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The Oxen

By Gary Wondergem

Yesterday, the planes had come. Bombing the village, dropping their fiery glue on the small thatched huts, burning the fearful inhabitants crouching inside. Le Duoc Tho had escaped. Twenty years of war made a man wise. He had seen the French come and go. He knew the new strangers would come and go. He did not worry. He had found a safe hiding place for his oxen. Yes, for his oxen.

He remembered when the man from the government had come and had told the villagers they were to receive a tractor. A machine stronger than all the oxen in the village. A machine that could plow all the rice paddies in the village in a week. The machine, the tractor, never came. Now, there was no village, and no villagers. Only Le Duo Tho and his oxen. Yes, his oxen.

He was a rich man, an important man, because of his oxen. He was able to produce more rice than others because his oxen were the best, the strongest in the village. He used to help the other villagers with their fields, but now there were no other villagers.

A week ago, people from the north had come, saying they were brothers, and they would free them from their oppressors. Their actions spoke otherwise. They took their rice, and when they resisted them, they took their elders hostage and then killed them. The brothers from the north had left. Before they left, one dark night, the northerners had attacked the government camp and had killed several soldiers. The next morning their village had been levelled by the silver birds that dropped fire, which stuck to people's skin. Many had died, the rest had fled. Only Le Duoc Tho had had the courage to stay, near his rice paddy, near his oxen.

This morning the planes would not come. The village was burned, the villagers gone or dead. Twenty years of war made a man wise thought Le Duoc Tho. The planes would not come today. He would harness his oxen, which he had safely in the cave near the river. He would plow his rice paddy.

Le Duoc Tho walked slowly to the river. He would have to walk many more steps before the day ended. There was no sense in hurrying. Twenty years of war made a man wise and cautious.

Le Duoc Tho harnessed his oxen, and started his long journey to his field. It lay quite far from the village. He had chosen it years ago when the French were landlords of his village. It had escaped the ravages of war before. He knew it would not be damaged by the bombs that had fallen yesterday.

The morning was quiet. The children that used to run to him were gone. His friends were gone. Even the birds were gone. On the horizon he could see the smoke of another burning village. High in the sky he could see the smoke trails of the silver birds, streaking away with their fiery cargo. The war had moved to another village. It would be safe to plow his village today.

Le Duoc Tho worked until the sun was high, then rested, letting his oxen roam into his field. He found some shade to rest in until the sun lost its heat. It was at that moment when a piercing scream hit his eardrums. The earth suddenly quaked beneath his feet, the air was filled with dust. Le Duoc cursed in anger mingled with terror, but it

Antidisestablishmentarianism

The making of the President, 1972, has been completed. It would be difficult to comment objectively on the outcome until more time has elapsed. Instead, the Christian community faces the task which God places before it for the next four years.

The election of 1972 does furnish several concepts which become apparent to concerned citizens, and Christian citizens in particular.

1. Pragmatic politics is treacherous to America, because it results in a watering down of principles, a weakening of commitments to beliefs, and an "end justifies the means" type of reasoning.
2. Progress through peace and peace through progress will continue to be a lie until the military draft is eliminated, and the industrial complex is bluntly introduced to fiscal and environmental responsibility.
3. The voice of the body of American Christians has come alive, the seed of Christian political awareness has been sown, and the blessing of God is now essential to providing a change of mind, an alternative direction, and courage to continue the task begun.

The Soft Revolution, a book that introduces a humanistic approach to change in schools, (by Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner) contains a short statement concerning obstacles which occur along the way to improvement. Although its particular application was not political, it does lead to an awareness of the position from which Christians must institute change. The statement is a short explanation of the origin and meaning of the speller's headache, antidisestablishmentarianism. Summarized, the authors state that the term establishmentarianism refers to the belief that all the particular and general woes of the world were created by the establishment. The term disestablishmentarianism is the belief that all the particular and general woes of the world would disappear if we could just

destroy the Establishment. Antidisestablishmentarianism, say Postman and Weingartner, is the perspective which includes the belief that: "the Establishment is only a metaphor for organized power. It is individual people who wield that power; individual people are changeable and accessible to reason, especially when reason and change can be shown to be in their self-interest. Among people of influence there are many untapped sensitivities and repositories of good will. Everybody is somebody else's Establishment, which means that more often than we think, when we denounce the Establishment, we are denouncing ourselves."

