THE STUDENT STRIKE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL (MAY, 1970): AN EYEWITNESS HISTORICAL MEMOIR

by

Thomas M. Bello

Senior Honors Essay
Department of History
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
1971

Approved:
DEDICATION

To Matthew Goodman and Lawrence Whitfield, two of my generation who were not afraid to climb the mountains others of us refuse to even recognize.

Every pacifist career is individual, a unique balance of forces, including the shared hope that other human beings will become equally autonomous. Most people want peace and freedom, but there are no pacifist or anarchist masses.

--Paul Goodman, speaking of his son Matthew who, like Lawrence Whitfield, died in a mountain-climbing accident.
CONTENTS

Foreword ................................................. 1
Event Preface
 "In medias res" ....................................... 3
Insight Preface
 from Waiting for Godot ........................... 6
Event One
 Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday; April 29, April 30,
 and May 1, 1970 ................................... 9
Insight One
 "Why all the commotion?" ........................... 12
Event Two
 Saturday and Sunday, May 2 and 3 ............ 13
Insight Two
 The "new" culture ................................ 17
Event Three
 Monday, May 4 ...................................... 26
Insight Three
 "Them outside agitators" ........................ 28
Event Four
 Tuesday, May 5, morning and afternoon .... 30
Insight Four
 "You can strike all you want, if you go around the
 building." ........................................... 34
Event Five
 Tuesday, May 5, afternoon and evening ...... 36
Insight Five
 To be violent or not to be violent ............ 39

iii
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date and Time</th>
<th>Insight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Tuesday, May 5, evening and night</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Where were the blacks?</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>Tuesday, May 5, night and late night</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>A prayer from &quot;fearless leader&quot;</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>Wednesday, May 6, morning</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>Revolution? What revolution?</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine</td>
<td>Wednesday, May 6, early afternoon</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine</td>
<td>The &quot;free University&quot;</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>Wednesday, May 6, late afternoon</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>&quot;You're either on the bus... or off the bus.&quot;</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleven</td>
<td>Wednesday, May 6, evening</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleven</td>
<td>While being caught up in all the rhetoric</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelve</td>
<td>Wednesday, May 6, night</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelve</td>
<td>Wisdom from the people</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirteen</td>
<td>Thursday, May 7</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirteen</td>
<td>Letter to Ken Kesey</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FOREWORD

As many men previously have realized, we only glean from an experience what is significant in terms of the personal, conceptual, and historical perspectives we bring to that experience. In this "historically self-conscious" age of today, insight and conduct influence each other with an immediacy that hardly leaves time for any "tradition" to evolve. In such a time, as Erik Erikson has maintained, "all thinking becomes an experiment in living."

Throughout the spring strike of 1970, I was conscious of the interaction between my own insights and conduct. Being a product of the times, I was also conscious, even then, that this interaction was occurring during an historical event—perhaps the most historically important event both in the student antiwar movement on the Chapel Hill campus and in my historically uneventful life.

In this essay I return to this historical occurrence to retravel the course of events, to re-examine my conduct during them, and to offer both old insights made at the time and new insights made after a year of learning and reflection. I seek greater understanding of the strike, its other participants, and myself. And I attempt to perceive the interaction of the subjective and the objective in determining my
involvement in the strike.

In putting on paper this "experiment in living," I employ a technique similar to that used by John Steinbeck in *Grapes of Wrath*; I alternate chapters between objective account of event and subjective depiction of insight. The technique is employed to draw special attention to the complexity of the strike and to the struggle occurring in my mind between external fact and internal realization of fact, between objective occurrence and subjective perception, between universe without and universe within. To achieve fullest understanding of what I attempt, I encourage the reader to imagine the alternating chapters as two halves of an extended metaphor, neither of which can be understood by focusing exclusively on one or the other, but both halves (and the metaphor itself) will be understood by allowing the mind to hover between the two, lighting on neither. Thus for a greater comprehension of both the matter and the method of this essay, I appeal more to the intuitive, imaginative mind than I do to the deductive, analytical mind.

And lest one take my effort too seriously, I stress from the start that what follows is not offered as a polished document revealing, for all times, a total view of the 1970 student world; rather, I offer this essay merely for the historical relevance it may have for whatever length of time.
"In medias res"

I write to depict a drama. This drama was neither pre-written nor pre-rehearsed. No one person directed its actions; no one person, once it had begun, knew how it would end. The drama swept its characters up as it unrolled. Having no one author, it had an unplanned, spontaneous force all its own. And most frightfully, this drama is not fiction; it did happen.

There were, however, some people who felt responsible for what was happening and tried to anticipate events before the drama presented them. I was one of those people.

On March 17, 1970, I was elected President of the Student Body, receiving more votes than any candidate for the office in the history of the University. Running without party affiliations, I promised conduct different from that displayed by my staid and soft-spoken predecessors. From April 28 to May 14, 1970, I was given the chance to fulfill that promise.*

*Realizing that the reader still does not have a biographical context for evaluating my personal conduct in the following events, I refer him before he gets much further to the "Dear Father" letter of Insight Two. Though the letter is long and has no direct bearing on the strike, I include it for its particular revelations into my own personality and beliefs.
Looking back almost one year to the day, I write of the largest student antiwar protest ever witnessed on this nation’s campuses. Cambodia–Kent State initiated the drama, and from there, events had a force all their own. I write of only one version of what was a national drama. For I now realize, although I did not then, that the Chapel Hill student strike was part of a nationwide student outburst after President Nixon’s decision to send troops into Cambodia and after the horrible deaths of the four students at Kent State. Causes, explanations, and ramifications of the unprecedented breadth and intensity of protest are admirably documented in the Scranton Commission Report, released in October, 1970. To that document I would refer anyone interested in a solid, overall analysis of the implications of the aftermath of Cambodia and Kent State. The Scranton report saves my having to make a similar analysis, but fails to diminish the uniqueness and complexity of the events at Chapel Hill. Thus my task remains to depict these localized events, yet only those events which I personally knew to have occurred. (I did not have a corresponding Presidential Commission.) Hence, what follows is objective, factual truth as much as I was subjectively able to tell what was objective, factual, and true. Imposing such limitations, I do not presume to tell all that occurred on the Chapel Hill campus and admit that even depicted events are seen through only one pair of eyes. Another pair of eyes could have seen the same events differently.
Without further squabble, and following Horace's age-old adage, I will plunge right into the middle of things, for like any historically dramatic moment, significant events precede where I begin and follow where I conclude.
P = Pozzo; V = Vladimir; E = Estragon


P: Help!
V: To help him--
E: We help him?
V: In anticipation of some tangible return.
E: And suppose we--
V: Let us not waste our time in idle discourse! (Pause. Vehemently) Let us do something, while we have the chance! It is not everyday that we are needed. Not indeed that we personally are needed. Others would meet the case equally well, if not better. To all mankind they were addressed, those cries for help still ringing in our ears! But at this place, at this moment of time, all mankind is us, whether we like it or not. Let us make the most of it before it is too late! Let us represent worthily for once the foul brood to which a cruel fate consigned us! What do you say? (Estragon says nothing.) It is true that when with folded arms we weigh the pros and cons we are no less a credit to our species. The tiger bounds to the help of his congeners without the least reflexion, or else he slinks away into the depths of the thickets. But that is not the question. What are we doing here, that is the question. And we are blessed in this, that we happen to know the answer. Yes, in this immense confusion one thing alone is clear. We are waiting for Godot to come--

E: Ah!

P: Help!
I also very much hear a lonesome cry of Help! swelling from the seldom seen caverns of the American College Student Generation of 1970. For what form of help the cry is made I know not. Perhaps the cry is for understanding or sympathy or companionship or love or an amalgamation of those. In any case, I define the anguished cry for help my generation is making ("my" in the sense of participation, not ownership) to be a cry for Godot. Not Godot as a person, but as a process, Godot as a satisfying, gratifying present, as an Answer, as a successful mediation between one's becoming and one's being. For we students are, as a generation, perturbed by our inability to anticipate the consequences of our acts and are still waiting, perhaps naively, for some magic telegram, notifying us that the tangled skein of misery and self-deception into which we have woven ourselves has disappeared into the night. That telegram, that unveiling epiphany, is the Godot my Generation beckons.

Surely, the cry for help does go out to all mankind and some could indeed answer the cry far better than I. Yet at this moment in time, writing this particular essay, I am all mankind, and I must make the most of it. Before the writing of this essay, during it and after it, an active search for Godot is my destiny. As part of that search, this particular inquiry leads me back to the Chapel Hill student strike of 1970, for during that event, more students than merely myself, for at least, and perhaps only, once in our college lives,
experienced Godot, experienced a tremendously revealing epi-
phany. In search of Godot, therefore, I return both to the
events that precipitated that realization and to the very nature
and process of that realization.
EVENT
ONE

Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday; April 29, April 30, and May 1, 1970

From a year's perspective and considering the quick intensity of the student protest nationwide, the Chapel Hill student strike had a meek beginning.

On Wednesday, April 29, the United States Department of Defense made public its plans to support a South Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. The following night President Nixon, after reportedly having twice seen the movie "Patton" within the previous two weeks, made one of the most unbelievable, jingoistic, never-say-die speeches of fisticuff heroism I have ever heard. That speech included comments like:

I would rather be a one-term President and do what I believe is right than to be a two-term President at the cost of seeing America become a second-rate power and to see this nation accept the first defeat of its proud 190-year history.

That speech provoked an entire student generation to come off its haunches in protest. Witness what the newspapers reported as happening on just the next day: at the University of Maryland, destructive students provoked the governor into sending National Guardsmen onto the campus; at the University of Cincinnati, students left the campus to paralyze downtown sections of Cincinnati; at Rutgers University, a thousand students went on an
indefinite strike; and at Princeton University, students decided to boycott all social functions at their "house parties" weekend.

By comparison, the most newsworthy response this campus witnessed was the Student Legislature's Thursday night passage of a hotly debated resolution that condemned President Nixon for the decision to invade Cambodia and urged students "to boycott classes on Wednesday, May 6, and to attend a rally on that day."

For my part, I spent Thursday night and Friday morning deciding that my most appropriate action in response both to Nixon and to the Student Legislature was to call an emergency meeting of the student body the next Wednesday, that significant date being chosen, interestingly enough, because it was far enough away to allow adequate publicity to be distributed. At about three o'clock Friday afternoon, I issued a public statement that said in part:

Due to the unprecedented amount of concern and condemnation I have seen expressed by so many students against Nixon's decision, I honestly feel that only such a meeting of the entire student body will convince skeptical onlookers that the protest is not leftist oriented or just another antiwar rally. It is a sincere, united expression by all students on this campus that what Nixon has done was wrong.

At four o'clock, I spoke for the first time before the Faculty Council. At that meeting I spoke in favor of some expression of faculty concern regarding Nixon's decision to send the troops into Cambodia. When I finished, a member of the faculty stood up and introduced a resolution condemning President
Nixon's decision to invade Cambodia. The vote for defeat of the resolution was not even close.
One of more rational, detached, and experienced perspective might inquire, "Why all the commotion? Did you students actually think you could change something?"

Perhaps it sounds crazy, but we actually thought we could do something. If we shouted loud enough, we were sure people would listen. And after all, we were not unlike any other youthful generation having never experienced want or war: we were idealistic, optimistic, and very arrogant. Entering the strike very young, very naive, and thus discounting that anyone could still support the foolishness of the war and Nixon, we did not leave the strike the same way we went in.
EVENT
TWO

Saturday and Sunday, May 2 and 3

With national hollerin' champion, Dewey Jackson, hollering the Dionysian celebration into being, many of my fellow students spent the week-end in the lights, crowds, stimulants, and music of Jubilee. The acid rock of the Pacific Gas and Electric and the sweet, sorrow-filled voice of James Taylor captured the consciousness of the crowd; any visions of protest were forgotten, at least for the moment. After all, students had been planning months in advance for this week-end; and if there were to be a protest, it could wait until after the Jubilee festivities. I do not imply a criticism here; jubilating students were merely following the advice of their mentors, such men as William Peck of the Religion Department and writer Theodore Roszak, who had told them that the cultural revolution had to precede the political revolution. And clearly, the cultural revolution occurring that week-end in Kenan Stadium was most important.

