

SKANDALON

Vol. 1 No. 9

March 11, 1963

The change in the appearance of Skandalon is an attempt to accommodate an ever-increasing amount of contributions from the academic community. Skandalon does not attempt to publish another campus literary journal. Our articles arise from the Christian concerns of our contributors towards various facets of life. Skandalon also functions as a link between the academic community and the Campus Christian Council. It is our belief that the Christian faith has relevance to the circumstances of any setting. Our perspective stems from the ecumenical Christian tradition. We welcome articles from all members of the university who share our purpose. Articles, essays, short stories, and poems, on political, academic, and theological questions will be welcomed.

Special thanks are gratefully extended to Mr. Wilson of the Art Department for making the new mast head of Skandalon.

-Editor-

THE NATURE OF LENT

"...When ye fast, be not; as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear to men to fast." (St. Matthew 6:16)

This is not an attempt to agitate against Ash Wednesday, but rather an effort to take some of the individualism out of Lent. This season is one of commemoration, a reminder of the forty days and nights which Christ spent in the wilderness fasting and praying. All very well for us to follow our Lord's example, but let the emphasis be put where it belongs--on praying, not fasting--for fasting is or necessity an individual action, while praying is by nature a corporate one. This is not a time to draw away from the other members of Christ's church, but a time to come together with them so that we may be made one with Him. There can be too much "apartness" as well as too much "togetherness". Fasting, penitence and self-denial are good for the soul, but they are the negative aspects of Lent. The positive ones of prayer, communion and praise of God are almost falling out of use, and they should be the last to be abandoned. This is not time to be self-centered or to brood over our past failures in our own small dark closet alone. It is now, more than ever, that we should come together to rejoice that we still have the opportunity to amend these sins "through His most precious death and sacrifice."

"...The end of Lent is not that you and I should be advanced in holiness...but that the whole Church may serve Him with greater constancy and joy, having come into His presence in the temple. Lent is the time when we are called to say with sincerity, "regard not our sins but the faith of Thy Church."

Linda Jean Delfs

CAMPUS CHRISTIAN COUNCIL AND S. P. G. TO COSPONSER SERIES

The Campus Christian Council and the Student Peace Group will present a pacifist, Mr. Charles Walker, at Albany State on March 21 and 22, and, on March 25, Lt. Colonel Neill T. Williams, from the Strategic Air Command AFB at Westover, Massachusetts.

The Council and the SPG. finding their programs and resources supplementary, take great pride in co-sponsoring, for this semester, a wide variety of speakers to discuss the multi-faceted problem of constructing a lasting peace. It is hoped that a comprehensive program, embodying religious and ethical, political, and economic viewpoints will be the result.

A REVIEW OF "THE LONGEST DAY"

"The Longest Day," Darryl F. Zanuck's recreation of the events of D-Day, 1944, seems to be well on the way to becoming a box-office smash. It is now in its fifth week in Albany's most elegant movie palace, and people flock in despite road show prices, the irritations of an intermission and reserved seats, and the other pretensions associated with the showing of Hollywood's most expensive products.

This popular success has been accompanied by some critical esteem. The National Board of Review has designated it the best film of 1962 while the movie industry as a whole has honored it with five academy award nominations.

Some of this popular and critical acclaim seems justified. There are several superb battle scenes, most notably the strafing of one of the beaches by two German fighter planes and a brilliantly photographed scene of a French commando attack on a small seacoast town in which the camera, located in a helicopter, follows the commandos as they sweep along the quay in a running fire fight. A British glider attack on a vital bridge is well handled, and the film captures some of the desperate confusion on Omaha beach. The recreation of the ill-fated paratroop drop on St. Mere Eglise realizes some of the sheer horror of the situation in which American paratroops overshot their mark and floated down into the center of a heavily-armed town to be butchered by waiting German troops. The scenes from the German side are also generally well handled.

Yet some very important things go awry in the film. There was some desperately mistaken casting for one thing. John Wayne is, I expect, more at home among horses than parachutes. Richard Beymer adds to the laurels won a year ago in "West Side Story," a role which quite justly won him the Harvard Crimson's "Roscoe" as the worst actor of the year. Watching Peter Lawford as a British commando leader, I momentarily expected Martin, Sinatra, and the rest of the "Rat Pack" to come charging onto the scene, tooting a bagpipe, and preparing to save the invasion.

Some of the actors work under serious handicaps. Richard Burton, playing the role of a British aviator, surely had some of the most banal lines of the year. Most of these handicaps arise from the script which attempts to inject "human interest" into the film, attempts which produce only tabloid journalistic cliches and sentimentalize and trivialize the entire film.

