

THE GADFLY

Vol 1, No 2 United Federation of College Teachers - BMCC Chapter November, 1966

MEETING OF OCTOBER 7

Chairman Friedheim opened the meeting by introducing the Chapter's officers and the Local representative, Mr Pankin. He announced the Teachers' Convocation to be held on October 15 at Local headquarters and reported on the results of three memoranda sent to President Block. These dealt with the status of returning faculty who had lost vacation time as a result of the changeover from the quarter to the semester system; the union's request that one Wednesday a month be set aside for meetings of faculty associations such as the Chapter; and a request for a monthly meeting between Chapter representatives and the President in order to ensure an open line of communication. President Block replied that the administration had not yet reached a decision on the matter of lost time; that the fact that many other meetings scheduled for Wednesday made another reservation difficult; and that, while a regular meeting between President and union was impossible, he was willing to meet with union representatives whenever either party found it necessary. The Chapter resolved that the union should seek financial remuneration for vacation time lost and discussed the questions of required office hours and the Multiple Positions Rule. While no definite policies were adopted, the members seemed to agree that the Multiple Positions Rule discriminated against the liberal arts faculty whose secondary positions were visible and the business faculty who could easily evade the ruling. Members felt that the ruling badly needed clarification in general. Since the ruling is a decree of the Board of Higher Education, it was decided that the matter might be better handled on the Local than the Chapter level. Several other matters were discussed and the meeting adjourned after about one hour. Minutes of the meeting from which this note is extracted have been duplicated and are available.

MEETING

There will be an important meeting of the Chapter on Wednesday, November 2, at 12:30 in Room 392.

The Chapter will consider the Report of the committee charged to present the union's position on compensation due faculty as a result of the transition to the semester system to the President. The full text of the Report appears on page three of THE GADFLY.

The Chapter will also discuss the issue of equity for non-instructional faculty (see page two), elect a grievance committee, and take a second look at the multiple position regulations.

Non-members and the College Center Faculty are invited to attend.

ISSUES

Too Much Sympathy

At times it seems as though the UFCT has too many sympathizers and too few members. Some non-members are quick to bring grievances to the attention of the Chapter's Executive Board. They ask the Chapter to take up the cudgels in their defense. They express their harmony with the aims of the UFCT but shy away from membership. They are, in short, "hung up" on the question of tenure. Once fortified by job security, they promise, they'll join and fight the good fight.

They evidently take a dimmer view of the administration than do UFCT members. Their attitude suggests that the President, the Deans, and the departmental chairmen are all conspiring against union members. We tend to doubt that they are quite so fiendish. Administrators are not by definition "evil." Even if they were, they would have a difficult time rationalizing the situation.

of such a large percentage of the faculty. The union does have the weight of numbers working in its favor.

Tenure should not stand between the faculty and the union membership. It is a spurious consideration. The time to join the UFCT is now!

A Question of Equity

Recently, upon the request of several members, we dispatched a memorandum to the President asking for a clarification of the status and duties of non-instructional faculty. We pointed out that in the absence of a well-defined policy there were many unfortunate disparities. Some worked longer hours and enjoyed shorter vacations than others. The situation demanded immediate attention.

In his reply the President expressed his concern. He indicated that the Administrative Council of the Community Colleges would soon take up the issue.

In the interim it might be wise for the union to address itself to the problem and suggest a policy. The regular faculty teaches up to fifteen hours per week. Ideally, for every hour in class, they spend one outside in preparation. Whether you employ the new math or the old or even some weird administrative calculus, the total adds up to thirty. Certainly, non-instructional faculty should not be required to spend more than thirty hours a week at their desks. Equity dictates that they also enjoy the same vacation benefits as the teaching faculty. Should the nature of their duties require an extra month or two of work, they deserve an increment based upon their normal monthly wage.

The issue is on the agenda of the next chapter meeting.

Black Wednesday

The free period between twelve and two o'clock on Wednesdays swells with meetings and conflicting commitments. The administration has not put the time to efficient use. Committees and departments compete for the presence of the faculty by scheduling meetings for the same hour. Professor Schmidman, the Chairman of the Department of Social Sciences, requested at the first meeting of the Faculty Council that the administration establish a calendar which would bring order to our chaotic Wednesdays. The union followed up his suggestion by petitioning the President to set aside one Wednesday each month for faculty associations. By the simple expedient of a memo, the administration could reserve the first Wednesday of every month for Faculty or Council meetings, the second for Committee work, the third for the conduct of departmental business, and the fourth for faculty associations. Hopefully, the calendar would be flexible so that if an emergency arose, for example, the President could convene the faculty council on the third or fourth Wednesday instead of the first. Meanwhile, with nearly half the term behind us, we still lack a calendar.

A Humane Policy

Some members of the faculty are up for tenure. The AAUP suggests that college administrations notify faculty of the renewal or termination of their contracts by December. The Association's suggestion is fact at many colleges and universities throughout the country. The policy is both wise and humane. The major scholarly associations representing the various academic disciplines convene, for the most part, late in December. Most college and university departments

interview and hire at these conventions. If, by chance, the college decides to terminate the contract of a faculty member up for tenure, it might well soften the blow by serving notice in December rather than April. Early notice, with the instructor's conventions ahead of him rather than behind, enables him to exercise greater leverage in --pardon the expression-- "the academic marketplace." If we are to reduce teaching and scholarship to a marketable commodity, we should at least inform our appointment policies with a measure of humanity.