For my part, I spent the week-end both in worrying how to attract enough students to make the meeting Wednesday worthwhile and in planning accordingly. Hence I was busy organizing people to make posters, to put them up, to telephone concerned
faculty and students, all urging attendance at the Wednesday meeting. In addition, I hastily wrote the following article. Appearing Tuesday, this article did have its own impact in getting some people to the emergency meeting and in getting other people angry at my overemotionalism and poor logic. In any case, the article documents the state of my concern at this point:

President Nixon is no fool. In choosing his lines, 'We will not be humiliated; we will not become a second-rate power,' he made his appeal to the Great American Spirit of Victory, our never-say-die striving to be number one, our will to win, whether it be in the classroom, on the football field, in the stock market, or out on the Cambodian borders. Such pride and drive built America and we shall not fail. We must win, even if we have to keep the bombers flying, even if we have to stay in Vietnam forever, even if we have to go to Cambodia. Nothing matters except victory. We must not be humiliated. We must triumph over the aggressor.

As the President reminded us, such triumph was seen in Woodrow Wilson's World War I, in Roosevelt's World War II, in Eisenhower's Korean War, and in Kennedy's 'finest hour.'

Now Nixon has chosen to include himself in that tradition. Without surprise, this decision has been received in some parts of the country as 'courageous' and 'honorable.'

Yet I for one do not agree. If the entry of American troops into Cambodia is this country's finest hour, then we might as well hang America up on a coat rack.

Are we ever going to outgrow this win-win-win drive? Instead of victory at any cost, when will peace no matter what be termed 'courageous' and 'honorable'?

Norman Mailer once said that any war was bad if it required an inability to reason for one to stay patriotic. I think I understand why the War in Indochina is such a bad war for this country. Just stop and think how strong the opposing sentiments are that could pull this country apart: the one urging an end to the war and the other espousing America even in war.

And yet we must protest; we must ask, why are we in
Cambodia? First, we have to swallow that everything to that point was irreversible, America had to send in advisors to Vietnam, then troops to support the advisors, then troops to support the troops, and now troops in Cambodia to support the troops in Vietnam.

And of course we cannot be so naive as to assume that Cambodia is the last line. Eventually we will have to support the troops in Cambodia, for as Mailer and others maintain, the American mind will not tolerate humiliation or accept defeat.

The idealisms of the New Left and the tirades of Norman Mailer are rapidly becoming old rhetoric. Thus their repetition would be tedious. Yet when are we going to learn? Apparently, this country has learned nothing from the horrors of World War I, World War II, Korea, the Bay of Pigs, and Vietnam. And how about ourselves? Here we are a part of the noble American educational process and what are we learning?

One thing we are learning is the ability to compartmentalize, that greatest gift of the American educational system: a pigeon-hole consciousness. Such a consciousness permits separation of one's existence into easily controllable sections. It allows us to go to Jubilee, have a good time, and somehow set aside the terrifying thought that the War is expanding. It allows us to sublimate our emotions to our apathy upon realizing that certain things like war and peace are not to be emotionalized, and if they cannot be justified logically and rationally, then they should not be faced head-on. If you don't love it and won't leave it, don't fight it. Just place it in another compartment.

In an America where the ultimate ideal is the Machine because of its ability to effectively get the job done, to never do anything wrong; and in an educational system serving to prepare one for his integral place in American society, it is hard to justify one's 'confused idealism' or one's protest of American actions.

Yet someday we must face facts. Someday we must achieve a total awareness of what America is up to; for one day we are going to inherit this disaster and then, what are we going to do?

Well, if we must compartmentalize our lives, which admittedly most of us have been trained to do and which is consequently the most efficient, practical way to handle situations, then I think that we have to reach into that dusty compartment entitled Protest.
Indeed, the time for jubilating is past: it was a beautiful week-end of love and fun. The time for studying is yet to come: exams are always the worst of times. The time for national concern and protest is now: it is time to express our opinions and give voice to this country's moral pains.

Please, we cannot sit back in our selfish, academic worlds while this country is unable to even express the values of peace and human community without the smirk that such are the foolish fantasies of youth.

If we do not assert our ideals and stress that they become realities, no one else will. Since we cannot find example among those who dominate this country, we must generate our own example. We must begin among ourselves to construct something better than what we see around us.

The college student is the unique creature who could save this country, but not merely by getting all those good grades and finding your assigned slot in the great American Technocracy.

This nation is foundering for direction, and surely we could come up with a suitable alternative to Cambodia.

So Wednesday, if you could, take some time off to pray and think about this country. Come to the emergency meeting of the student body to voice our common protest against extension of the war and our common desire for peace and human communion.
A subjective look at the "new" culture or how Jubilee week-end and the preceding article provoked the following diversion from the strike:

Call it a counter-culture, a post counter-culture, a state of Consciousness III, a drug culture, a meditation culture, an electric kool-aid acid test culture, a Woodstock culture, a New Establishment culture, or whatever. The phenomenon that many have observed happening on this nation's campuses is important to my perspective on my generation. William Braden, Erik Erikson, Paul Goodman, Kenneth Keniston, Michael Novak, Charles Reich, Theodore Roszak, and Philip Slater, to name a few, have all written about this cultural phenomenon and each has reached somewhat different conclusions. As a participant, I am unsure of what exactly I am participating in; and recognizing that the aspects of this culture* are as numerous as the individuals who identify

* A word on what I mean when using the word culture: In much the same way that Shelley says the imagination works to mediate between external experiences and internal perceptions, and between those internal perceptions and their external expression, so the total product of that imagination, the "culture"--in this case, the "new" culture--is working to mediate between us and our environment, between us and other than us, between us and our Gods, and between us and those now dead and those yet to live. Hopefully, the word new will be defined both by the style and by the content of the letter that follows.
themselves within its fold, I thus offer the following letter not as an objective view of the culture but as a subjective personal piece that qualifies me for membership in the "new" culture by its outspokenness, its expression of entrapment in outdated social forms and of criticism of an American institution, its great fear, and its perhaps overconfident hope for something far better than what we now have. And if at times the style appears to possess more rhetoric than logic, more spontaneous emotion than controlled thought, more moral conviction than persuasive argument, then the style also qualifies me as a participant. (Written last summer, with the events of the spring still very close, I stress that I could not write this letter today and presently doubt that I ever could again. In fact, I view this piece as historically documenting my past, personal participation in the "new" culture. Currently, I am unsure of what I am participating in.)

August 1, 1970

Dear Father,

It's been a long time since I have seen you--I think it was the July Fourth church picnic the summer before I left for college. It seems like such a long, long time ago; yet I can still remember your holding high the American flag as you led your parishioners into mass that morning. Your sermon that day likewise comes to haunt me as I now write, a sermon praising this country's greatness and lauding its involvement in Southeast Asia to stop the onslaught of Communism throughout the world.

I don't know why I am writing you today. I do have a lot to say that should reach your ear. Whether or not it will is up to you. If it will ease your conscience any, after I am done and through, take it all as an act of confession, for I do have a lot to confess.

Let me start by confessing a sense of being lost. "You are a lost generation," Gertrude Stein told Ernest
Hemingway's generation and the same could be said to the current student generation. So many of my friends are walking around in a daze. We look ahead and know not what we see. We look back and know not which experiences, if any, to learn from. We look to the American Way and are disillusioned. We look around and only see people just as confused, lonely, and frustrated as we are.

So many of the kids at school are characterized by a pervasive futurelessness. They have no idea of where they are going or what they will be doing. One kid, when I asked him what his future plans were, replied, "Hang myself."

Quite obviously, so many of us are experiencing a crisis that transcends the everyday horrors of Vietnam, Spiro Agnew, and other current societal inadequacies. We are experiencing a crisis that touches the very essence of our being, a crisis of trying to achieve self-understanding and find meaningful relationships with a world increasingly denying us anything more than a depersonalized and regimented lifestyle.

Being born into a world of such constant flux, my generation cannot help but be skeptical of a lasting commitment to any institution or set of ideas. On top of that, we have been taught that Santa Claus is not real, that symbols have lost meaning, that myth must be separated from history, and that Trix are for kids.

For reasons I will go into later, we cannot turn to your generation, Father. As I have said before, we cannot turn to each other, for each of us is just as lost as the other. And yet, we must turn somewhere.

Drugs, music, movies, and pop festivals have been my generation's most recent avenues of experience. Drugs have been good to break down a this-worldly orientation. They can open one to his subconscious, to his subjective self. Music has been a universal form of communication, transcending virtually all language barriers. Movies and movie theaters have offered me what sermons and churches offered your generation. Up on the screen, I have seen the Word and around me have felt community. Serving as one massive affirmation of life, loud music, and people, the pop festival has provided a temporary utopia of brotherhood, freedom of individual expression, and mutual understanding and recognition of each other's wants and needs.

Yet all four have been false gurus. Drugs are but a limited form of experience, not the ultimate modality of life. As a medium, music is invaluable; as a belief system, it is impossible. The problem with the movie and the pop festival is the same: what happens when they are over? The massive pop festival is admittedly reminiscent of the large Nazi rallies when audiences became one
great, believing mass. Three days of love and beauty do not compensate for three hundred and sixty-two days of throwing bottles, cursing at professors, and yelling "pig!" or worse at the local campus cop. Drugs, music, movies, and pop festivals offer, at best, temporality. I realize that the beauty of sharing, of loving, of affirming, and of accepting each other must continue beyond these transient experiences. And I further understand that highly intense, yet short-lived experiences on a sustained basis make it harder and harder to find one's identity within the traditional bonds of hard work, consistent development, and sustained motivation.

Here, I know you would interrupt by saying, "My son, have you tried religion? The God of the Catholic Church will offer you all you need."

Let me answer in the following way. Yes, Father, I would agree with you that religion seems to be the answer. My crisis seems to be a religious crisis, for the quest for personal authenticity is itself substantially a religious quest. If religion is the search for the transcendent, whether it be in each other, in the world, or in some God, then sign me up.

Unfortunately, I believe that somewhere between its ideality and its reality, American religion lost the way. As I look at the prevailing religious creed in this country today, I can see where it took two wrong turns: one, in deciding whether to build itself on love or fear; and two, in deciding whether to build itself around God or country—I will elaborate.

Of all the animals, man is the only one who represses his desires, who lives in constant turmoil between wish and guilt, and who constructs corporate neuroses labeled religions. Why American Catholicism had to re-enforce this idiocy I will never know.

I remember reading my Baltimore Catechism, going down the do's and don't's always having ten don't's for every one do. In parochial school I remember seeing a nun stand before my class and burn a book about Martin Luther, damning him for questioning the infallible righteousness of God. And I remember going to confession and being lectured about the horrors of masturbation and sex.

Excuse me, Father, but religion should be more positive. God made us to love, not fear. He means well, but does make mistakes. And, quite honestly, sex is not His worst gift to man.

Seriously, your religion has served to stifle my imaginations and channel my ways of life. I have been criticized for experimenting and praised for conforming. Instead of religion being a mind-expanding experience it has burdened me down with institutional truths and
with the concepts of hell-fire and damnation and mortal and venial sins. Religion has offered me little more than the two walls of right and wrong against which to bounce my psyche. Tell me something, Father. Is man so bad that he cannot get along with his fellow man, with the world, and with his God unless sustained by fear and these seemingly unnecessary concepts of sin and salvation. Is pure and simple love totally unmanageable as a basis of religion?

Before you think about a response, Father, let me go on to my other bone of contention.

Freedom of religion is one of the founding tenets of this country. Each individual has always been permitted to believe in the God of his choice. Consequently, there has never been a state religion. Yet I would maintain that your generation has established one in every way except overt law. Supposedly coming from different heritages and containing different dogmas, the three main religions of this country (Catholicism, Judaism, and Protestantism) somehow have all become one big affirmation of America.