While the Christian must reject the statement's incorrect view of man and the appeal to Reason as mediator, he realizes that the author's description has summarized the role of the body of Christians across America throughout the last century or more; bemoaning its minority status, critically hesitant at a time when belief-directed action was vital, denouncing individual efforts to confront problems, when they occurred. And in condemning the noise of the American political scene, the body of Christ has condemned its own silence.

Yet what is left to do when it seems that our political system is falling apart? There are three possibilities:

1. Silence, the product of despair.
2. Separation ("the personal Christian life") the result of ignorance.
3. Cooperation, a united response, the product of faith.

Christians must reject silence, first, because it is not obedient to the mandate from God, and second, because it has produced misunderstanding, apathy, and division among the members of Christ's body. Separation of politics from the Christian's experience of life, or separation of the community of Christians from the political battleground is likewise disobedient to God, and results in the type of "personal Christian life, period" mentality which divorces itself from the world and turns inward with the Good News of salvation. The modern political absurdities are the result of the withdrawal of Christ's name from the political sphere.

The only obedient response is for Christians to enter the arena of politics. For even though their voice is considerably small, it holds the answer to the broken, fragmented mess that is 20th Century American politics. That answer is obedience to Jesus Christ, a willingness to surrender all to His will for the nations of the world from His Inscripturated Word. And this is not restricted to a conglomerate of individual Christians. The change that is necessary calls for such magnitude of force that it is alone through a united response of American Christians, catching the flame of obedience, that the task will be accomplished, the vision come true.

Rather than an appeal to reason, America needs a return to obedience. When change resulting from obedience to the God of politics can be shown as not only in people's best interest, but also as a cause for blessing (Psalm 1), then we will observe a regeneration of politics, influencing all of life.

The task is difficult, there is opposition and criticism from Christians and non-Christians alike. That criticism exists cannot be a serious obstacle in the faces of those who believe "the earth is the

(Continued on back page)



"All the way to the Student Forum, nothing but rain, rain, rain!"

was too late. His field was destroyed. When the air cleared Le Duoc Tho saw that his oxen were dead. Le Duoc Tho would not plow his field today. Twenty years of war made a man wise.

The First Snow of Winter Menuin Rylaarsda

Andante



Schalekamp's Drug Store

invites you to come in and see
how quickly and easily you can improve
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Gary Wondergem
Karl Neerhof
Wayne Farr
Becky Maatman
Wayne Brower

GENERAL STAFF

Mark Okkema
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Wally Vande Kleut

Sonnet on Sight (Gen. 2: 19-20a)

My Eden eyes focus on East;
 eyes seared by hot, blood-tears;
 always yearning and craving and crying to feast
 upon that Son-Rise so eternally dear
 and necessary. Eden eyes -
 stubborn; torn by sunken glass slivers;
 eyes losing sight of the earth and sky,
 and man-creating Word of the loving Giver
 of the Body-and Blood-Word who gives. Taking
 his Bread and Wine, the fragments slowly return
 and rejoin to mirror an all-encompassing, making,
 preserving Power. How I forever yearn
 to have Perfect, Adam-Sight to see
 the Word ruling with Over-All Majesty.

—Mark Okkema

S. U. B.

Sitting on the brown chair
 I finger a cigarette hole
 on the seat
 gently depressing the bumpy leather surface.
 Flattened dead damp grass
 lies on the small incline
 beyond the plated glass wall
 Grey sky
 like wet sea sand
 the pounding rise and fall
 summer surf of
 bowling balls
 below
 repeat the sounding dullness
 of restless
 captured life.