REPORT OF UFCT COMMITTEE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BLOCK AND OTHER MEMBERS
OF THE ADMINISTRATION - OCTOBER 17, 1966

Subject: Remuneration for vacation time lost as a result of the transition to the semester system.

The committee comprised of William Friedheim, Leigh Marlowe, and Anna Porter met with President Block and Dean James on October 19, 1966 at 3:00 P.M.

- I. The committee presented the motion passed upon by the Chapter on October 7, 1966 to the effect that remuneration in the form of money be paid to faculty members for vacation time lost.
 - II. In response, President Block indicated that there were no funds available to meet the committee's request. He added that the Board of Higher Education fell under no legal obligation to provide remuneration for vacation time lost as a result of the changeover from the quarter system. The by-laws do not stipulate vacation time normally due faculty. Hence, legally, faculty members had no case. Finally, the President explained that the administration would not be acting in good faith if it petitioned the Board for the funds necessary to meet the union's request. President Block stressed that the Board had originally approved of the transition to the semester system with great reluctance. Originally, the Board had designated the school as "experimental." The quarter system was the school's most significant experiment. Hence, according to President Block, the changeover was not "an easy pill for the Board to swallow." A request for funds to compensate faculty for time lost as a result of the transition would not sit well, for obvious reasons, with the Board.
 - III. Dean James stated that the memorandum issued from his office in the form of a chart on May 19, 1966 had been misconstrued. He pointed out that the chart did not indicate that remuneration would come in the form of money and he and President Block expressed surprise that some faculty members had chosen to interpret it in that light. The Dean, backed by the President, reminded the committee that the faculty, at the time that it approved the modification of the calendar, was apprised of the hardships which might result from the changeover. It was implied, Dean James argued, that the faculty, alert to possible hardships as a result of the transition, would take them in stride. On its part, the administration would, where possible, seek to remunerate the faculty as justly as it could.
 - IV. The committee responded by making the following points:
 - A. Faculty contracted under the quarter system were party to a verbal agreement with a member of the administration to the effect that they would teach three out of four quarters (or nine of twelve months). The committee indicated that at this juncture, it was not necessary to debate the legality of such an agreement. Morally, the agreement was and is binding.
 - B. The memorandum released by the Dean on May 19 was the first specific indication by the administration that faculty members would lose vacation time as a result of the transition to the semester calendar. While the memorandum did not mention money, it did promise just remuneration.
-

- V. The President noted that the faculty contracted as of September 1, 1965 were actually in most cases due less than the month designated on the chart originally compiled by the Office of the Dean of Faculty. Normally, under the quarter plan, the faculty would be due back late in September, not on October 1. Hence, as a result of the switch, they were not due the full month of September. And those called back before the start of classes on September 19 were for the most part on duty for only two or three days.
- VI. The committee replied that while faculty were called back for only a few days at the most, they were on call for the time span between Labor Day and the start of classes. A mere day of duty could throw off whatever plans a faculty member had for a vacation or work during those two to three weeks.
- VII. The delegation, acting upon the Chapter's instructions, asked the President how he planned to compensate the faculty. He outlined the following:
 - A. For those who have lost more than a month:
 - 1. Possible assignment to Academic Advisement for one semester. They could work full-time in academic advisement for part of the semester and take vacation time due them for the remainder of the term.
 - 2. Or a reduction in class load. This would be compiled on the basis of the average class load of the department in which the faculty member teaches.
 - B. For those who have lost one month or less:
 - 1. Freedom from college duties during intersession, as can be arranged in each department. If Departmental meetings are necessary during this period, they will be convened at the very end or very beginning of the intersession.
- VIII. The committee requested that President Block sign a copy of this memorandum indicating that it accurately reported his position. He granted the request.

We present this memorandum to the Chapter for consideration at its next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
 William Friedheim
 Leigh Marlowe
 Anna Porter 10/25/66

Approved as corrected,
 Murray H Block 10/26/66

NOTE: We are presently conferring with Ralph Katz, the attorney for the UFCT, on the legal implications of the compensation issue. We will report on the thrust of our discussions to the Chapter on Wednesday.

A comment or two is in order about our negotiations with the President. He made what seemed to be a concession to those owed more than a month of vacation. But he conditioned the concession with the word, "possibly." "Possibly" the college will assign those due time in excess of a month to Academic Advisement. The assignment is not definite. He indicated that he would instruct departmental chairmen to free, if feasible, those owed a month or less from college duties during the semester break. At best, this is a gesture, not compensation.

WPF

CINEMA

FILMED SCRIPTURES

by Roger Dooley

The Bible

Those who on the basis of the famous names involved have been looking forward to the film over-ambitiously titled THE BIBLE as one of the great religious pictures of all time may as well be warned at once that they are in for a major disappointment. Not that it is sensational, tawdry, vulgar, or any of the other epithets usually flung at Hollywood Biblical epics; rather it fairly reeks of self-conscious good taste, restraint, and anxiety not to offend a single viewer of any sect -- apparently starting with the fundamentalists.