Nowhere was this all-encompassing civic religion more apparent than in Washington last July Fourth. Yes, all three religions were represented. (Significantly, however, when asked why there were no atheists present at the Honor America Day Memorial Service, Billy Graham replied that they had not been invited because they did not believe in God.) And equally significant, all three—minister, priest, and rabbi—got up and eulogized ol' United States God.

Somehow, the over-thirty generation was able to incorporate within its religious values a love of country, its nine-to-five ambitions, and an idealization of the individual, of self-reliance, of success, and of the middle class ethos. In short, your generation, Father, has been extraordinarily successful in attaching its lifestyle to its religion. And admittedly, this symbiosis of God, job, and country has served your generation well: whether it be in allowing you to hate that Devil Communism or in allowing you to step over someone on the way to the top, assured that God would have it so. But where does that leave my generation?

It has been said, and I would agree, that there is nothing quite as irrelevant as last generation's relevancies. My generation is just not concerned with security or with success in your sense of the word. Being the first generation in the history of mankind that has never known hunger or deprivation, that was spanked instead of spanked, we cannot be awed by the Great God Job or Great Devil Communism. We feel more a generational identification than a national one. We refuse to be identified by our
function or labeled by our work. We are not in search of financial success but of self and each other. It is not surprising that over one in five of the 1970 Harvard graduating class have no idea of where they are going or even worried about it. We know that we could make it in your world; it is not hard to fit into an assigned niche. But we don't want that road, Father. So many of us want to be left alone just long enough to get our heads together and see what this big world is all about.

And here is where all the trouble comes. In trying to find personal meaning, many of us have rejected your lifestyles and values. Normally, this might be acceptable, but since your generation interwove its lifestyle with its religion, my generation has also been rejecting your religion.

I would hate to imagine how many times man has killed fellow man because of differences in religion. Clearly, a society that hates its young hates its future, but I can see the over-thirty generation slowly developing a hatred for us students who cannot believe in their United States God or accept their American Way of Life. A man might accept your stepping on everything except his religion, but there he will draw the line. Unfortunately, the line now gets drawn pretty early in American, for God and President, church and corporation, spiritual salvation and financial success all went to bed together.

God or fear; God or country? Which way for you, Father, which way for me?

I don't know. I am young, protean, and confused. The world around me is old, complex, and equally confused. All I know is that I cannot accept a religion that solely affirms American Society or its culture. I do not want a religion defined with the national purpose. I reject a God who is the champion of America, who endorses American purposes, and who sustains American might. I love my country. I love my God. Yet my country is not my God. I want a religion transcending nationalities, one in which I can focus myself, then go forth and seek my fellow man.

Admittedly, I do not have all the answers. The record of the student-youth counter-culture is not good. We are young, very volatile, many times unresponsible and inter-change roles frequently. We are often more willing to parrot moral purities than to ever admit political complexities. We have classically been known to fill the ranks behind a multitude of 'good causes.' Classically again, we have not been expected to exercise wisdom and restraint in our words and actions.

Yet those of your generation, Father, who were supposed to give us inspiration and guidance have, instead, stifled our imaginations, filled our hearts with fear, and preached
a frightening gospel of national religiosity.

And Father, I am not picking solely on Catholicism. Catholicism provides no worse programming than that provided on the other two major channels. But why do all these religions have to come out in red, white, and blue? You may criticize me for being too pessimistic, but I think it is getting late for man to discover his own humanity and seek world unity. The days when men had the luxury to contemplate the next world are no more. Today we have to bring God into this world to make and keep life human and humane.

In the industrial revolution man fought a losing battle in trying to assert the superiority of his muscle. In the current cybernetic revolution man will again lose the battle, this time in trying to assert the superiority of his intellectual mind. If man does not soon have a religious revolution to expand his own sensitivity and spirituality, he will find himself totally dwarfed by his own creations. Already he can be criticized for setting as his ideal a product of his own creation: namely, the trouble-free, consistent, and unemotional machine. This cannot continue.

What to do? I am not sure. Many of my friends talk about destroying or slowing the technotropic advances of our modern day. Not only is this idea foolish, but impossible. While science and technology are progressing geometrically, social and political structures are progressing arithmetically, if at all. Instead of slowing the wheels of science, man must expand his consciousness to encompass his tools. The only way for man to stay master of his tools is through a constant assertion of his humanity. And it seems to me that religion—not your kind, but a kind that was described to me—is the only key to unlock the door to the transcendental, humanizing, and psychically expanding experiences my generation so desperately needs.

I do not know what you think of communes, Father, nor do I know what the Pharisees thought of the early Christians. Many of the kids in communes feel persecuted by the outside world, have been shot at, and constantly harassed merely because they want to live in peace and harmony with themselves and with nature. Is the analogy valid? Anyway, though I may be idealizing the commune experience, I think many of us need to start expanding our minds by trying to assimilate the concept of the commune: a concept of common property of a common sharing of suffering, and of mutual love, understanding, and tolerance.

If you can visualize or comprehend that idea, let me take you one step further. Father, let me give you the advice given me by one fellow living at this commune I visited. He told me to remember one phrase and say it 'always' to myself and 'especially always' when I was talking to someone else. The phrase is: 'Thou art God.'
From meditation on this one phrase, I have come to realize that each of us is God, and by that I mean that in each of our hands lies the future of the world. Today man has the powers of the gods of old, for he can destroy or create this world as he will. The terrible responsibility of the world's future cannot be overlooked even by one individual. It is man's world, his secular city.

Upon man's back are all the myths of old and all the symbols that went to make up those myths. We were born into a civilization of shattered dreams, myths, and symbols. We awoke to the bright sun of awareness: awareness of the plight of our fellow man throughout the world, awareness of the part we all would have to play in the world's future, and awareness that the gods and myths of old could no longer be hid behind. No longer could we permit ourselves the luxury of a ubiquitous God somewhere 'over there' upon which to laden responsibility for the world's direction.

We are our own Gods. Each person's God is an internal one demanding of each his utmost ability to both create anew and reaffirm the basic, unifying humanity of all mankind.

As this fellow told me, the phrase, "Thou art God," said not only to ourselves but to those around us, is necessary for man to pool all his creative talents in a concerted effort, each using his Godlike abilities, to make this world a better place. Heaven is around us, but only if we assume our responsibilities as Gods and start creating it.

We must master our tools, ever-conscious of their inhumanity and each other's humanity. We should realize that the gain of any symbol, be it money or property, is simply not worth the loss of the God in any of our fellow men. Each of our brothers is a God with the same powers and responsibilities. Thus we must love the God in each other equally as much as we love the God in ourselves. That we should permit each his chance to create himself and the world in his image is equally as important as our denying his irresponsible destruction of the world. If a brother seems to be using his Godliness to destroy rather than create, we must not go to him and fall guilty of his supposed weakness—namely by going to destroy him. We must take our love to him, our own creative Godliness, and create in him the strength to overcome his destructive Godliness and to work with all men in creating a new world.

Thou art God. Thinking about the phrase and trying to apply it is a step in the right direction. It can be taken out of the commune and applied to daily life. Man can remake this world in his own image; why he does not realize this or see the God in his fellow man, I cannot understand.

This phrase I do understand, however. It has personal meaning to me, Father. It is not an ideology, for I am
tired of all of those. It is not a sermon, for I have heard them all. It is simply something I feel. Please do not waste time trying to ponder its intellectual depths, for there are none. The message is simple and has to be felt by the entire personality, not intellectually by the skeptical mind.

I have to go now, Father. By way of conclusion, I only wish you could have seen what I just saw. About two minutes ago, it started raining. Outside stood a young couple: the wife nestling a young baby, the husband with his arm around his wife. When it started raining, the girl pulled her baby closer to the warmth of her body. While she was doing so, the father gently guided them both to the shelter of the nearest overhang. It was beautiful. Somehow, Father, that picture caught the message I have been trying to convey to you today.

Peace be with you, father,

Tommy Bello

(I apologize for the length of this letter and remind the reader that what precedes and follows this long diversion is a discussion of the student strike at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill [May, 1970].)
EVENT
THREE

Sunday, May 4

While violent protest and destruction of property continued throughout the country, Monday morning found a slumbering, quiet Chapel Hill campus. The painful throb­bings of Monday-morning-after-Jubilee-week-end were all too present; and with no Monday Tar Heel, it was hard enough getting out of bed for classes, much less for protesting.

Although an unprecedented plea for peace, the strike soon disrupted peace on the Chapel Hill campus, for paralleling a denumbing of most students' sensibilities were the events on a far-distant campus in Kent, Ohio. By the time of Walter Cronkite's 6:30 news, the euphoria of the past week-end was only serving to heighten the horror and outrage at the killings on the Kent State campus. A feeling of absolute emotion swept the entire nation; the experience was as ineffable as it was engulfing. Students immediately identified with their dead brethren. They realized it could have been them, and in that realization the national student strike was born.

The Chapel Hill campus was no exception. At the eight o'clock regularly scheduled meeting of the English Collective, the member graduate students who also taught English decided
that they could no longer meet their classes, that they had to go out on strike. With Jubilee over, with the totally disjunctive shock of Kent State, with what was happening throughout the country, and with the dramatic decision of the Collective to go on strike, there could be no question by Monday evening that there would be protest on the Chapel Hill campus. There could be no question that it would be a sizable and very emotional protest. The main remaining question was the direction of that protest.

I remember that as I talked late Monday night to Joe Shedd, president of the YMCA, who was mimeographing leaflets about the Wednesday meeting, members of the English Collective came to us, saying that they were going out on strike and needed posters announcing their decision to strike. Eventually both sets of materials were printed by Tuesday dawn, but what was most significant at this moment to me was the expansion of awareness I underwent. Indeed, only when the graduate students came running in on our conversation, did I realize that what the campus had on its hands was far more than one emergency meeting of the student body.
"Them outside agitators"

More than once this past year, in my numerous speaking engagements at civic clubs throughout the state, older men have said to me:

Tom, we realize that there are many fine students (i.e., our children) at the University, but what about all those outside agitators coming on the campus trying to stir you students up?

To my knowledge, few, if any, "outside agitators" joined in the Chapel Hill spring strike; but in one sense of the phrase, "outside agitators" played a very key role in building the emotion and immediacy of the strike. The "outside agitators" I mean come to thousands of students every evening at 6:30 via the television and every morning via the daily newspaper. To understand the impact of the media on students, I have urged these older men, as I now urge the reader, to imagine themselves to be like many of my fellow students: young, idealistic, and arrogant enough to believe we have all the proper solutions and know how to implement them. If they achieve this state of mind, I have then asked these civic people to watch the 6:30 news every night for one week. After watching so much dying, so much
misery, and so much societal chaos, in such an idealistic state of mind, the frustration generated should speak for itself. (After following this advice, one member of the Shelby [N. C.] Rotary Club even wrote to tell me that, being "disgruntled," he could "better understand angry students.")

In this particular incident, the 6:30 news brought Kent State to every student watching the television Monday and Tuesday nights. The media (television, radio, newspapers) spread the horror; they invaded every campus in the nation permitting them; and they were of primary importance in inciting thousands of previously uninvolved students who now felt the immediacy of the tragedy and sensed their own lives to be in danger. Thus, for the national and the Chapel Hill student strikes, the television, the radio, and the daily newspaper were incredibly effective "outside agitators."
Tuesday, May 5, morning and afternoon

The first day of the strike, Tuesday, May 5, was easily the strike's worst day, for it was the day when students were most angry yet most uncertain how to vent that anger, when there were no discernible leaders yet very many leaderless protestors, when there were no planned events to direct and to channel emotion yet a very pressing situation of high emotional intensity. A number of times violence almost occurred. At any time only one angry person was necessary to fire a shot, to burn a building, or to assault a teacher. With so many people involved, with so much anger being generated, and with nothing being supplied to sublimate that anger, the University was lucky it did not sustain that first day more damage than three broken windows and an overturned trash can in South Building plus many teachers' frayed nerves as a result of students marching through buildings yelling, "On strike, shut it down!"