—jeanie zinkand

Missing the Point

Stellar stabbings
 Seek forever
 Flaunted flickers
 In the void;
 Spinning spiders
 Span the spaces
 By no basic
 Boundary bouyed.
 Cataclysmic chaos
 Courses cravingly
 Through
 Carbon Cold;
 Mighty motion
 Many marvelled
 As they crossed
 A palm with gold.

—Tina LaBrenz

Untitled by Julius de Jager

Dumb-founded is the Blood, Peigan, Sarcee. . .
 in this world of reds and whites
 all let one forget.

"I am a gentleman—"
 a gentleman
 with that red man's nose
 and white man's rags
 and white man's red wine.

"an', an' I love my kids, yeah."
 a sugar-beet house, not fit for an immigrant
 a rusty car surrounded by children,
 wild, long-haired, filthy children
 that run through weeds and wait in dark alleys.

"I got a boy as old like you"
 dark figures in the night
 young daughters looking for comfort
 with white men and red wine
 and sons lie in gutters; scarred by living.

"Yup, an' now I go to the rodeo."
 with swaying feet curved by horses
 that plod over the dry dirt in endless beet-fields
 worn, torn cowboy boots shuffling over the sizzling pavement.

We see you
 standing on the highway in the open spaces
 being cheated by bars and bartenders.
 What will become of the children that still
 run through the weeds and crouch in corners?

EDITORIAL

Poetry is as old as man's tongue. It is perhaps the best conveyor of attitudes at a given period of time. It is also one of the best ways that man can praise his Maker.

In an age which easily discards traditional ways of communicating, today people write more poetry than ever. Modern thinkers feel emptiness in their lives, but they can't keep quiet in their search for some kind of meaning. The more futile the poem or the lyrics, the more popular it becomes.

I like poetry because it is heart stuff. The poet pours his heart out to the reader's heart in condensed language. He speaks his way of life and his way of death. A poet hits the soft or painful spot in the reader. Therefore a poem is often more emotionally worded than an essay. It is also shorter than an essay, but it cannot be read rapidly. Poetry should be read aloud and at least twice to get the full meaning. It is hard to judge the quality of poetry, especially since rhymes, meters, and punctuation are no longer observed. Instead we look at the content and decide if what the author says is true about the world, who made it and why he is here on earth.

Reflection

Last night
 sky wept for earth.
 He drenched the trees,
 green grass and
 me
 with sorrow.

I cried.

The hollow pearl
 sank
 last night
 with ice-cold bareness
 inside.

I cried.

A grain of sand,
 (the melted pearl),
 drowned
 in unfathomed
 loneliness
 last night.

Last night,
 I cried.

—Mark Okkema

bodnar

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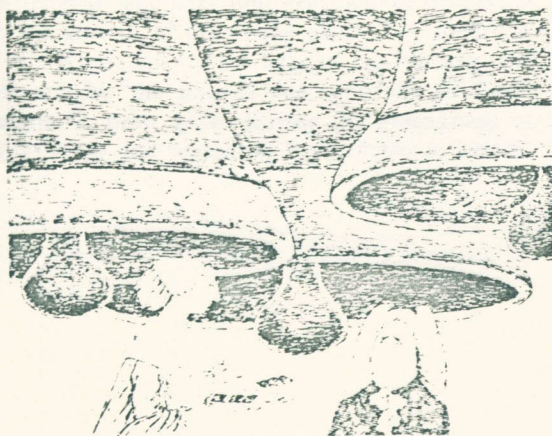
cameras, projectors and
 accessories

pre-recorded cassettes

You may have read in our previous issue that we hoped to publish music and you may have wondered what kind of music would be produced on a Christian campus. Now that we have published a song celebrating sleep you may be wondering even more. Haven't we Christians been asleep too long as it is? Shouldn't we use our music to win "souls" for Christ.

I don't think so. I believe the arts were created to be much more than a tool for evangelists. Through the arts one expresses his religious commitment, his vision. A few centuries back Frau Bach complained to her husband Johann Sebastian, "Do you have to sit here and compose all day just to prove you're a Christian believer?" (Saturday Review of the Arts, November 1972). We can sense in his music the joy of his Christian confession, though it may have brought his wife grief, poverty and 22 children.