It is indeed ironic that in an era when forward-looking theologians of all faiths have been moving toward symbolic or allegorical interpretations of the early chapters of Genesis, producer Dino deLaurentis, director John Huston, and script-writer Christopher Fry have created a picturization so literal as to raise doubts where none existed before. One wonders, indeed, what Fry contributed, since hardly a line is added to the standard King James translation. While it is true that those translators were of the same generation as Shakespeare, the crucial difference is that he was writing lines to be spoken on stage by living actors. The stately 17th century rhetoric which can sound so impressive when read from a pulpit or intoned in a solemn ritual, in dialogue form crushes all life out of the actors. In scene after scene, posed like figures in a mural or a religious pageant, they must put across such sprightly exchanges as "It has been written that this is the will of the Lord," followed (after a five second pause) by some snappy comeback like "Even so."

Without asking for another Green Pastures (a delightful view of the Old Testament as visualized by a Negro Sunday School class, which conveyed more true religious spirit in any scene than does THE BIBLE in its entirety), one wonders why the bare bones of the familiar stories were not fleshed out with enough vivifying detail to make them humanly credible to skeptical audiences of the 1960's. As Huston's voice offscreen recites the opening passages of Genesis, the visual effects of the Creation are indeed impressive despite an obtrusive musical accompaniment. Likewise, the Garden of Eden, seen through a golden mist as in a Renaissance painting, is pictorially promising -- but Adam and Eve, generally glimpsed at a safe distance, behave like zombies. Neither before, during, or after the fall do they give the slightest indication that they know what they are doing. If the producers feared the

incongruous effect of mixing modern dialogue in with the standard text, surely they could have used some passages from Milton's Paradise Lost (written in the same century as the King James translation) to bring out some of the dramatic possibilities inherent in the fall of man.

On the other hand, the section on the Ark -- by far the most enjoyable segment of the film -- is so dog-goned Disney-cute and folksy, one expects any moment to hear a fiddle strike up Turkey in the Straw. Huston himself makes a shrewd, foxy-grandpa type Noah but the real interest lies in the fantastically assorted pairs of animals marching peacefully into the Ark (a ramshackle vessel, by the way, which scarcely looks capable of holding them). Had Fry taken as many liberties as did the writers of the medieval cycle plays (in which Noah's wife is always a comic shrew), this might have come off even better than it does.

From here the picture runs downhill. An episode involving Stephen Boyd as a curiously made-up Nimrod inspecting the Tower of Babel is absolutely meaningless even to those who know the story. The scenes in Sodom and Gomorrah look as if they were photographed in a coal mine; the amount of pagan revelry suggested is so minimal that one is left wondering just what it was that so angered the Lord. The cities are destroyed off-screen, with a single shot of a mushroom cloud -- symbolic, no doubt. What Lot's wife turns into (literally, of course) looks less like a pillar of salt than a toasted marshmallow.

For the rest of the three hours' running time, the story of Abraham drags interminably on, the events presented without the slightest attempt to make them psychologically palatable to modern viewers. George C Scott, nostrils flaring, snorts and snarls up a storm to achieve a dramatic moment now and then, without ever making Abraham seem more than a self-righteous fanatic. Ava Gardner, made up to look far older than she is, is wasted in the thankless role of Sarah, as is Peter O'Toole tripling in brass as three angels.

As an illustrated accompaniment to a Sunday School lecture on Genesis, this film would no doubt be quite effective, especially in the Bible Belt (if it still exists). As a super-colossal production, made with apparently unlimited international resources, it commits the one cinematic sin that renders

any virtues irrelevant; it is lifeless, static, unmoving in any sense of the word. If it is not as bad as The Robe, The Big Fisherman, the last King of Kings, or many others now enjoying the oblivion they so richly earned, it cannot compare with any of a number of religious films which were also dramatically engrossing: the silent King of

Kings, The Ten Commandments, Ben Hur, and Barabbas, to name but a few. (DeMille, thou shouldst be living at this hour!) In short, despite all its lofty aims and good intentions (the kind Hell is paved with), for any but the most naive audiences, THE BIBLE must be described as "God-awful."

 *
 * Members who wish to contribute items *
 * to the next regular issue of The *
 * Gadfly should submit their copy no *
 * later than November 23. *
 *

ESSAY

THE MARVELOUS MIND MACHINE

by Leigh Marlowe

The celebration was underway inside, but there was still a throng milling about the entrance. So many people were jammed inside that seats could be found only at the rear of the second balcony. In the dim light on stage, to one side of the enormous llob of color and opposite an Indian trio, Dr Timothy Leary held forth from a brocade couch. Aside from an excellent lavalier mike, his dress was quite casual. Most of the audience could hardly be classified as youthful, although a sizable minority wore pressed hair and unpressed clothes. Generally, they were attentive, but not receptive: curious, for various reasons. After the celebration (for that's what Dr Leary calls these comedy-variety acts) the crowd moved out, silent and orderly.

Had the star of the show been addressing a mental health team rather than a cash audience, the conclusions that might be drawn would not be particularly inspiring. In my opinion, Dr Leary has made a major breakthrough: in the millennia since H. sapiens appeared on this planet, no one has been able to communicate madness so effectively and profitably. I don't think, however, that one can attribute this success entirely to the stupidity of the public or the coverage by the mass media.

What is the nature of the appeal, bordering on chafisma, that Leary exerts? His dishonorable discharge from the academic community is an experience that is widely shared among the segment to which he appeals most. His slogan, "Drop Out," has given these words not only new meaning but new status. To "Drop Out" in Leary's lexicon is to be among the select few (if one becomes an acolyte in the new religion.)