Yet in looking back over the entire strike, it now occurs to me that the continued nonviolence of the strike was precipitated, in some part, by Tuesday's being a day when the anger and the emotion were allowed to overflow spontaneously, when
students were able to see the potential danger of such spontaneity, yet unable to see what else to do, and when most of the immediate, unthinking passion was released through all the walking and marching of that first day. I think Tuesday's unplanned spontaneity was necessary so that subsequent days' planned activities could be, and were, successfully presented to the students. In short, one day of broken windows, of disrupted classes, and of destroyed shrubbery at the Chancellor's house prepared first-time student protesters for the planned and scheduled activities that started with the one o'clock meeting Wednesday.

Sliding handbills under doors and putting posters up around buildings, particularly around Bingham Hall, students met the sunrise Tuesday morning. By 7:00 a.m., thousands of handbills circulated by the English Collective and by Student Government were respectively broadcasting the one-day-old strike and the emergency meeting on Wednesday. In addition, morning papers carried the first written descriptions of the Kent State killings; the Tar Heel, a story of a Monday arson attempt on an Air Force ROTC building. Reaction was as swift as it was ominous. At 8:00 a.m., not one but three campus buildings—Bingham, Dey, and Wilson Library—were emptied after police received phone calls warning of bombs in the buildings. Upon search, no bombs were found.

Late the previous night, the English Collective had planned a rally at noon in Polk Place. Just before that noon
rally a student lowered to half mast the flag in Polk Place. When a campus policeman came to raise it, about twenty students surrounded the flagpole in protest. In response, Campus Security Chief Arthur Beaumont raised the flag to full mast and reportedly told the group of students surrounding, "We'll get him (the one lowering the flag), we'll bring in the National Guard, they have the solution." I do not doubt that Chief Beaumont said these words; knowing him, I do not think he said them as seriously as they were interpreted. Nevertheless, these particular words flew through the crowd, putting already angry students in an even worse frame of mind.

Although I was not present at the rally, what occurred is pretty much common knowledge. Members of the English Collective, including John Rosenthal, spoke to the 2,000 students present. Others spoke, including Dr. Lou Lipsitz, a political science professor with irrefutably radical credentials. (When Lipsitz was shouted down for talking too moderately, anybody still unaware of what was happening should have opened his eyes.) The speeches concluded, the crowd marched throughout main campus, up and down between the library and South Building, and through South Building, where they met Dean Cathey's comment, "You can strike all you want, if you go around the building."

The leaderless mob then marched through the classroom buildings in Polk Place, stomping their feet and yelling, "On strike, shut it down!" In a march to the Naval ROTC building, students again attempted a flag lowering, this one in front of
the building only to see a group of ROTC students again raise the flag. Tempers flared and fists tightened. Sensing the impending violence, Casey Donovan, a huge and emotional freshman football player (also claiming to represent SDS), jumped atop one of the showcase artillery guns and, in his finest and most nonviolent moment, asked the crowd to think sensibly and to return to the main campus. The crowd obeyed, returned to campus, and dispersed to get students out of classes and at a rally to be held later that evening.
"You can strike all you want, if you go around the building."

—Cornelius O. Cathey, Dean of Student Affairs

The prevailing moral code in American society, according to Paul Goodman, places "the emphasis not on law and Justice, but on law and Order, meaning business as usual." Referring to personal experience acquired within one of that society's institutions, I must state agreement with Mr. Goodman; the emphasis at the University is truly on "business as usual."

Although a student is entitled to his own opinions and can get as upset as he wants about racism, about societal injustice, and about the war, he does so on his own time and does not disrupt business as usual. As Dean Cathey implies, "You can protest all you want, but go do it somewhere else that does not cause anybody else interference."

Nor is Dean Cathey alone in his sentiment. I think many University administrators and faculty were upset at the strike not because of disagreement with the reasons for striking but because the strike was a gesture symbolically stating that business could not go on as normal. Indeed, they agreed with the sentiments students were expressing about the war; they, too, thought that Nixon's decision sending troops
into Cambodia was a terrible mistake and that the deaths at Kent State were a tragedy of the deepest proportions. Yet they did not like to see their classes disrupted. They did not like seeing academic business not conducted as usual. They were really frightened then not by students' opinions but by their efforts to do something about those opinions.

Students were actually serious; they were not going to conduct business as usual. Nixon had finally gone too far; the troopers at Kent State had done too much for them to continue sitting in their classes, listening to professors mouthing the same liberal thoughts they had been mouthing all year without putting those thoughts to action. Consequently, rallies and marches, screaming and shouting did occur and did disrupt.

As I look back, I feel the strike was valuable in disrupting business as usual and in awakening people to the realization that something unusually bad had happened and that something unusual needed to be done. Unfortunately, because "business as usual" is not disrupted enough on the Chapel Hill campus, many creative and different thoughts, actions, and questions never occur, and many valuable and educative experiences are lost.

In its refusal to accept "normalcy," the strike was as frightening as it was provocative. In its disjunctiveness, the strike was for many a profound, educational experience.
What was not so much common knowledge was where I was that Tuesday afternoon. By 1:00 p.m., I realized both that if I stayed in my office (Suite C of the Student Union) I would not have sufficient peace or quiet to think coherently and sensed the importance of the situation (which was not hard to do with 2,000 kids marching through the buildings yelling, "On strike, shut it down!") Thus I spent the rest of the afternoon in the Richardson Fellows Office in Phillips Hall Annex. Here I had access to a phone, privacy, and could hear the happenings on main campus.

Thinking ahead to the increasingly important activities surrounding the emergency meeting the next day, I employed my time in the following ways. First, I wrote a press release to be printed in the Tar Heel the next day. The release strongly expressed my outrage at the Cambodia-Kent State atrocities:

I share with all UNC students, workers, and faculty, bitter emotions of disgust and horror at Nixon's unconstitutional expansion of the war in Asia and at the murders of my fellow students at Kent State. I feel as if I had been staked out and forced to watch the slaughter of my brothers and sisters. I have an indescribable emptiness in my stomach.
Also in the press release I spoke publicly against violence, for I could not understand how a protest against violence could itself be violent. To me, the violence of war was then, and is now, intolerable, "whether it be in Cambodia, or at Kent State," or on the Chapel Hill campus, and I reiterated my sentiment that the emergency meeting of the student body was to be nonviolent, to be an effort seeking "meaningful answers to this unprecedented crisis."

Second, I began thinking about the very important Wednesday speech I would have to make, but without much progress. I just did not know what to say.

Third, I urged President William Friday, by phone, to keep National Guardsmen or State Patrolmen off the campus. From Berkeley in 1964 to Kent State only the day before, the effect of armed police or troopers on a campus during a period of turmoil was much the same as kerosene on flickering fires. At all costs, the cops had to be kept off campus and I found myself both pleading and talking tough to President Friday to keep armed officers off campus.

Fourth, I called and asked Chancellor J. Carlyle Sitterson and recently elected Chairman of the Faculty Dan Okun of Environmental Sciences to speak at the Wednesday meeting, to encourage President Friday to encourage Governor Robert Scott not to call out the troops, and to keep the faculty calm during this turmoil. Sometime that afternoon Chairman Okun decided to call an emergency meeting of the general faculty
for Thursday, thus making a decision that was going to have a very significant effect on the direction of the strike.

For President Friday's part, he had been in contact with the Governor. Both from the remarks President Friday made and from the lesson the Governor learned in the 1968 workers' strike when he foolishly sent troops onto the Chapel Hill campus, Governor Scott decided not to send in any type of police reinforcement on this first day. Never pulling any punches, President Friday urged me, however, to realize that if students continued to march through classes, efforts would have to be made to ensure that non-striking students could peacefully attend classes if they so desired. What he meant was that continued efforts to disrupt classes and intimidate students wanting to go to classes would provoke the Governor to send troops, whether President Friday wanted them or not.
To be violent or not to be violent

Throughout the strike I confronted my beliefs on violent or nonviolent protest. The already lengthy and well-reasoned debate on violence and nonviolence does not need additional philosophical input from a twenty-one-year-old youth who has never experienced a really violent situation. Yet the question has intrigued me. At one point, I considered doing this senior honors essay on the violence-nonviolence debate, and since last May I have done considerable reading on Thoreau, Gandhi, and Cesar Chavez.

Yet in re-examining my experience in the strike and in admitting a desire to show that all my actions had a well-thought-out, philosophical foundation, I must honestly confess that my actions and decisions were more situation-oriented than founded in any philosophical school.

I admit an innate abhorrence of physical violence, destruction of property, and displays of inhumanity, but, even after all my readings, I still do not possess a well-reasoned philosophy of nonviolence. And although I feel the strike did not demand a philosophical mind, but a mind able and willing to make quick decisions, even on vital matters, I
did at times act too quickly, speak too emotionally, and was
too dependent on the immediacy of the situation. Tuesday
night's speech, the topic of Event Six, is but one example
of what I am saying.
Tuesday, May 5, evening and night

Along about six o'clock, Skip McGaughey, a political science graduate student, and Joe Stallings, an undergraduate student presidential advisor, who had spent the day conducting for me most of the strike conversations with the English Collective, came to Phillips Annex to tell me of a strike organization meeting at seven o'clock in the Great Hall of the Student Union. Quite honestly, I expected a crowd of about fifteen to twenty, maybe fifty, at the meeting, for I had not then learned that during the afternoon rally, everybody had been urged to come to this meeting. When I opened the doors of the Great Hall, therefore, I was simply overwhelmed at the sight of a wall-to-wall crowd of people. Wearing the black arm band of protest, I walked on shaky legs through the crowd up to the front of the Great Hall, a feat, at that point, of no small amount of courage, only to find out that the Collective had decided to move the meeting into the brick pit outside the Union. As the crowd streamed into the pit, I remember feeling as emotionally tight as I have ever felt in my life. For here were 2,000 very angry and yet very lost students, not knowing what to do, and here I was, having just
waged a tremendously successful campaign for the presidency of the student body and hence having a chance to direct sentiment at this all-important time, particularly among the majority of moderate students who identified perhaps more with me than with the "long hairs" of the English Collective. Realizing both my position and the mood of the crowd, I knew I had to say something.

What I did say that Tuesday evening in front of the microphone before 2,000 plus (I've never since then seen the pit as full) was, in my opinion and in the opinion of many other students, the most important event that had happened up to that point. For surely there was going to be a strike, but the position of Student Government, in the eyes of the Administration, in the eyes of the vast majority of moderate students, and in the eyes of the English Collective, was to be directly determined by what I had to say.

Looking back on those words, I realize their importance in building the strike, in giving it the spirit and emotion it had, and in gaining credibility for Student Government and myself in the eyes of students and of the then strike leaders of the English Collective. Yet I went up to that microphone not knowing what in the world I was going to say. I knew I had to say something; I knew it had to be good, and I prayed to God and hoped it would be. Sensing the already displayed anger of the crowd and knowing my own anger, I could only begin with a profanity. From there, the speech gave itself: (Feeling
a knowledge of the crowd's spirit and mood to be helpful, I include in parentheses the crowd's responses.)

I'm goddamned tired of all the rhetoric I've been hearing from Nixon about his reason for sending troops into Cambodia and saying we've got to make this country a first-rate power. I'm tired of his saying after the deaths of the students at Kent State that they had it coming. Well, he's got it coming; and he's going to get it. (strong applause)

Like I said, I'm tired of the rhetoric, so I'm not going to stand up here and give you a lot of it. I'm going to give you the facts. We've been working on this thing since Thursday. There are now over 20,000 leaflets all over this place. We've got people tonight calling every single number in the phone book. We've got people going door-to-door in every room and in every suite in every hall in every dorm on campus. (sporadic cheers) We've got to get the people out here tomorrow at one o'clock in Polk Place. The only way we're going to do this is to unify and have a unified base of support. And I believe we have that. (intermittent applause) Tonight when this meeting gets over, I want each and every one of you, as I will be doing, to go out: go to your hall, get the people out here, get them concerned. I tell you if this nation is going to sit back and let Nixon go ahead in Cambodia and let National Guard troops go into Kent State and at the same time expect us, the student brotherhood of this country, to sit back and watch, they've got another thing coming. (strong, sustained applause)

If the only way that this nation is going to notice us is for us to strike, we strike. (nothing less than a deafening outburst lasting approximately a minute)

We strike tomorrow (applause so strong the word tomorrow was drowned out); we strike tomorrow (again, strong applause), the next day, the next day, the next day. . . . We've got that meeting tomorrow at one o'clock in Polk Place. . . . one o'clock in Polk Place.