In the same way we can celebrate sleep. Sleep is a beautiful part of our creation without which we would all probably go insane. Though it may be a terribly simple song, it is perhaps through the little things that we can recover the sense of joy Bach displayed. This is our creation given to us by God, — let's celebrate all of it.

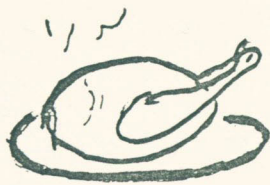


"Ach," said Bach. His wife had interrupted him just as the great chords and grand sonorities of the opening of the B-Minor Mass had thundered through his head.

Princess Sioux

SAYS....

"We take care of Thanksgiving feasts, pale face."



HEAP BIG SAVINGS!

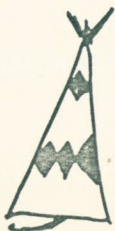
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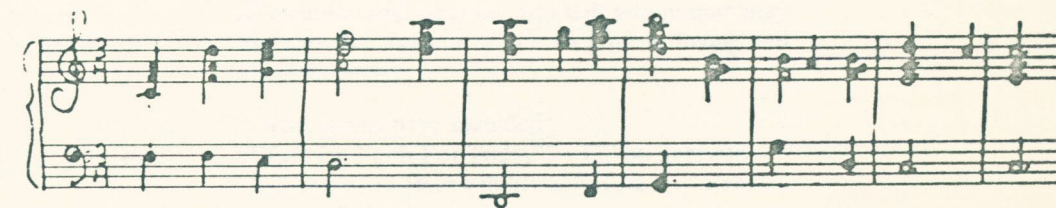
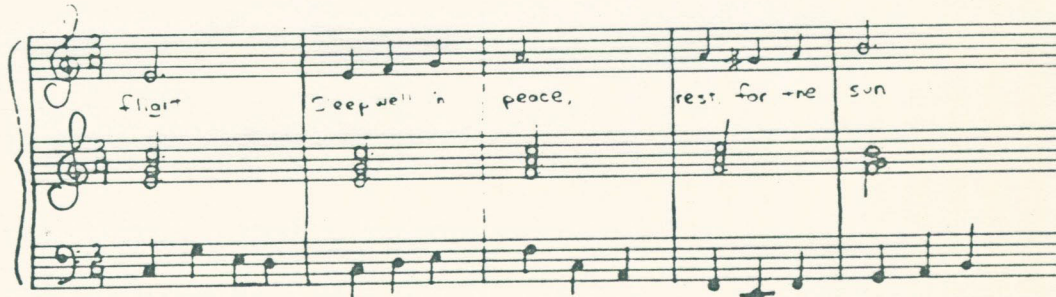
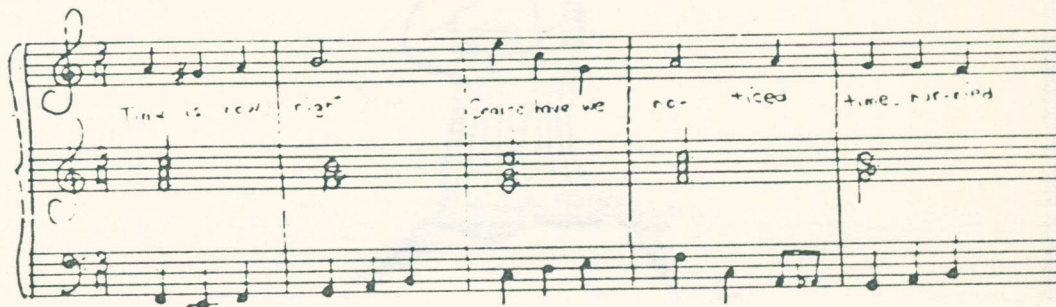
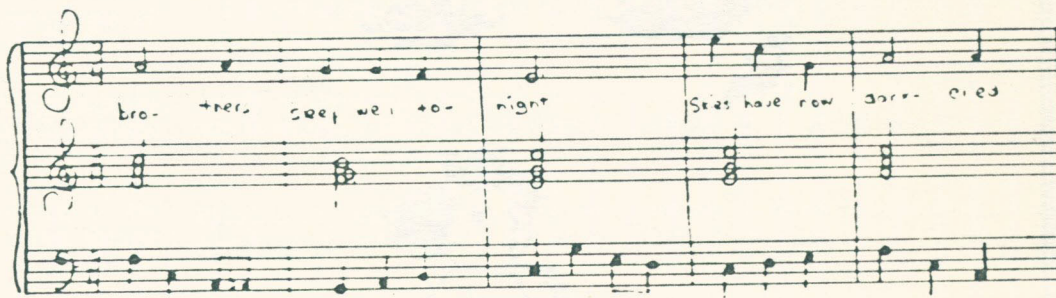
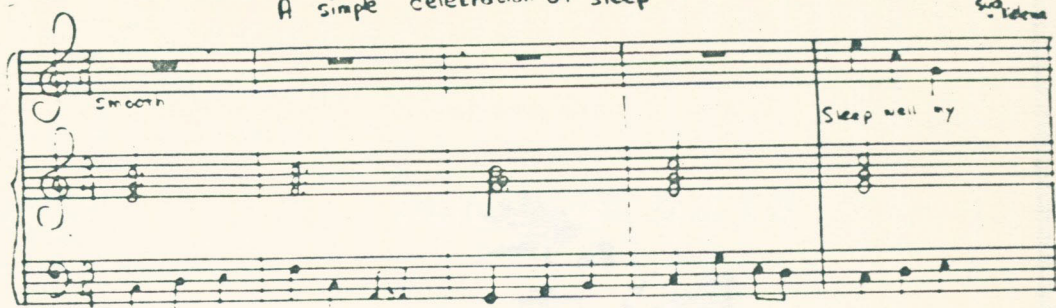
—DOUGHNUTS