An alarming number of individuals dabble in drugs. Leary's sanctions take such behavior out of the realm of lawlessness and thrill-seeking ("Turned On" his slogan has it) and transmute it into a communion, for he conceives of the giving and taking of drugs as a kind of sacrament. To proselytize the use of drugs is no longer to be a pusher, but to be a "Tuned In" missionary to the heathen. "Turn on, Tune in, Drop out" becomes a Hail Mary.

But religion is somewhat passé. After all, we've been told that God is dead. Even if we are not too concerned about God Himself, we notice that churches have become sanctuaries for bigots, that religious institutions are run like Big Business, without suffering its censures or strictures (like taxes). Mealy-mouthed hypocrites fix it with Father for themselves after the most treacherous Machiavellianism. How can a new religion --the League for Spiritual Discovery-- get off the ground?

Very simple. Instead of locating God out there in the cosmic soup (it's full of space junk anyway), put Him in man. Everyman can thus become a Christ, with built-in social, if not physical, martyrdom guaranteed. The problem of finding God then, in Leary's words, resolves itself into going out of one's mind to come to one's senses.

Several issues still have to be settled. The Puritan Ethos dies hard --even harder than God-- in this country for more people give it lip-service. Thus, a sensate religion has to be justified. It is in this regard that Leary's pitiable deterioration is most evident. He completely garbles such topics as the history of religion, the relation of religion to culture, the function of the nervous system, and simple anthropological fact (e.g. according to Leary, the Indians of the Southwest live in wigwams). By rewriting history and science, Leary "proves" that the League for Spiritual Discovery is a return to Man's True Religion.

The call to True Religion has been a common dodge among the holy, and the revivalist spirit --Good Old Time Religion is another American theme-- now rears its head in an exotic package. The shaman is a well-known figure in all cultures. One might even go so far as to say that Leary trots out his Ph.D. as a sheepskin stigmata to indicate to his adherents that he has suffered in the mundane world. The boys on Mad Ave couldn't have planned a better campaign.

I doubt whether Leary plotted to perpetrate such a hoax in any sense of tactics and strategy. When it became clear to Leary and his colleagues that they were never going to accomplish anything within the framework of scientific method --which puts the burden of proof on the Believers-- he suffered a loss of faith in the academic religion which had nurtured him. (I was present at a professional meeting addressed by Leary when his pièce de résistance, the "experiential typewriter," embarrassingly failed to operate. That gadget never did get fixed up properly.) For a while, Leary maintained that what he was doing was scientific, but his turn from psychology to theology is a tacit admission that what he is trying to say cannot be said either in the laboratory or the clinic.

Some people regard Leary's founding of a religion as a fiendish scheme to avoid prosecution for he can then claim his constitutional guarantees. The League for Spiritual Discovery is not really a religion since all known religions are based on some kind of relationship to the supernatural, however the supernatural may be defined, and the League for Spiritual Discovery is much more concerned with the unnatural. The best thing, best in terms of catapulting popularity, for Leary's League would be to make him a bona fide martyr. The parallels would be just too embarrassing for the rest of the community to explain away. Besides, violating the Constitution is a sin in the religion of Nationalism.

For those interested in starting a Discourage and Stop Learyism movement (DSL), for those who see him as an especially corrupt Socrates planning a disastrous Children's Crusade with the twentieth century touch (to mix metaphors), the following suggestions are submitted:

1. The Blackout Tactic -- Simply enlist the cooperation of the mass media in not disseminating publicity for Leary. Let them write about dogs, babies, and murders. Or, make him pay the going rates, like, say, Rockefeller.
2. The Scofflaw Strategy -- Everytime Leary parks his gaudy hearse on the street, get the Sanitmen to tow it away, gaily decorated with green tickets.

3. The Be Kind to Animals Ploy -- Get the ASPCA to investigate the deplorable condition of the Herefords on Leary's estate in Millbrook. How could the Civil Liberties Union fight the ASPCA? Such would induce a serious sentimentality conflict.

4. A Pray-In -- Convince leaders of all creeds, e.g. Martin Luther King, Bishops Sheen and Makarios, the chief Hasidic Rabbi, some Muezzins from the Black Muslims, Oral Roberts, etc. to pack the house at Leary's celebrations and use their Good Magic against his Bad Magic. (Perhaps this way we'd be rid of all idiocy at one stroke.)

5. If matters really get desperate, perhaps our good friends, the American Management Association, could be induced to enforce the BMCC dress regulations at the League's celebrations.

SATIRE

PROFILE: NEW DEAN AT BMCC

by Joseph Conlin

("Profile" is an adaptation of a column which will appear in the November number of ACTION, the journal of the New York Local of the UFCT.)

The chapter is pleased to welcome the latest addition to the college administration, Larsen Bloom, who has assumed the newly-created post of Dean of Memoranda and Official Charts. Dean Bloom will earn his \$30,000 plus salary by coordinating and supervising the release and distribution of all college memos.

Comfortably esconced in his mauve-walled second floor office, Dean Bloom's ruggedly handsome looks and ramrod posture belie his military background. The fifty-year old Dean comes to BMCC from the U.S. Army where he held the rank of Brigadier-General and personally supervised every memorandum issued from the Pentagon since 1948. He was no ten o'clock officer. "Look at any army memo, any army memo," Dean Bloom told us, his steel blue eyes twinkling, "I've initialed it."