I was in contact with the New Mobe people that for some reason or another have gotten revitalized in the last day or two. There's a meeting Saturday morning on the White House lawn. (laughter) I hope you're there. Let's do not forget where the focus of our protest lies, and it lies right there on the White House lawn. Let us be there. (intermittent applause) I'm behind you, I'm talking to the Administration, I'm keeping the troops out of here, I'll work with you, let us work together. (two-minute standing ovation)
Regardless of the fright I receive every time I reread those words, the crowd loved it and overwhelmingly agreed with my decision to strike (although that decision was not finally determined until midway through the remarks). Frankly, I could not stand; my knees were shaking so hard that I had to kneel down, and looking out through those cheering people, all I could think was: one, what are people supposed to do in these situations?; and two (and I can remember almost my exact thoughts), "Jesus Christ, Tom, what have you done now?"

After the applause ended, a member of the English Collective, Jack Hicks, whom I did not know, came up, saying, "Bello, you've got a good speaking style. I'll let you have two of your people (i.e., Student Government) on the Strike Steering Committee."

At this point I was not in a position to be self-righteous, so I smiled at Jack, thanked him, and chose myself and Skip McGaughey, who was not really a Student Government type yet at the same time was a person whom I trusted and who had a very good rapport with the radicals. I also appointed Joe Stallings to be my official alternate when I was not at steering committee meetings, which later proved to be quite often.

Elected immediately after my remarks, the Strike Steering Committee met for over a dozen hours in the next three days, trying to build the strike to where not one student was attending classes. It was a fascinating conglomerate of people. Representing the English Collective were Vinny Walsh, Jack Hicks,
John Rosenthal, and Cathy Ging; Skip McGaughey and myself represented Student Government; Fred Thomas and Clint Pyne came for their earlier antiwar and radical activities; Hal Fisher was chosen to represent the fraternities; Casey Donovan, the freshman on the ROTC cannon earlier in the day, was appointed to represent SDS; Jan Atkins, a very vocal, very unfeminine female liberationist, was appointed to represent female liberation; a former veteran, Lee Merowitz, was chosen, as were Cathy Bannon and Claiborne Jones to have a more equal male-female ratio.

In looking back, I now realize the steering committee had no articulate advocate for the radically militant activists, although Walsh, Hicks, Atkins, Donovan, and Pyne were all, at times, very emotional, very angry, and very desirous to vent those feelings in some action. The dividing line for committee members was one's position on nonviolence. Walsh, Hicks, and Rosenthal, all very intelligent and articulate, were also very committed to nonviolence. McGaughey and myself were committed to nonviolence. Casey Donovan, Jan Atkins, Clint Pyne, and Lee Merowitz were more willing to try violence, yet failed ever to persuade the group to violent action.

The steering committee brought together the most visible leaders of the strike at that point and proved to be, as the next night showed, the only group having credibility to striking students. At the same time, the committee included those leaders most potentially capable of either doing violence.
themselves or in provoking the crowd to violence. By bringing these potentially dangerous leaders into my office where they pounded on the furniture, shouted to burn the place down, and screamed at each other, I was able to achieve a situation where the only really sustained violence of the strike was the vocal violence exhibited at these meetings and not physical violence exhibited throughout the entire campus. Only through the organization of the steering committee were the strike leaders brought together in a group that had credibility and allowed violent emotion to be released vocally.

Tuesday evening I made the decision to open up Suite C of the Student Union entirely to the strike. The move provided both a base of operation for the strike before the necessity of "liberating" one arose and added credibility for Student Government.

Thus, the steering committee met for the first time that Tuesday evening in my office to discuss the strike's future direction. Donovan and Atkins wanted more issues brought into the strike, such as the workers issue or anti-ROTC. Yet the major emphasis at this point was in building as big a strike as possible. And the strike could only be broadly based if it stayed narrowly focused on Cambodia and Kent State. After the strike was sufficiently large, of course, the strike could later be directed. At least in the committee's meeting that night, that line of argument was employed with success by McGaughey and myself.
No blacks sat on the Strike Steering Committee, none to my knowledge, became actively involved in the strike. The strike was white, middle-class, college student. Period. Efforts to expand the issues of the strike to specific workers' demands or to racism in general were not successful. I will not even include in this essay the campus reaction to the deaths at Jackson State on May 14. Though there was a memorial service and a small amount of protest, the spirit and emotion was just not the same. I can cite two reasons for the difference: one, students were too emotionally drained to get re-cycled for another emotional outburst; and two, since the dead students at Jackson State were black, the white student majority did not identify themselves with these dead as they had with the dead at Kent State. Thus these deaths were not as personal, as immediate, as gripping.

For the black response after Kent State, I sensed a general reaction of "So what, whitey? It's been happening to us for years. Remember Orangeburg? Remember Alabama? Remember Mississippi? If you're going to play with fire, man,
you'd better expect to get burnt." In much the same way that whites did not identify with the dead blacks, the blacks did not identify with the dead whites. Nor did the blacks feel the terror of the violent deaths, for many had always known that terror.

Consequently, color the Chapel Hill student strike white. Blackness was only seen on the arm bands. If there was a sense of unity and community built within the students, it was only within the white segment of the student body, for the blacks did not and were not asked to take part.

However, it is fair to add a further suspicion, namely, that although the blacks did not take an active part in the protest, they did vicariously enjoy the white students' confrontation with a system the blacks already hated. In short, though the black students might not have shared any sense of brotherhood with the white students, they did more closely identify with white students than with Richard Nixon or National Guardsmen. And they did appreciate any blows against "repressive, pig Amerika," even if by white students.

In this light, I will not forget when I met the Chairman of the Black Student Movement, Cureton Johnson, for the first time the following summer. Fearing the worst, I was pleasantly surprised to see Johnson smile upon hearing my name, saying, "Man, Bello, you sure socked it to 'em during that strike!"
Tuesday, May 5, night and late night

At about ten o'clock, the steering committee meeting was interrupted by the flicker of candles and the yelling and chanting of a very large crowd almost right outside the Union. Looking out, I saw what had to be over 1,000 students marching with candles through the dormitories, including even Joyner and Connor—girls' dormitories which were not open to anyone, much less marching students bearing candles. In seeing the crowd outside, the steering committee realized it had not planned the march now occurring. Believing ourselves all to be generals, of course, we knew we had to keep up with our army, so we planned a meeting at 7:00 a.m. Wednesday morning to discuss further the speakers for the one o'clock meeting (which was now "our" meeting and not just Student Government's meeting) and adjourned to see what was happening outside.

I did not participate in the marches on Chancellor Sitterson's and President Friday's houses, although, from what I heard, some of the marchers shouted obscenities, trampled shrubbery, and threw paint on at least President Friday's car. The crowd became so boisterous and unruly outside President Friday's house that his frightened wife and daughters asked
to be moved to the Carolina Inn. Ironically, it was reported that neither the Chancellor nor the President were at home that night. Significantly, the Chapel Hill Police had been asked by Chief Blake not to interfere either in the night's march or subsequent marches unless serious violence or destruction seemed imminent.

For my part, I thought my time could be better spent conversing with McGaughey, his friend Tom Denyer, and other people I could trust as to the best course of action to follow both on Wednesday and with the Strike Steering Committee, since staying on the committee, recognizing some of the people on it, was as much a personal hardship as it was a blessing. This early in the game we felt it better to stay with the committee and to keep the meeting on Wednesday flexible so that as many different sentiments could be expressed as possible. (As anybody knows who has been at these rallies, one of the best ways permitting those of strongest conviction and most vehement emotion to feel they have done something without their resorting to violence is allowing them to get on a podium to speak their mind to thousands of people. For many emotional antiwar protestors, that speaking in and of itself has been enough to deter them from any further need to satisfy their egos.)

I stayed up talking and planning until about 1:00 a.m., at which time most people were returning from the night's march. After talking briefly to Mike Parnell, a writer for
the Tar Heel who had been in the march, I dragged into the room of Doug Dibbert, who was a close friend serving as a residence advisor in West Granville Towers, to try to write that all-important speech to be delivered only twelve hours later.

In reflecting on Tuesday's hectic and uncontrolled pace, I realized then and continued to realize that only one unexpected accident could destroy everything. With emotion so high and tension so great, what did it take for one student to light one building? But what can you do? At this point in the strike, all I could do was try to write my speech. And I could not do that; I just could not think what I knew had to be said. Consequently at 4:00 a.m. Wednesday morning, I lay down on Doug's bed feeling very frustrated and tired, knowing I had to wake at 6:30 to get ready for the 7:00 a.m. Strike Steering Committee meeting. And yes, I went to bed not knowing what I was to say at that all-important Wednesday meeting.
A prayer from "fearless leader"

After I had made the Tuesday night speech, one student came up to me and said, "Fearless leader, that was just great!" The ironic humor of that statement stayed with me until much later, and early Wednesday morning, when I should have been completing perhaps the most important speech of my life, somehow I found the time to jot down the following:

And what about 'fearless leader.' Well, fearless leader is scared shitless. Where did all these crazy people come from? Where do we take them? What's this talk of burning down the University? Troops on campus? Massive sit-ins? Visible and rampant use of narcotics? Revolution? Violence? 'Fuck you!'? What is a nice boy like me doing in a situation like this? Holy shit! God, if you're not too busy, I sure could use some help. Why don't we split up: I'll stay visible if you will invisibly keep the crazies from burning stuff, keep the cops away, keep everything peaceful. A deal? Great.
Wednesday, May 6, morning

Early Wednesday morning (6:30), Dibbert awakened me. Putting on the symbol of my participation in the strike, the black arm band, I headed to the 7:00 a.m. meeting in Polk Place. Surprisingly enough, most of the steering committee were there and we briefly discussed: one, the one o'clock meeting and who was to speak and two, the nature of our trying to keep people out of classes. To make the strike bigger and to keep the troopers off campus, we decided to encourage students not to march through buildings. Consequently, strikers were to sit down outside of classroom buildings and merely ask fellow students not to go to classes. When I saw our encouragement being followed, I remember thinking that this display of tolerance by striking students for non-striking students was one of the first "good" signs of the strike and served as a good omen for the coming day.

After about an hour and a half of talking, I went back to my dorm room to change, realizing it was now or never for my speech. For some inexplicable reason, the speech came to me while sitting in my room in James Dormitory,
making the Wednesday speech the only fully prepared speech I was to deliver throughout the entire strike.

Finishing the speech I came back to the office, which was an incredible chaos of people running everywhere, tacking up things, running off things, typing up things. One person, I then learned, had spent the entire preceding night at the mimeograph machine running off over 20,000 fliers. All he could say in talking to me that morning was "chug-a-chug," the sound the machine made. His sleeping with a machine who in his mind really "put out" was a topic of laughter in later, less hectic days. At the moment, however, the speech had to be dictated and run off.

In addition, I had to attend a 12:15 press conference called by McGaughey and held in the Union. At the conference, representatives of the Carolina and Duke strikes spoke to news people from WRAL-TV, WCHL radio, WTVD radio and television, and WUNC-TV. I remember thinking that the combination of "straight looking" students saying such unstraight things must have really freaked those guys out. They really did not know how to handle the situation. I remember heading out of that press conference feeling good, for this one time we had really shocked the news people who could not connect our physical appearance with our emotional sentiment. In thinking back, this inability of the newsmen to make this important connection was representative of the entire state's inability to realize that the protest they were about to and had already witnessed at Chapel Hill was actually a protest not of one radical element
of the student body, but a protest voiced, for the first time, by a majority of the students at Chapel Hill, most of whom could not be labeled radical. Only gradually would this realization dawn; even this summer, in speaking to civic groups, I ran into people who still maintained that the only students involved in the Chapel Hill "riot" were the Communists. Over 6,000 Communists is a lot even for Chapel Hill.
By this point in the Chapel Hill strike and in the larger national drama, more than one person was remarking how these efforts were the final and long-anticipated Revolution.