Perhaps Mr. Zanuck planned it that way. Exactly what he was trying to do in the film is not always clear. In part he had a kind of antiquarian impulse to recreate a portion of the past. Throughout the film I was constantly reminded of Civil War cycloramas in which artists painted an immense picture purporting to display the events at Gettysburg or some similar engagement, all for the edification of curiosity seekers at county fairs. Or there was also an aura of 19th century Fourth of July celebrations with their quaint historical tableaux formed by the costumed children of the community. Unfortunately the unhappy actors chosen to play Eisenhower, Bradley, and some of the other luminaries of D-Day nervously acted as if they had similar recollections.

Occasionally there are signs of more pretentious objectives. There are some attempts to portray the confusions and futilities that characterized some of the day's events. If the entire film had been informed by this kind of objective, Mr. Zanuck might have come up with something important to say. But I'm afraid this facet of the film fell flat. At least the night that I saw it, the audience generally reacted as if "The Longest Day" was just another cinematic western, peopled with good guys and bad guys who deserved to be cheered or booed. There was little sense of decent people trapped in a nightmarish situation not of their own making.

Ultimately then the failure of "The Longest Day" is the failure of a point of view. The film simply says nothing important about war and about the dilemmas of men trapped in battle. Instead it is an expensive pastiche of spectacular battle scenes, historical tableaux, and sentimental human interest stories, a pastiche that lacks unity and punch. It may be a commercial success but it is certainly a moral and artistic failure.

Clemenceau once remarked that war was far too important to be left to the generals. It is also obvious that it is much too important to be left to Darryl F. Zanuck.

Kendall Birr

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Campus Christian Council meeting, Tuesday, March 12, 7:15 p.m., Brubacher Hall.

Chapel Service, Wednesday, March 13, 12:00 noon, Unitarian Church.

Charles Butterwooth, associate editor of the Catholic Worker; Thursday, March 14, 8:00 p.m., Brubacher Hall.

Chapel Service, Wednesday, March 20, 12:00 noon, Unitarian Church.

Charles Walker, Thursday, March 21, 8:00 p.m., Brubacher Hall, "The Future of Non-Violence"; Friday, March 22, 1:00 p.m., Page Hall, "Politics: What Stands in the Way of Disarmament."

Lt. Col. Neill T. Williams, Strategic Air Command, Monday, March 25, 4:00 p.m., Channing Hall, "Counterforce as a Deterrent."

STAFF

Editor: Al Minarcik

Associate Editors: Guy McBride, Dave Simington

CHAIRMAN OUTLINES GOALS OF LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM

The Language Arts Program, sponsored by the Campus Christian Council, is, very simply, a program involving volunteers from the State University who devote an hour or more a week of their time to helping youngsters from the economically depressed areas of the city "in improving their reading skill, building their vocabulary, and increasing their understanding of ideas."

This last is quoted from our statement of purpose, formulated at the beginning of the year by George Laribee and Pat Peairs. We have found as the program has progressed, however, that overshadowing all of these idealistic goals has been our ability to satisfy in these children one of the basic human needs which many sorely lack in their home environments: This, of course, is their need for love and companionship. This is evidenced by the fact that the children constantly plague us with their questions and their problems. Perhaps "plague" is the wrong word; we always listen sympathetically and try to answer to the best of our ability, although often we must stop short at the "listening sympathetically" since there is always the fear of repercussions from the home should we over "meddle."

Our primary concern, academically, is to "improve their reading skill." By this, we don't mean speed. At these grade levels and under these circumstances this would be ridiculous. We are mainly interested in improving their reading efficiency and comprehension; we want them to read for understanding, not just for the sake of reading. Eventually their speed does pick up slightly, as you might expect, but this is secondary.

The program runs two days a week, Wednesday and Thursday at 4 p.m. at the Temple Baptist Church, located at Ten Broeck and Clinton Avenue. Those who have participated or are now participating in the capacity of teachers are: George Laribee, Pat Peairs, Joan Webber, Nancy Keith, Linda Mattison, Linda Van Buren (who, as Rev. Snow's secretary has handled a lot of our paper work), and William Kushner. It is not likely that these people will ever feel that what they are doing is for naught; rather, they will probably find the time they spend with these youngsters to be highly satisfying and spiritually rewarding.

Gary Alan Luczak

Chairman, Language Arts Program

PEOPLE ARE NO *#!* GOOD

Students of propaganda technique call them "dynamite words"; the rest of us simply leave them unclassified and usually avoid them altogether for fear of alienating an attentive listener or would-be sympathizer. However we may dislike these little black semantic fiends that shatter our logic and disrupt our carefully constructed communication patterns, we are forced to recognize and use them, simply for want of something better. A communist is a communist is a communist, no matter what middle-class shivers that word may send down the collective American spine. Candid expression is admirable, but one can only wonder what kind of people would name a paper the Catholic Worker and expect to get away with it--that is to sell it to the general American reading public, if there exists such an animal.