He has not left this sense of personal involvement behind. When President Block offered him provide a full-time secretary, "Dean Bloom politely declined. "I love memos," he says, "they've been my life's work and provided me a great deal of satisfaction over the years -- not to mention excitement. I'll handle them

all myself and don't want any secretary messing them up with typos."

Spotting typographical errors is one of Dean Bloom's most gratifying duties. Sharing the walls of his austere office with framed commendations from four presidents is an old-fashioned sampler bearing his motto:

IF IT'S WORTH A MEMO
-AND IT IS--
IT'S WORTH AN ACCURATE MEMO

Another function of the new position will be to adjust memo phraseology so that it conforms to standard usage as set in Dean Bloom's own book, Making Memorable Memos,

THE GADFLY

November, 1966

Joe Conlin, Editor

Contributors: Roger Dooley is a member of the English Department, a novelist, and movie reviewer. Leigh Marlowe is a member of the Social Sciences Department. Mark A McCloskey is Professor at BMCC and former Chairman of the New York State Youth Commission. Rochelle Weinstein, who designed the head of THE GADFLY, teaches in the Art Department.

Opinions expressed in signed articles are the writers' own and not necessarily those of THE GADFLY or the Chapter.

(Knopf, 1957). "Take a look at these," the old soldier said, furiously shaking a sheath of dittoed messages dealing with student dress regulations. "Sure, the idea is great but the wording frankly stinks." Too many monosyllables --I hate monosyllables in a memo-- little use of capitals for emphasis, and hardly a latinate technical term in the slew of them. You can bet you'll see a lot of changes in the future."

As a former general, Dean Bloom is unlikely to be anyone's yes-man. "President Block and I understand each other perfectly," Bloom confides, leaning forward over his desk, "I've got no business with college policy but absolute control over memo format." The Dean crashed his blond-haired tan fist on his desk to emphasize the point and then smiled as if a trifle embarrassed by such enthusiasm. "It's like this," he went on, "President Block's personal memos get the identical treatment as the basketball team's. If he sends a memo through here to be processed and it smells, I tell him it smells --period. I can't play favorites if this office is going to click."

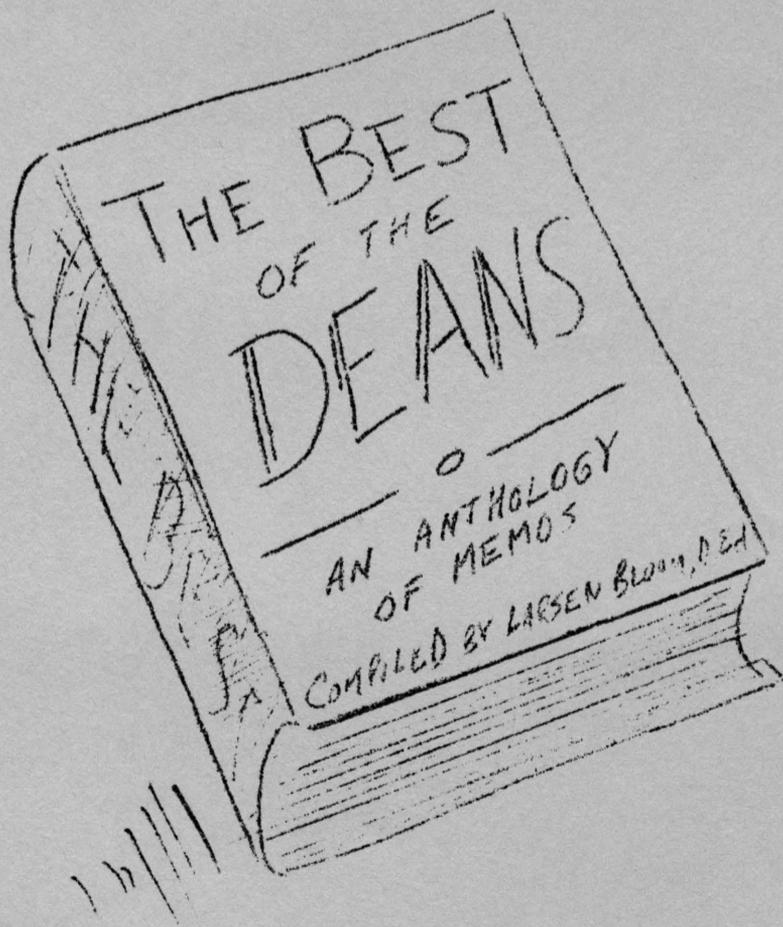
One of Bloom's first policies is to double the college consumption of mimeograph paper. His own first official memo was to direct that no message be released on half-sheets. "If the college can squander money on salaries," the Dean claims, "it certainly cannot protest paper purchases. If someone has a simple announcement of, say, ten words, center the damn thing on standard 8½ by 11. I don't want faculty mailboxes cluttered up with scraps.

Bloom is also disturbed by what he calls the administration's horse-and-buggy niggardliness in issuing memoranda. "This place is filled with fine minds," he said, beckoning toward the business office, "when they have a thought, I want that thought memorandized immediately. When I walk past a departmental office I want to see those pigeon-holes stuffed 'til they'd like to bust at the seams."

As for long-range plans, Dean Bloom envisions a moroccan-bound multi-volume facsimile edition (quarto-sized) of all BMCC memos. It will be printed on fine parchment or Irish linen and offered to faculty members at a forty-percent discount. "Maybe we could work out a salary check-off system for installment purchase," he mused, pausing to jot the idea down on one of a dozen handy stencils. In the meantime he's preparing an anthology entitled "The Best of the Deans" which will be free and available to students and faculty in time for Christmas giving.