To those people, I express a sentiment shared by any thinking student with any sense of historical perspective; namely, that in 1970 the Revolution, in the 1789 sense of the word, simply will not work.

Where does one focus "a violent overthrow of the system"? The White House? Congress? All of Washington, D.C.? Any State's Capital City? Any State's Capitol? Any State's Governor's Office? The Post Office or the Internal Revenue Service or the Federal Bureau of Investigation or the Pentagon or the Local Draft Office or the Local Recruiting Office or the Local Police Department or the Local Chancellor's Office or the Nearest Classroom or the Nearest School or the Nearest Church or even the Nearest Fraternity House???? Where is this societal overthrow to focus? And who and where is the "we" that is supposed to make up the Revolutionary Vanguard? What?

Okay, I will not belabor the point that a Revolution in the
historic sense and in the current radical student sense is an impossibility.

Interestingly enough, during the first week of the strike *The Daily Tar Heel* published a little known fact. That fact and its significance speak for themselves:

At the Atlanta Pop Festival last summer, a local underground paper sponsored a poll which asked, among other things, the correlation between Rock and the Revolution; and the most common response was, 'What Revolution?'
EVENT
NINE

Wednesday, May 6, early afternoon

While leaving the press conference in the Union, I ran into the waiting and angry presence of David Adcock, President of the Young Americans for Freedom (Y.A.F.). Mr. Adcock confronted me, saying that if I were really seeking "meaningful answers" at the emergency meeting, I should allow the Y.A.F. a place on the podium. Fearing for Mr. Adcock's life if he should speak and knowing that his comments could easily have an unsavory effect on an already tense, uneasy crowd, I asked Joe Stallings to handle him and Joe politely told Mr. Adcock the Y.A.F. would not be allowed to speak.

Passing by Bingham Hall and heading up to the podium, I anxiously pondered several topics. First, the overwhelming sight of the thousands and thousands of students now in Polk Place made me reflect back to that previous Saturday evening when I had worried so much about whether anyone would even show up for this meeting. Second, I experienced a slight feeling of guilt for denying at least one segment of opinion to speak. Yet considering the meeting's overall effect on the students present, I felt it was better not to include the Y.A.F. than to include them. And thirdly, as I got closer, I
could feel my heart skip a beat, for earlier in the day I had asked Tom Ricketts, a dependable and intelligent friend handling the technical equipment, to place the microphone atop the first flight of steps in front of South Building, thus keeping a safe distance from the speakers and the crowd. Instead, Ricketts had shoved a desk between the two big bushes in front of the steps and level with the ground. Thus when you got up to speak at the microphone all you could see on all sides of you were human bodies, a sight as scary as it was inspiring.

While discussing final arrangements behind the microphone with Jack Hicks, whom I let chair the meeting in an effort at compromise, I could hear the very melodic voice of Dianne Gooch, an attractive college girl, not terribly outspoken against the war, but, like many students, very upset at recent happenings. Dianne possesses a beautiful singing voice, much in the school of Joni Mitchell and Judy Collins. She was asked to sing before the start of the meeting to calm the hotheads, to soothe the many disturbed, to appeal through the music to everybody's basic sense of human sympathy, and generally to try to build a Woodstock sense of community where we all felt together, humane, and tolerant to whatever was said. In looking back, I think her singing had a noticeable effect on putting the crowd into a proper frame of receptiveness to the speeches and events that followed.

At this point, I must admit a major tactical mistake. The previous day I had invited Dr. Okun to speak at the emergency
meeting, but until Wednesday morning I had not specifically told the steering committee that he was to speak. Consequently, when I stressed as the meeting was about to begin that Dr. Okun was to speak, Jack Hicks became very upset, feeling I had arbitrarily exerted my influence. In his anger at me, Hicks rudely asked Okun why he wanted to speak, and when Okun concluded his remarks, Hicks requested full-time sociology instructor, Richard Roman, who was standing near the microphone, to articulate a "different" faculty perspective on the strike. Caught in a moment of emotion, surprise, and unplanned thought, Roman called on all faculty to strike, then turned to Chancellor Sitterson and taunted him by saying:

I would like to ask the Chancellor if he plans to enforce the Disruptions Policy against striking teaching assistants. If he does, then he is a cop. If he doesn't, he is against the war.

These remarks incited the crowd to shout, "Speech! Speech! Speech!" Despite the shouts and catcalls, however, Chancellor Sitterson remained silent. Having provoked Hicks to initiate this critical confrontation, I still feel responsible, for in a later conversation with Roman, he admitted his remarks that afternoon would have been different if he had had a chance to prepare them.

Since this event occurred later in the meeting, however, I return now to the day's opening speech. I admit I felt badly about Hicks's outburst at my not having included him in the decision to ask Dr. Okun to speak. I felt frightened by the closeness of the crowd. I felt strangely guilty for
having a prepared speech. And I stepped up to the microphone feeling emotionally unable to give the speech I knew I had to give. As if sensing my emotional situation, the crowd gave me a very encouraging, a very spiritually boosting, and a very sustained standing ovation. From them, and not vice versa, I received the spirit to give what still is to me the best speech I have ever uttered:

In standing here before you this afternoon, I cannot help but look back on this year and recall the Moratorium activities of October fifteenth and that day of hope. I remember November fifteenth in Washington with the 'Hair' cast in front of me, looking over a sea of people dancing and singing, 'Let the Sun Shine In.' Indeed, for that one day the sun of human communion and mutual understanding did shine in. Yet since that day up to the murders of this past week, I have come to realize in my innocence that things are really not getting better, that we shall not overcome, and that unless we act, this country will destroy itself.

The evidence is obvious. By sending troops into Cambodia, Nixon's administration has admitted that it has learned nothing from the hundreds of thousands of dead in Vietnam. By resuming the bombing of the North, Nixon has shown that rather than seeking 'to bring us together,' he seeks to polarize this country as never before.

At Kent State University, we have relived the horrors of My Lai. Today these students--Jeffrey G. Miller, Alison Krause, Sandy Scheuer, and William K. Schroeder--lie dead, the tragic victims of Nixon's latest move 'to bring us together.' I am bitterly disgusted and horrified at the atrocities committed at Kent State and in Southeast Asia. We will not forget Kent State. We will never forget what Nixon is doing to America and to Asia.

And yet we cannot give the White House the satisfaction of a violent and destructive reaction to Nixon's and the troopers' demonstration of intolerance, impatience, and aggression. We must not fall to their level of inhumanity. Violence is intolerable, whether it be in Cambodia, Vietnam, Kent State, or on this campus.

Therefore, listen today to each speaker, be he SDS member or Chancellor. We are not those troopers. We
will possess our humanity, our tolerance, and our
desire for nonviolent, peaceful solutions.

These students at Kent State must not have died
in vain. And by that I mean we must not respond to
their deaths by violence and destruction.

We must know by now that the politicians that run
this country are cold, hard, calculating men, men
untouched by reason. They realize that if students all
over this nation close down the universities that they,
the politicians, will have everything to gain. These
men realize that: first, such action would hurt only
the students and the faculty, who are foremost among
the compassionate, intelligent, and concerned indi­
viduals this nation has; second, that such action would
be politically ineffective, even politically destruc­
tive, because of all the citizens such action can alien­
ate; third, closing down the university would dissipate
the energies there.

Yet these politicians apparently have not learned
what we are capable of. What happened to Johnson is
going to continue to happen until this nation quits
its wanton aggressions.

Over 300 universities are now on strike. I am on
strike and am urging strike, not to shut down this
university, but to express my commitment to whatever
I can do to end the political careers of these insen­
sitive, insecure, and blatantly inadequate individuals
who hope to gain at the expense of lives in Cambodia
or Kent State. We must not be fooled by these cold,
cruel, men. If they will not come to us, we will go
to them. Instead of burning ROTC buildings, we will
beat these men at their game of politics. Our focus
is Washington.

And even more than this, we go on strike to open
up a new university; to create a free university. This
meeting is not the culmination of our efforts; rather, let
it be the beginning of an educational system built not
on class attendance or grades, but as evidenced by this
meeting today, one built on the principles of free exchange
of ideas, open expression of opinion, and learning through
personal interaction and involvement. We strike to estab­
lish a university that will espouse what this society
so desperately needs: mutual love, respect, and under­
standing.

Today we peacefully and responsibly commemorate the
deaths of our fellow students at Kent State. Tomorrow
we begin with the professors and educators also on strike
to establish constructive educational alternatives. We
will fast, we will pray, we will vigil. We will talk to
the citizens of Chapel Hill and North Carolina. We will
go to Raleigh. We will go to Washington and show Nixon
what power is—not the power of guns and bayonets, but
the power of people and their votes.
We have lived the nightmares for too long; today we begin to live the dream. Together and nonviolently, compassionately and intelligently, we strike to begin anew.

Thank you.

Two remarks before I leave the speech. First, the WCAR radio people made a tape of the speech which I, admitting my vanity, kept. In listening back over the speech, I noticed a significant shift in the rhetoric of the crowd. Before my speech, witness all day Tuesday, the crowd had consistently shouted, "On strike, shut it down!" Immediately after my speech, however, the tape records a sustained chant of "Strike! Strike! Strike!" and at no subsequent time in the life of the strike were either the words of or thought behind the chant "Shut it down!" voiced seriously.

Second, I must return to the guilt feeling I had for giving a prepared speech. In a re-examination of self, I realize now that I felt guilty for bringing a sense of planning, in the form of the speech, to a crowd that romped in the freedom of its spontaneity. Indeed, spontaneity had been the life of the crowd up to that point, but the necessity for planned activities was all too urgent as I viewed past the microphone that Wednesday afternoon into the somewhat innocent, somewhat angry, somewhat tense, somewhat confused faces of over 6,000 students. Considering their destructive potentials, I knew the delicate tightrope that I walked between spontaneity and planning had no net beneath.
The "free University"

My greatest disappointment in the strike was the failure of the "free University." During the strike, I wanted students to question the value of the education they were receiving. I felt that the "free University" would provide an alternative to the structured, grade-oriented classroom experiences defined as our college education. Yet I found the "free University" to be poorly received.

I agree with Green Bay College President Edward Weidner's comment that "the time is gone when higher education is a thing that takes place in the classroom," but most current University administrators cannot perceive of education beyond the classroom. They are not responding to students' academic needs. There is not enough innovation and experiment being done with the required curriculum.

Realizing these current inadequacies, I refused, however, to focus the strike directly at the University, not because I did not think students would respond to that issue but because I did not believe certain administrators could begin to handle such attention without becoming extremely frightened and perhaps overreacting. That might be a poor reason, but I
did not want some fearful administrator, in a moment of stress, to call Governor Scott for help. Consequently, the next best thing seemed to be the organization of the "free University" where students could go to classes if they so desired. Without receiving any academic credit and without the major focus of the strike being on educational activity, most students decided not to participate in the "free University." Thus was lost a potentially valuable opportunity for students to examine their college education.

In addition, I find valuable the following comments made to me by Buck Goldstein, one of the key people organizing the "free University," or as he calls the concept, "Liberation Classes."

Dialogue concerning the practicality and the advisability of Liberation Classes began on Tuesday, May 5. This was before the general strike officially began. The rationale behind starting the classes was twofold: one, to serve as an alternative to regular class attendance with the hope that such an alternative would add numerically to the strike; and two, to begin exploring the possibility of building a viable alternative to the traditional classroom model. It should be clear that the immediate political gains involved in building the strike were of primary importance in our thinking.

By the time the strike had officially begun, the procedure by which Liberation Classes could be started had been formulated and publicized. About twelve courses were started on the first day. Most of the instructors were graduate students. However, some full-time faculty also participated. By Thursday (May 7) another eight courses were underway.