The answer lies first in the conjecture that the Catholic Worker is probably not intended for such consumption, and if it were, this same audience would be interested to find that the publication is in fact neither Roman Catholic nor an advocate of proletariat revolt, as its name suggests. It is technically a secular journal, as the Roman Catholic Church looks upon it as a layman's publication, and it certainly has no connection with the line of the American Communist Party's Daily Worker. The socialism of the Catholic Worker is voluntary, deeply rooted in religious belief, and Utopian in nature--its politics are pacifistic. But there is more to all this idealism than meets the eye; the Catholic Worker is both a publication and a charitable organization, a social movement, if you wish.

This movement and its history will be the topic of a lecture given by Mr. Charles Butterworth, one of the editors of the Catholic Worker, this Thursday evening in Brubacher Hall.

IS THE WAR OVER?

In 1867 Anna E. Dickinson wrote in her novel What Answer? of a one armed negro soldier who returned to his native Philadelphia and who attempted to vote in the election following the war. The election officials threw him out with the comment that "niggers" were becoming too "uppity." As he left the polling place, the veteran laughed sardonically and asked: "1861, or 1865? Is the war over?" The negro veteran of the Korean War returned to America and asked the same sardonic question--whether he be James Meredith in Mississippi, or James Baldwin in New York City.

We have not resolved America's dilemma, as Myrdal termed it, and indeed the dilemma grows more complex. It is as much a Northern phenomena as a Southern one. When an Albany woman can say, however exaggerated it may be, "Albany, New York is no different from Albany, Georgia," there is a measure of truth in her utterance. When the Black Muslim in effect says, "Christianity has failed us," it does not help much to correct him by saying, "No, it's not Christianity that has failed you--only Christians."

The Negro is one of our "original" immigrants; most of their ancestors arrived in America long before the majority of ours did. Nurtured in an environment of human slavery and racial inferiority arguments, his road has been anguished and bitter. The loss of potential talent among negro Americans has been tragically great, particularly in the light of our pressing national need for greater skills and ability. There are talented negroes who make their mark today as they have done in the past, but how many talented individuals are destroyed by self-hate and a lack of aspiration? We smother negro talent more efficiently than a police state destroys initiative. "It is not so much that developed talent is rejected but that talent is not allowed to develop. It withers under the cumulative impact of poverty and ignorance at home, degraded neighborhoods, poor educational facilities, limited job opportunities, and the ever-present fear of rebuff." (Prospect for America: The Rockefeller Reports, 1958, p. 381)

This generation of negroes has found a voice to protest; it is a multi-tongued voice, that offers us many alternative solutions to the American dilemma. But abstract solutions are not enough; the dilemma can be resolved only by empirical means, in Albany, New York, as well as in Albany, Georgia. Perhaps we need an eleventh commandment, not as a law to be followed with pharisaical devotion, but as a reminder of our human and individual responsibility--"Thou shalt not steal thy brother's talent."

D. E. Liedel

NON VIOLENCE, POLITICS, AND DISARMAMENT

Mr. Charles Walker, College Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee, Middle Atlantic Region, will appear at State on March 21 and 22. At 8:00 p.m., Thursday, March 21, Mr. Walker, a Quaker, will speak in Brubacher on "The Future of Non-Violence." The following afternoon, at 1:00 p.m. in Paige Hall, Mr. Walker will present his views on "Politics: What Stands in the Way of Disarmament?"

Mr. Walker is somewhat unconventional in his viewpoints. His staunch adherence to the values he deems important, in a society that frequently denies the very existence of such values, make him quite remarkable. During World War II, Mr. Walker was a conscientious objector. He objected so conscientiously, in fact, that he was imprisoned for his refusal to register for the draft. Undaunted by the sanctions of our society, he has continued to act in those ways that he believe will strengthen the bonds of world brotherhood and aid in the construction of a lasting peace. He is a Founding Member and International Council Member of the World Peace Brigade; he is an Associate Editor of Liberation Magazine; he is connected with the Friends Peace Committee and the Friends Civil Liberties Committee.

Recently, he was the originator and Co-Chairman of the Vigil at Fort Detrick, in protest against experimentation in germ warfare. He has also been active in interracial problems, coordinating the Youth March for Integrated Schools in Philadelphia.

Not only is Charles Walker qualified to speak, but he is an extremely able speaker as well. He was a radio analyst for four years, Director of a 13 week radio series, called "Let's Talk It Over", has travelled extensively in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, and is the author of the handbook, "Organizing for Nonviolent Direct Action."