Dean Bloom is a member of the Elks and the Staten Island Reform Democratic Club. He speaks four languages and enjoys reading Edna Ferber novels and small game hunting in his spare time. He is married to the former Sheila "Sunny" Twining of Philadelphia and the father of three children: Randy, Craig, and Melissa. "Randy already knows Xerox and Thermofax," Dean Bloom beamed and one sees that the no-nonsense administrator is also a proud family man.

We look for big things from Dean Larsen Bloom and welcome him to BMCC.



ESSAY

URBANIZATION

by Mark A McCloskey

"Urbanization" was first delivered as an address before The Institute for Religious and Social Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America during the winter of 1959-1960. It was subsequently published in Dilemmas of Youth: In America Today, edited by R M MacIver. It is printed here with the generous permission of the Institute. and the distributor, Harper and Row, Inc.

My assignment is the dilemmas of contemporary youth: the dilemma being what the Scots called a "Haflin," half boy and half man, and that dilemma in our time and place.

Recently I was asked to talk about "Panaceas for Delinquency," and being a non-believer in panaceas, I had a hard time. By the nature of my inheritance, I am up one day and down the next. It was one of my "down days" and I rejected belligerently the single answers held by many good people to the problems of youth and problems of society. When I read the newspaper the next morning I discovered my own delinquency and telephone calls aggravated my misery. "Why on earth have you alienated everybody, the public, the social workers, the educators and the psychiatrists, the religious teachers, all down the line?" What I wanted to do was reject panaceas, not works or professions. I never got to what I wanted most to do; that was to call for the assembled effort, to point out that we were all involved and that the combined labor and the combined operation of people is one of the best ways to serve young people and ourselves. No one, and no one group can be left out of the talk of constant changing and reordering our institutions on behalf of humans, and particularly young humans.

Let me go back, for perspective, to my remembrances of life on the Chelsea waterfront where I spent all of my childhood and youth, and the first twenty years of my apprenticeship as a social worker.

Tenement houses jammed together near the waterfront, rat and roach infested, cat and dog odored, badly lit, badly ventilated, foul sanitation and fire traps. Trains grinding along Death Avenue. Roofs and backyards were to try clothes, fly pigeons, and provide a place for the inherent need for games of chase. One-man bands and yard singers provided small entertainment to a neighborhood that had the rhythm of life but little of the melody or harmony of good living.

The coal, milk, and vegetable yards, the slaughter and warehouses, were anonymous stores from which the adventurous and needy could meet their needs: North River, where we learned to swim and to pilfer from the scows tied up at the piers. The family doctor was poorly paid and often unpaid. There was little faith in and much fear of Bellevue. There was prevalent the myth of the black bottle that kept patients from lingering too long. Milk stations with their pasteurized milk were slow in coming and the neighborhood clinics were shabby. St. Mary's Hospital was a fine haven for sick children. There were "soup" schools and "diet" kitchens. The former carried shame and the latter doused the pride of the woman who had learned to make food "go a long way." Money for injured men and their families was gotten by raffling off turkeys. The local political clubs provided occasional aid of various kinds and wealthy parishes opened up neighborhood clubs and missions. Case work was just beginning and the private welfare agencies gave small amounts of money after much investigation and others gave more and cut it off earlier. The skillful and persistent needy knew their story and their way from one agency to another, but their pickings were meager at best and the stigma was obvious. It was far better to help yourself on the waterfront from the great and impersonal depositories and warehouses. Those boys who were hustlers were counted good when they got supplementary aid at the coal yards, the milk depots and the bread wagons. The produce yards were for plucking and picking over partially damaged potatoes and onions. Bread and pie wagons were legitimate prey.

The street trades, shoe shining, errands, newspaper hawking, and odd jobs helped out but there was always a wait "until he got his diploma." After seven years of schooling the certificate was the equivalent of working papers, and diploma in hand, the young ones fanned out to the labor market. The ads asked for strong, willing boys. Few went to High School. The schools of Chelsea were all prewar; no play yards but yard toilets. Much of the schoolwork was drill and unexciting. Teachers were fair game, but all of them were sensitive to the rough road that the pupils had travelled, and the teachers visited the homes of the troubled and troublesome children.

Play was sidewalk and street games, but adventure was in the chase games over the roofs, through the cellars, over the backyards, and off the piers in the summer. The cops, janitors, and storekeepers were the pursuers. Those who hung out together bunched up for the often delirious excitement of chasing other neighborhood gags. These little groups met in cellars, on roofs, in empty rooms or in the corner of a stable. After one went to work, he could and usually did, join what was called a "cellar club" by social workers. There were gang fights, some between nationality groups, but often one end of the street against the other. Small battles were waged on each avenue, on the way to school and again on the way home. The smaller ones carried the books, the older ones used their fists. Roofs were ramparts from which to throw anything from stones to bottles. There were few knife jobs; guns were easy to get and were used by older, closely organized gangs. There seemed to be less vandalism, just as much conflict and more thievery. Social study and statistics seemed to be in their infancy.