It is difficult to evaluate the success of the classes in terms of either of our objectives. Over half the classes met more than once. But none continued through the reading period (May 15). They did seem to serve as a facilitator of dialogue between different segments of the campus in the early days of the strike.
Clearly, they did not involve serious, longterm academic endeavor.

My belief is that the Liberation Classes would have been more successful if they had begun earlier in the semester and if they were not competing with a great amount of intense political activity. The mood of the campus was clearly oriented toward local canvassing and lobbying in Washington and not intellectual activity.

Before leaving the "free University," I must add two footnotes. One, two phenomena occurring this past fall received their seed indirectly from the "free University": King Nyle's classes and Political Science 95A. Two, rather than use specific names in my criticism, I chose to use terms like "most current University administrators" or "certain administrators" because I do not consider personal attacks, however justified, to be within the realm of this essay.
EVENT
TEN

Wednesday, May 6, late afternoon

Instead of listening to the ensuing speeches, I spent the remainder of the rally in Polk Place speaking to news people and community leaders like Miss Anne Queen and Professor Dan Pollitt, speaking to President Friday to stress the inadvisability of police on campus, speaking to Chapel Hill Mayor Howard Lee, who was always very cooperative during the strike, to see if he predicted any trouble from Chapel Hill townspeople or police during the subsequent march down Franklin Street. (Although local merchants reportedly disagreed with striking students and feared possible property damage, I did not ever receive a complaint or hear of any trouble from them.)

After all the speeches were concluded, I returned to the microphone to announce the march down Franklin Street, asking people to follow the six coffins which had been obtained from somewhere (where, I never found out; six, because we mistakenly thought that six had died at Kent State). That march was a very amazing thing in and of itself. Leaving Polk Place, we marchers went past the Air Force ROTC buildings to Cameron Avenue; from Cameron we turned left onto Raleigh Road; taking another left, we marched down Franklin Street
to Columbia Street where we took another left and marched
down to South Road; taking our fourth left onto South Road,
we marched to the Union where we took still another left and
headed back to Polk Place. Throughout the march, the crowd
was peaceful, even joyous. Its sense of togetherness and
unity was so strong that when some of the more radical students
attempted a sit-down on Franklin Street, they could not do so,
for the crowd was beckoning them back and they could not refuse
the call. This group cohesion also helped to restrain indivi­
duals who might have otherwise wanted to engage in single
acts of destruction, such as throwing rocks. The march was
good for building the spirit of the strike, for strengthening
the growing unity of the striking students, and for convincing
skeptical onlookers that not a small segment, but, indeed, a
majority of the student body was voicing its nonviolent pro­
test at Nixon's decision to send troops into Cambodia and at
the deaths of the students at Kent State. I am not sure how
many people actually marched that afternoon, but I will never
forget looking back on an endless wave of people, six to seven
across, that, as I turned up Columbia Street, had not even
finished turning left onto Franklin Street from Raleigh Road.
From my perspective, the combination of the Wednesday meeting
and the subsequent march sufficiently unified individual pro­
testors and channeled spontaneity so that we now had a little
more unified and controllable student strike; I cannot emphasize
enough the importance of this group identity in the signifi­
cance and impact of the strike.
"You're either on the bus... or off the bus."

--Ken Kesey

I have seen an amazing psychology at work in group situations involving the young. In such mass situations, an overwhelming force works to make everyone do as the group does. I cannot dissect this group pressure, but I have felt it and do feel that Tom Wolfe best described it in saying:

No one was to rise up negative about anything, one was to go positive with everything--go with the flow--everyone's cool was to be tested, and to shout No, no matter what happened, was to fail.

In the Wednesday march, the few that tried to sit-down were trying to say, "No." Yet they could not resist the flow. The group was saying, "March," so they got back up and marched. They stayed on the bus. But by the same token, on Tuesday afternoon many students found themselves doing something they individually would not have done, for when the group that they were a part of said march through classroom buildings shouting, "On strike, shut it down!" they did march and they did shout.

Being caught up in the spirit of the crowd is an exhilarating experience. Try it if you must. But I would also try mighty hard to find out where the bus was heading
before I got on. For you see, to get off is to fail, and regardless of what else you do, no one likes to fail.
Wednesday, May 6, evening

Coming back to Polk Place, the crowd heard some final remarks spoken by the Reverend Carl Culberson as a nameless, but involved student poured blood onto the steps of South Building, signifying, symbolically, (1) that the blood of the students at Kent State was on our hands, (2) that we as Americans were responsible for what happened in Cambodia and at Kent State, and (3) that we as University students were responsible for insuring that the violence and deaths that occurred at Kent State did not happen at Chapel Hill. With the announcement of an open meeting of the Strike Steering Committee at 7:00 p.m. in Suite C and of a memorial service to be held at 8:00 p.m. in McCorkle Place, the Wednesday emergency meeting of the student body was concluded.

Between this conclusion and the meeting at 7:00, I first called Dr. Okun to apologize to him for the afternoon embarrassment and then telephoned President Friday for a general discussion of the situation at this point. Soon to receive over six hundred letters urging drastic action against striking students and faculty, President Friday was, and continued to be, helpful and frank, while also admirably handling a difficult public relations job with the people of the state.
The meeting Wednesday night began at 7:00 in my office, but so many people showed up that it had to be moved to the Great Hall. What followed was a debacle; no other word will serve. I have never seen so many different people trying to say so many different things at the same time. Little was communicated; chaos reigned; and group cohesion that had been painstakingly built earlier in the day was momentarily shattered. Democracy is nice, but town meetings involving upwards of six hundred people, each with his own words to speak, simply will not work.

Coming to the meeting late, I could feel the emotional chaos and tension the moment I entered the hall. After much more heated discussion, a decision was reached to block the next day all the major roads entering the Chapel Hill campus. Subsequently, with the help of some friends in the audience, I was able to get the meeting adjourned on a more friendly and happier note than had previously characterized the debacle. Leaving in a better mood than they had earlier felt, students went back to their dormitories to bring people to the memorial service.

For my part, I momentarily remained in the rapidly emptying Great Hall, wondering if it were possible to change the roadblocking decision. I discovered no answer and dejectedly headed over to McCorkle Place for the memorial service.
While being caught up in all the rhetoric and argument of that amazingly verbal steering committee debacle...

Two heroes of the counter-culture, Ken Kesey and Allen Ginsberg, were once discussing the war. Ginsberg felt "that these things, these wars, were the result of misunderstandings. Nobody who was doing the fighting ever wanted to be doing it, and if everybody could only sit around in a friendly way and talk it out, they could get to the root of their misunderstanding and settle it." After sensing the innocence and simplicity of Ginsberg's wisdom, one of Kesey's Pranksters answered, "Yes, it's all so very obvious."

Unfortunately, it is not quite that obvious; yet most of the Student Generation I know do not want to physically engage in a life-or-death struggle, do not want to be in a situation of kill or be killed, and do not have a vain sense of glory being worth more than the human life. Surely, some students do like to kill or, if they do not like killing, will obey orders for the sake of duty, honor, and country. These people are not necessarily evil, but neither are they necessarily good; and all of America must learn that the killers and the glory-seekers, the hawks and the chauvinists, will only occupy a sidelines position when we realize that you do not honor killing, you do not praise killers, you do not measure "success" by body counts, you do
not spend the vast preponderance of your budget on instru-
ments of death, and you do not have a national initiation
rite into manhood that requires willingness to kill your
fellow man or be killed by him in the marshy swamps of Viet-
nam. Perhaps one of the members of the strike committee, in
a fit of passion late Tuesday night (May 5), best caught this
sentiment when he said,

Hell, this country's morals are so fucked up. Why just look at that four-letter word fuck. If
this society exerted the abhorrence it mouths
against this four-letter word fuck and the beau-
tiful, loving act it describes and projected that
abhorrence onto another four-letter word kill and
the beastly act it depicts. . . . Shit, how much
better off this whole world would be.
Wednesday, May 6, night

Originally scheduled for around eight o'clock, the memorial service was postponed two hours, allowing more students to get to McCorkle Place. Organized primarily by the ministers at the YMCA and Wesley Foundation, the service was one of the most moving, beautiful, and indeed religious occasions of the entire strike. A small group played music and the brief talks were all good. It was dark and candles were given out to each person, generating a very sobering and unifying effect on the crowd. Each person was individually responsible for his candle; yet in individually holding that candle, each acquired membership in an entire group of individual candle holders. Dispersal of the candles thus sparked a sense of group unity by emphasizing individual worth and responsibility.

With very little talking the service moved down Franklin Street, up Columbia Avenue, down Cameron Avenue, and back to Polk Place where announcements were made of the next day's activities. An announcement stressed that the major emphasis on Thursday was to be the general meeting of the faculty at four o'clock.

By this time, through both a sustained outcry by many moderates who were opposed to the roadblocking decision and a
sustained effort by McGaughey and myself, the more radical Strike Steering Committee members (Atkins, Donovan, Merowitz, and Pyne) reluctantly realized that to keep the strike as unified and broadly based as possible, a focus of Thursday activities at the four o'clock meeting of the general faculty would be better than trying to block all the entrances to the campus. Thus before the crowd sluggishly departed, Vinny Walsh announced the tactical change which was well received. I concluded the service by offering a prayer that the sentiment and communion we felt then would carry not only beyond that day, but beyond the whole phenomenon of the strike and beyond the narrow boundaries of Chapel Hill.

Before falling asleep that night, I remember feeling not as tense as the night before; in fact, I felt quite good. I felt that I had done as well as I could have done and that the day had gone as well as it could have gone. I thanked my God, prayed that the success of Wednesday would portend for the rest of the strike, and prayed further for the continuance of the spirit of nonviolence and community I had seen etched on so many faces during that long day.
Wisdom from the people

Besides the candlelight procession, Wednesday night was also special because of two conversations I had after the service. The first was with a fellow student whose name I never learned, and whose face I would not again recognize. Coming up to me with a radiant but tired smile on his face, he said, "Tommy, I've always wanted to do something about the war; now I have and I feel good." After a year of conversations, I know his sentiment was shared by many other first-time anti-war participants in the strike; indeed, that was the strike for many students. It was good. It was something. Nobody really knew what exactly and nobody cared. In a rather dreary existence of too many nothings, the strike was merely and totally something. And that something was good.

Later that evening back at Suite C, the second conversation occurred with my loyal and loving companion, Judy Hippler. We were watching students scurry in and out of Suite C, everybody using the common area, common paper, and a common mimeograph machine as if the machine, paper, and indeed the whole office space were jointly owned by everybody involved; yet at the same time everyone felt individually responsible for his task: putting up posters here, conveying information there, or sliding
leaflets under doors everywhere. Judy remarked how unfortunate it was that greater society was not structured in much the same way. Refusing to be held individually accountable, Americans tend to pass responsibility off on someone "over there." Yet simultaneously we vigorously assert our individual ownership of property. Instead of material individualism and communal responsibility, she said America should follow this student example of individual responsibility and material communalism.

I agreed with Judy's sentiments, as would Philip Slater when he made an analogous observation that "the more power is diffused the more the assumption of power looks like the assumption of responsibility."
Thursday, May 7

The main event of Thursday, May 7, was the emergency meeting of the general faculty at four o'clock. Wednesday night's decision to change tactics made that meeting the primary focus of all striking students on Thursday. As implied, the moderates exerted the initiative and the pressure to bring about that change, which was good in that there would be no disruptive sit-ins, but which was dangerous in that no one should have placed the major emphasis of the strike at this very crucial time on a mere assumption that the faculty would vote in favor of the students. For the moderates, there really was no choice: it either was the general faculty meeting or the sit-ins. There was no third choice. But having placed all our eggs in the faculty basket, the moderate leadership of the strike had taken responsibility for the peaceful continuance of the strike out of their own hands and placed it into the hands of the faculty. Thus with really nowhere else to turn, the strike now balanced between an affirmative faculty vote of support which would keep the strike peaceful and a negative faculty vote of nonsupport which, quite simply, would have led to violence and possible destruction of the University. Having been outmaneuvered Tuesday night when
they wanted to expand the issues, Wednesday afternoon when they wanted the marchers to all sit-down and block Franklin Street, and again Wednesday night when they wanted to have massive sit-ins on Thursday, the radical leaders of the strike were looking for trouble, were looking for a situation to arise where the initiative of the strike would be in their hands. A negative faculty vote of nonsupport would have given the radicals that situation. Thus on a vote of the faculty hinged the entire peace and nonviolence of the strike. And though the elected representatives on the Faculty Council defeated a simple resolution condemning the Cambodian invasion less than a week previous, the general faculty was to save this day both the moderate leadership and the peace of the strike.

