dangerous position. We have carried war to Korea, and we cannot just overlook the consequences of the action of the U. N. and the U. S. State Department.

Fundamentally, we face a clash between ideologies. It is this that has drawn us into armed conflict in the Orient. As English interests were once best met by supporting the South in the War Between the States, so our interests can best be met by supporting the South Koreans in a similar war. On this small battleground is being waged a struggle between two ways of life. It is quite probable that either free enterprise or flagrant statism will emerge the victor in the world.

Over and above our interests in this particular aspect of the conflict there are several important issues to be faced. They are: (1) war with China, (2) war with the Soviet Union, and (3) the use of atomic weapons. Further complicating the matter are moral issues involved beyond the practical considerations of statecraft. So we are faced with political, economic, and moral issues. Therefore, it is vital that we do a great deal of serious thinking before we take too firm a stand on any particular line of action.

Perhaps our best approach is the prayerful, reverent attitude which characterized the discussion of the issue by the newly organized National Council of Churches. Surely an immanent God will not desert us in this crisis.

Dave Mark

#### SOCIETY NEWS

##### Art in Religion . . . . .

The student body and faculty of Lancaster Seminary are deeply indebted to the Program Committee of the Society of Inquiry for having secured Italo de Francesco, artist and educator at Kutztown State Teachers College, to speak in Santee Chapel.

A vivid speaker and an expert in his field, he stressed the relationship that has always existed between art and religion and further illustrated the truth of his talk with both reproductions and slides of reproductions of masterpieces of art. Thus depicting in an extraordinarily interesting and convincing mode the historical progress of art within the Church, he placed a final emphasis on the place it can occupy both individually and congregationally within modern Christianity.

##### Coming Attractions: Party . . . . .

Thursday, Dec. 14, is a traditional high point in the school year of the Seminary--the annual Christmas party. Seniors and Middlers among us know the pleasure and good fun that has been characteristic of the parties of previous years. To the Juniors, well--just come and see! And bring your good humor man with you.

While it has been customary to utilize the local talent which abounds within our own family here every year including this one, the committee in charge of the program for the party felt that the added attraction of one item of outside entertainment might be a welcome addition. Hence, scheduled to entertain us with harmony Christmas style is the Barbership Quartet of Millersville State Teachers College.

The traditional exchange of gifts will take place as in previous observances, this time with a new wrinkle by way of preparation. The committee chairman, Earl Koehler, has chosen representatives of each class to better facilitate the purchase of more appropriate tokens for each of us.

The annual Christmas banquet, in which, be forewarned, Mamma Greff and her staff do themselves really proud, turkey and all, will be held in the refectory at 6 o'clock, party to follow.

## STUDENT BODY HEARS ABOUT "NEW INDIA"

The students and faculty heard Dr. M. P. Davis, missionary to India, on Monday, December 4, during the regular assembly period.

Dr. Davis went to India in 1912 to do educational and evangelistic work. Since then, he has written several books on India.

Dr. Davis opened his talk by showing pictures of Mohandis Gandhi with a halo around his head and in the position of a god. These pictures are being sold throughout India, and the people are worshipping Gandhi as they do their gods. The people of India compare Gandhi to Christ, saying that Gandhi was Christlike. It was this same little man who turned the face of India toward Jesus and his teachings.

However, Dr. Davis believes that Gandhi's big mistake was his dream of a Hindu kingdom, ruled by Hindus and for Hindus only.

It is quite evident that life as a missionary to India has its complications and set-backs. The missionary constantly runs up against 4000 year old doctrines, which no one can tear down in a few years' time. The problems of India are religious problems, not social or economic. The Christian Church, through her missionaries, is helping solve these problems and is helping to build the "New India". To do so will take a lot of patience and hard work, but we must try to understand the Indian and his way of life, dealing with him accordingly.

Dr. Davis ended by putting a challenge to his listeners - helping bring this "New India" into existence.

## SPORTS REVIEW

The Seminary Angels had their wings clipped in the initial game of the cage season. The curtain-raiser last Thursday was a thriller, which saw the Sem team take the lead early in the game and hold it until the middle of the last period. Then things paved in.

The leading scorer for the evening was Tape of Chi Phi, who had five field goals for 10 points. Rader led the Angels with 8.

Chi Phi used a two-platoon system to overcome the spirited Seminarians. Reserve power was the answer for the victory. The Seminary team could use this reserve power too. All substitute players should be available for every game.

Taking a look at the ping-pong tournament, we see that some interesting developments have taken place in the past two weeks. "Ive" Morrin, who was

leading the tournament, was dumped from the top slot by last year's champ, "Bucky" Trout.

As the tournament enters the last two weeks of play, the first four positions line up this way: Trout, Morrin, Titus, and Bucher.

Bob Titus

## HUMOR ESQUIRE

History has been made! Never before has a Southerner had to come north to thaw out. Over Thanksgiving it was so cold, in the South that is, that we had to wrap the thermometer in a woolen blanket to keep it from freezing. It got so cold that the coo-coo in the clock would come out every half-hour and just say "Brrrrrr". Heavy Sink lost ten pounds from shaking so much, and I used so many blankets on my bed that I was lost for twelve hours; Dad had used me for a book-marker.

We had to put anti-freeze in the molasses, and Mother served me pan cakes wearing ear-muffs; Mother was wearing the ear muffs, of course.....I think that's the way it was!

And snow! Now I think snow is pretty - in its place - and its place is north of the Mason-Dixon Line. That white stuff cost me the best bird-dog I ever had. It was like this. I was hunting about half a mile from the Big House, on our plantation, of course. I was hitting quail right and left. My dog would find a covey, and I would flush them and shoot a couple. Naturally, when I hit them it scattered feathers everywhere. My dog is trained to find the dead bird by looking for the feathers. Well, everything went along fine, and I just about had my limit. My dog set another covey, and just as I flushed them the clouds shivered a bit and let loose with the white stuff called snow. I shot at one of the birds, downed it, and sent my dog after it. The dog took one look at what she thought was feathers and looked up into the sky to see more falling. Off she went across the field. I hated to lose that dog...had her for about seven years, and she was just about getting old enough to wean.

I got so cold from hunting that I turned blue. Dad almost shot me. He thought the South was being invaded again. But with the standard brand of human anti-freeze we soon straightened that out. But I'll tell you one thing; if it had been as cold in 1865 as it was over Thanksgiving, Sherman would not have said what he did about war. I think he would have chosen a colder term.

Mel Palmer