Looking back in that dark abyss, I am amazed that so many children grew to decency and that so few were personally scarred. Survival alone was a struggle. The social advances have been uneven, but the rot has stopped. Across the street from "Bed Bug Row" the hospital flats were built with outside stairs and fireproofing. In 1934, New York Housing Authority started what has become the second largest municipal housing enterprise in the world. The women who followed homemaking as a profession began to get a proper place to do their job, but the decay of old houses and the increase in population still outrun the public provision of housing.

The road was rough and there was little or no beauty alongside the road children had to travel. There were few buildings in Chelsea that could lay claim to beauty or dignity. The General Seminary, a few churches, some old private houses, and the National Biscuit Company's glistening generators provided a smidgeon of beauty. The ocean liners lashed to their piers were lordly wives of men of war but the barges and scows along the river were smelly and unlovely craft. The odors were chocolate and tobacco, brewery and slaughter house compounded. The tenements had their own noxious blend in the plaster, woodwork, and corners of the hall. It was ugly, ugly! To look west, however, from the piers upon the broad, living, moving North River, provided a bit of beauty, particularly at night when darkness shrouded the ugliness and the tugs and liners with their lanterns and colored running lights, were like grace notes to the full-throated blasts of the liners "sailing at midnight." A Chelsea child could lay awake dreaming of going away someday aboard one of those liners.

The art, music, and drama classes of the Settlement and the programs of the Church and Mission branches were small islands in a sea of mediocre dreariness. When Chelsea Park was built, the Settlement's Spring pageants with large singing and dancing groups in gaily colored costumes brought together units from most of the schools and other groups of the neighborhood.

Best aid of all, the fresh air "camps and farms" gave a temporary experience of natural beauty, the shape of trees and hills, the smell and sight of grass and growing things. The host of tenement children who came to Camp Felicia, in the twenty summers our family "ran" the camp, made me understand how hungry children were for natural, as well as manmade beauty and how cruel it is to starve them of it. If the love of beauty goes undernourished in youth, it may go unfulfilled for life. If it is cultivated when children are sensitive to all of their surroundings, one cannot measure, one can only sense, the subtle civilizing effect and believe that it will be a long-lasting defense against the damage wrought by ugliness.

The Settlement where I worked my apprenticeship was a battling institution. It worked with the neighbors, step by step, for the demolition of a block of foul tenements to make room for a public park (mostly concrete with few trees). The Settlement's gymnasium was crowded with neighbors who chanted "we want a bath" and

the public bath came, complete with swimming pool and gymnasium, the first Public gymnasium in Chelsea. The struggle for a health station took longer and Elliott Houses longer still. The Settlement and its neighbors worked for woman suffrage and the whole range of social legislation to bolster an uneven economy and to make up for the vicissitudes of slum life. The cultural and educational enterprises of the Settlement were yeasty encouragement to the arts and learning. It provided a library and a dental clinic, at the same time forwarding the movement for dental examinations in schools. Each new wave of immigrants was helped to learn our common language and get knowledge of our institutions.

Scales of values change from place to place and time to time with individuals, families, and institutions. Currently segments of government, industry, and commerce are busy setting up "codes of ethics." Youth also has to go through the business of code building. It is a slow process and it takes time to arrive at rules acceptable to their elders, and like their elders, it is harder to abide by new rules than it is to make them.

All of the Settlement's enterprises and the other neighborhood undertakings were helping to set rules and to set values. They worked with the homes, schools, and churches in their stand for decency in relation to each other, to property, and to legal institutions.

To the dwellers in Chelsea had come a body of people, a few professionals and many volunteers who worked with more or less organization but with much warmth and desire. By today's standards, the job was imperfectly "structured" but the program was based on people working directly with people. I want here to escape from words like dedication and consecration, and plump for people who "bother" about people. Young people, particularly, have the most need and are the most difficult to "bother" with. I do not frown upon my fellow professional social workers, but I set great store by worriers --those who carry on the hand to hand, face to face struggle with the young over a long haul. I respect the importance of organization, of research and training, but I insist upon the primacy of those who "bother" and hold fast to the child who needs warm help and strength.

There has been much talk about national purpose. It has been defined variously, and some declare it can't be defined. Those who "bother" with youth in schools and out, have to help them find purpose and motivation. Thinking is harder than physical labor, and to be free in the search for truth, to pursue knowledge, to discover and discipline talents, to work off a debt to one's country and the human race, to establish a decent scale of values, to establish identity and assume responsibility in our society, are difficult tasks. I believe they can be best gotten by contagion and example rather than by talking and preaching. Youth can be challenged by hardship and labor more than it can by lush living.

The step by step piecemeal progress over long years is too expensive. I hope that urban renewal and redevelopment plans will provide for the necessary safer streets, libraries, health stations, neighborhood schools, and public welfare facilities. Concomitant with the physical planning must go planning for social services. It would be well to have at the heart of every neighborhood a multiple store of services, where any and all families could get, not only the supportive service necessary for decent living in congested neighborhoods, but the advice and counselling so readily accessible and purchasable in better-advantaged neighborhoods. Parents should be able to go for help of all kinds as readily as they go to a central market area and they should be able to go uninhibited, confident that they will not be possessed by fear, or passed along from one agency to another.

All neighborhoods have their share of "stumblers," mixed up and disturbed young people. The help they need to get through the vestibule of adolescence should be accessible, with removal from the community only as a last resort. We need badly to pull together the neighborly nonprofessional help which can be summoned to mutual support in all fields. It is hoped, too, that professionals will likewise be moved to maintain residence nearer to the people for whom they work. One would like to know that there would be no more "closed cases."