—BARS



A simple celebration of sleep

by [illegible]



Lord's and the fullness thereof." Opposition calls forth renewed dedication.

But where does antidisestablishmentarianism fit in? To begin, it rejects a violent overthrow of Establishment Institutions. It calls for intelligent, capable citizens, followers of Christ, to begin to work with the tools given, and to return government to the obedience demanded by its Creator.

Second, antidisestablishmentarianism operates by entering the territory of the (political) enemy, and calling to the attention of the nation its mistakes, shabbiness, and futility, while boldly suggesting an alternative. Christians, through their efforts allow the Establishment to work against itself, and publicize its failures.

Third, antidisestablishmentarianism rejects individualism, especially in its application to the activity of Christians. Rather, it pleads for the support of the Christian community in prayer, academic research and compiling of records, and communication of ideas.

The seed of Christian political awareness has germinated. The next four years will be decisive as to the growth of the young plant. Yet, rooted in God's Word, fed by the light of His blessing, and watered by the prayers and sacrifices of God's people, it must grow, leaving the greenhouse of uncertainty and spreading its branches in witness to the will of its God. Karl Neerhof

Fools Remain Necessary

Even fools play a vital role in our lives.

Without them, how could the rest of us succeed?

CANNON POLL

In an effort to make the Cannon fit your needs, we would like you to answer these questions. Please fill it in and drop it in the box near the bulletin board in the classroom building.

Which articles do you like to read in the Cannon?

Do you think the Cannon is aimed toward you and your friends?

Put these in order of preference:

Short Stories_____

Poems_____

Essays_____

Cartoons_____

Reviews_____

Music_____

Art_____

Photos_____

What other types of creative literature should be included in the Cannon?

What should be excluded?

How could the Cannon best be improved?



VANGUARD

If you're interested in ideas, you'll be interested in reading VANGUARD, the magazine voice of an international body of Christians calling for an alternative lifestyle, and an alternative Christian culture witness in every country, according to its particular needs and history. VANGUARD is a magazine of vision advocating and leading the way to thorough, integral Christian reformation of every sector of public and private life. VANGUARD seeks to proclaim Christ as the Redeemer and Renewer of creature and creation, through whom man may dedicate the fulness of life to God in loving and obedient service.

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