I hope that we could develop a "pride of place." The names of our neighborhoods need not be labels of despair or fear. The shift from neighborhood decay to all-around neighborhood development might well help to stabilize values, reduce neighborhood conflict, promote mutual aid, and diminish rootlessness. By "pride of place" we might encourage settling down rather than migrating constantly from one neighborhood to another.

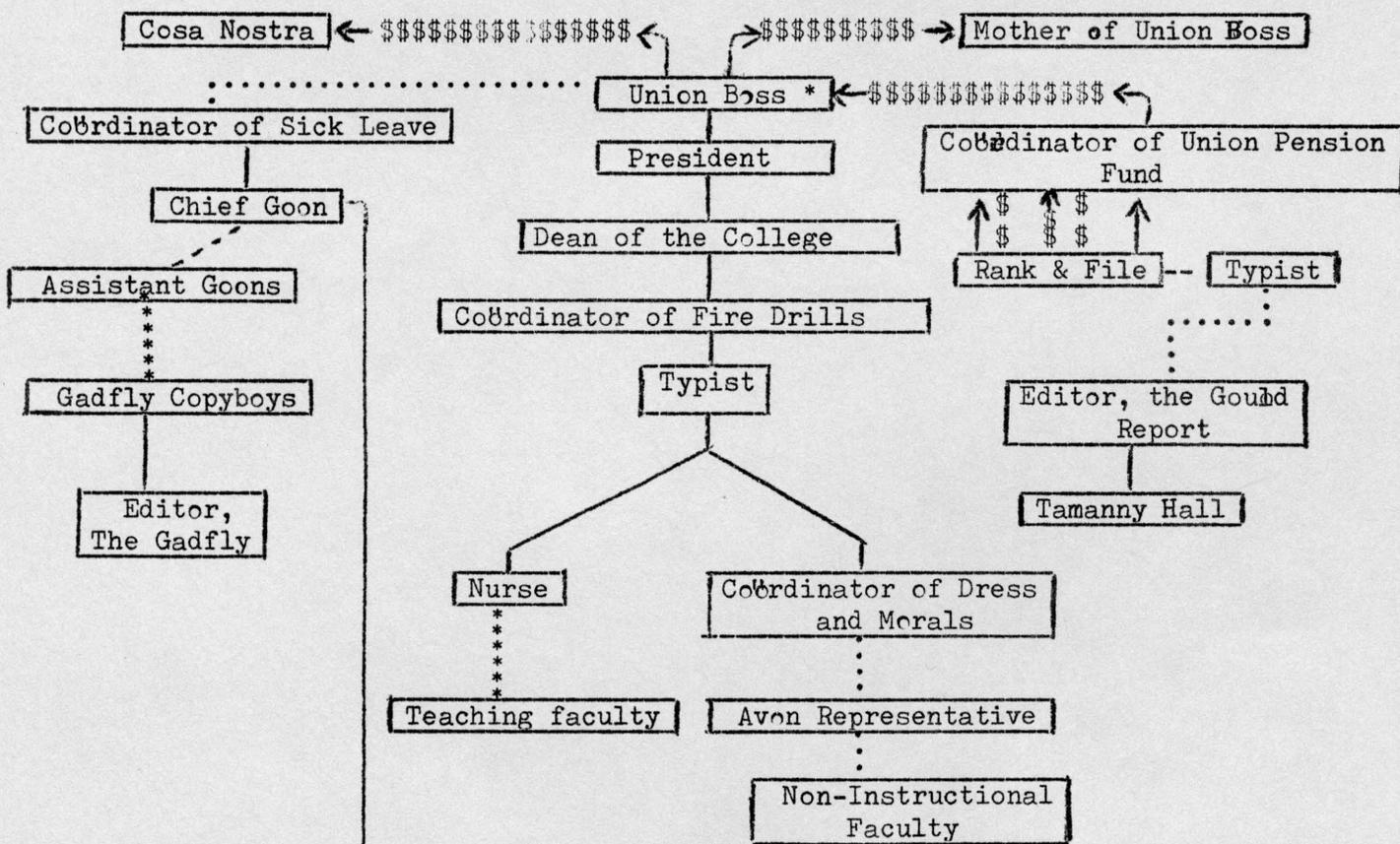
The social advances since the turn of the century, through depressions and great wars, are to me a source of encouragement. Causes I once thought were lost, have been won. The Cassandras don't win. To those with great faith and great conceptions of the possibilities of civilized life in a metropolis, there are an infinite variety of ways to work to bring us nearer to the "New Jerusalem." The problems are challenging and varied enough to rally workers with faith; those who believe in the young strangers who are always coming, coming, coming --and to work with them with all their might. I do not subscribe to easy generalizations about young people. I subscribe to the delight of living and working with them as they face a "sea of trouble" in a time when their responsible elders have an even greater tempest to brave.

Looking back over the road we have come, I know we can go ahead with confidence in our youth, ourselves, and in our fundamental institutions.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

by William Friedheim

What with every office in the college issuing spurious organizational charts, it is high time that the truth be revealed. Herewith is the last word in such charts, the union's version (unexpurgated).



*Also goes by title of chairman; sometimes called "shop Steward"

KEY

- Straight line
- Dotted line
- Broken line
- \$\$\$\$\$\$\$ Dollar signs
- ***** Stars
- > Arrow

..... Student Body?