What happened that Thursday afternoon is now history. With 5,000 students outside Hill Hall, the general faculty within passed what came to be called the "amnesty statement." And though there has been much debate about that statement, its passage did preserve the peace of the campus, did affirm the moral, if not educational value of the strike, did allow the leadership and initiative of the strike to stay in the hands of the moderates.

I cannot comment at length on the politics of getting that amnesty statement passed at that meeting, for the effort behind the passage was almost entirely generated not by students, but by the moderate and liberal members of the faculty. I do think it fair, at this point, to comment on the sustained
courage and good judgment of the Chairman of the Faculty, Daniel Okun, who made an excellent speech Wednesday afternoon amid the boos of students and disapproval of Jack Hicks, and who, even after being personally embarrassed Wednesday, was still willing to chair that all-important meeting Thursday afternoon, a meeting that the Chancellor should have chaired but refused, terming the emergency meeting "inappropriate."

Exerting low-key leadership, Okun not only chaired the Thursday meeting, but also was instrumental in its success; and when student disapproval occurred over the ambiguity of the amnesty statement, he was courageous enough to follow through and write the following letter that went out to all faculty early Friday morning, May 8:

TO: All Faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
FROM: Daniel A. Okun
DATE: May 8, 1970

In view of the immediate importance of one of the actions taken at the May 7 meeting of the Faculty, and recognizing that many faculty members were unable to attend, I thought it imperative to report that action and also to clarify it for all concerned. This action was the adoption by an overwhelming voice vote of the Faculty of the following motion:

The students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill have reacted to the deaths at Kent State and President Nixon's escalation of the war in Indochina in a mature and constructive manner. Without passing judgment on the ultimate effectiveness of their strategy, we recognize that this activity constitutes a reasonable, peaceful and responsible course of action by members of our own University family. Therefore, in order to give tangible evidence of our support be it resolved that we affirm the freedom of students to be assessed only according to their academic performance and the faculty members' professional criteria. This includes giving students final grades on the basis of work completed thus far this semester or of permitting delay in the completion of course requirements. Students are assured of the right of appeal in case of departures from this policy.
The purpose of this action as explained in the discussion which preceded the vote was to give students involved in the antiwar movement the maximum possible latitude in completing and fulfilling course requirements. In other words, the faculty went on record advocating that all members of the faculty take every possible step to avoid penalizing students for their participation in this movement. Specifically, this would mean no penalties for class absences because of involvement in the strike, a readiness to grade students on the basis of work completed to date where this can be done meaningfully and responsibly, a readiness to postpone the due date for term papers and similar obligations, and a willingness to give a makeup final examination for students who are unable in good conscience to take the exam at the scheduled time. In the case of students scheduled to graduate this June, this would mean grades based on work completed to date except in those cases where no truly meaningful basis for grading yet exists. In short, faculty members will be expected to make every effort to treat students who are responding to our current national crisis with at least the same consideration with which they would treat individual students faced with some major family or personal crisis.

At the same time, the faculty has not agreed to grade every student on the basis of work to date, since this is impossible in those courses in which all or most of the assignments on which grades are based remain to be completed. Nor does this mean that faculty members will not meet their classroom responsibilities in the remaining days of the semester. We recognize that there are students who wish to continue with course work and to take examinations at the regularly scheduled time. The faculty recognizes its responsibilities to these students as well.

In implementing this program, students who are actively participating in the antiwar movement are expected to initiate consultation with their teachers. Teachers are expected to be available for such consultation. Because of the diversity of our courses, it is impossible to lay down any single formula which is equally just in all cases. For this reason, the action taken yesterday was couched in general terms. But the intention of the faculty was clear: we expect all of our colleagues to respect the moral dilemma confronting our students who wish to be both good citizens and good students at the same time, but who find this impossible at the moment. The faculty examined the issue in free and open debate and voted to recognize this dilemma as a legitimate one and pledged its willingness to adjust traditional rules and practices to the circumstances.
Almost certainly there will be some disputes over the application of the principle to individual cases. We hope that students and teachers alike will make every effort with respect and courtesy at all times. Where an agreement cannot be reached to the satisfaction of both student and teacher, the student has the right of appeal, first to his department chairman, then to the appropriate dean. We expect decisions to be rendered in accord with the guidelines spelled out above.

In closing, I would like to underline a point made by several of the speakers at the May 7 faculty meeting: students and faculty on this campus have a long tradition of friendship and respect, and I have every confidence that we will follow in this tradition.

In rereading that statement, I can only imagine how much Dr. Okun personally risked his reputation in speaking so strongly to all the faculty on a definitely political and delicately individual matter of grade determination. Yet that letter, even more than the amnesty statement, appeased suspicious students and kept troublesome faculty on both sides (the conservative faculty desiring to do less; the radical faculty desiring more) unified behind a single document.

It is common knowledge that coming out of the meeting on Thursday faculty members were greeted by a rousing round of applause for passing the statement as overwhelmingly as they had. What is not common knowledge is that first, there were radical students surrounding Hill Hall who were ready, if the faculty did not pass a statement of this type, to forcibly keep the faculty in the building until they did pass the statement; and second, learning of the radicals' planned action, Joe Stallings, Tom Ricketts, and others had spent Thursday morning calling striking students who, nevertheless, did not agree with such scare tactics and would have interfered with
those trying to deny the faculty exit from the building. Thus the stage was set, depending again on the faculty's decision, for considerable trouble, if not between students and faculty then between students and students.

Realizing this dangerous potential and cognizant of the applause the departing faculty were receiving, at the meeting's end I ran out a side door, around the building, and up the front steps leading into Hill Hall. On those steps and without any microphone equipment, I put all my credibility I had with the crowd on the line in support of the amnesty statement: first, by telling the students of the overwhelming spirit with which the statement was passed, and second, by emphasizing that Student Government and the Strike Steering Committee were going to do everything in their power to make sure that no student was unfairly treated by any faculty member.

Feeling then that the meeting inside had gone a lot better than it actually had, what with the almost unanimous passage of the amnesty statement and with my reassuring words, the crowd outside peacefully departed.

Meeting Thursday night in my office, the Strike Steering Committee, with a lot of other people, discussed the amnesty statement, the march to Raleigh the next day, and the activities in Washington for the week-end. The meeting Thursday night was much less heated and much less important than the meetings the two previous nights, and I can remember getting to sleep earlier that night than I had in a week.
"You know, you're not gonna stop this war with this rally, by marching. . . . That's what they do. . . . They hold rallies and they march. . . . They've been having wars for ten thousand years and you're not gonna stop it this way. . . . Ten thousand years, and this is the game they play to do it. . . . holding rallies and having marches. . . . and that's the same game you're playing. . . . their game. . . . There's only one thing to do. . . . there's only one thing's gonna do any good at all. . . . And that's everybody just look at it, look at the war, and turn your back and say. . . . Fuck it. . . .

Ken Kesey
Vietnam Day Rally
Fall, 1965
Berkeley, California

Thursday Night, May 7

Dear Ken,

Having yesterday spoken at a big rally and marched with 6,000 others, having today marched to a faculty meeting, and knowing that tomorrow I will speak at a rally in Raleigh followed by another march, I find your words disturbing. You may be right; I may be wasting my time. I know that I would like to turn my back on the whole thing and say what you urge. And it would be easy, especially since the faculty today let me off the academic hook. But tell me, Ken, how does one turn his back on Richard Nixon, Melvin Laird, or John Mitchell?

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Friday, May 8

The emergency meeting of the entire faculty was to Thursday what the Raleigh march on the State Capitol was to Friday, and Thursday's success was almost matched by Friday's failure. As if to balance a fortunate week of nonviolent protest without serious accident or individual acts of destruction, the two p.m. Raleigh march was poorly planned and ended as a mass of confusion. It was an event that received very little cooperation from the Governor, that witnessed very little coordination between the people at Raleigh and at Chapel Hill, and that could have exploded into something far worse than even its eventual failure.

Friday began as badly as the day was to continue. First, almost all the Daily Tar Heels for that day were stolen, because, in the minds of those that took them, the day's lead editorial, which was highly critical of the amnesty statement, would have had a deleterious effect on the peace of the strike at that point. Thus, although the Tar Heels were stolen in an act of support, their theft left a very bad feeling in my mind and in the minds of many other people. Second, placed by yet unknown hands, a homemade bomb exploded that morning beside
the Student Stores building, breaking one of the large plate
glass windows with an estimated loss of a thousand dollars.
This explosion was disturbing, not so much in its reality but
in what it could portend for the future. Third, Cam West, Doug
Dibbert, and myself spent the entire morning before leaving for
Raleigh trying to get the Governor merely to show up at the
three o'clock rally to be held at his doorstep. West had
called his father, Dr. Cameron West, Chairman of the Board of
Higher Education; Dibbert had called Miss Anne Queen, Anne called
State Senator Ralph Scott, and then both Miss Queen and Senator
Scott tried to reach the Governor. I had been talking unsuccess-
fully with Mr. David Murray and Mr. Ben Roney of the Governor's
Staff, both of whom became offended when I stated in somewhat
demanding terms the necessity of the Governor's presence at
the rally since there would be over 5,000 students sitting on
the front lawn of Capitol Square, waiting to hear something from
him. These two gentlemen could not comprehend the emergency
of the situation, and I left for Raleigh late for a 1:30 pre-
march rally to be held on the North Carolina State University
campus and without the knowledge of whether or not the Governor
would even be at the 3:00 rally.

On Highway 54 to Raleigh the traffic was bumper to
bumper. Although I did see a small wreck, I think maybe
2,000 Chapel Hill students made it successfully to the State
campus. Having left late, I arrived late but somehow in time
for the speech I had to give. My prepared speech was not as
fortunate, however, and was still somewhere between Chapel Hill and Raleigh receiving some polishing touches by political science graduate student, Tom Denyer. Consequently, the State people were waiting for me, and I was waiting for my speech. The State people were less patient and introduced me to the 5,000 students. Without any written remarks, I made up whatever I said at the State rally. When I concluded, I did again receive a standing ovation, but more for old times' sake than for any strong or significant statement.

In any case, the three-mile march began at 2:15 p.m. from the State campus, down Fayetteville Street, to the Capitol. As it proceeded, I learned that the Governor would meet with representatives of the different student bodies, a small step in the right direction. As might be expected by this time, the march to this meeting with the Governor went badly for a number of reasons. One, the marchers did not know each other and did not develop any group cohesion or sense of unifying identity. Thus the march underwent numerous, but momentary, disruptions when different groups decided to do different things. In addition, this lack of unity increased the possibility of individual acts of violence at the Capitol. Two, where I was marching, everybody noticed the incredible number of photographers surrounding them. I cannot remember ever seeing as many photographers. They were as numerous as we were, and they were taking pictures of everybody and everything that moved. To the crowd, this great number of photographers could
only have meant that Big Brother was watching, a realization that made the marchers both fearful and indignant. And three, at one point in the march some wise guy with a "Support Nixon" banner atop his car tried to disrupt the march. Although the fellow did upset a lot of students, the cooperative Raleigh police got to him before we did and quelled a potentially volatile situation.

Having just completed a discouraging forty-five minute march arriving at Capitol Square, I went into the Capitol to have a depressing forty-five minute meeting with the Governor and the student presidents from State, Shaw, Duke, and St. Mary's College. The recently elected President of the Student Body at State, Miss Cathy Sterling, and I went into the meeting with three objectives: one, to have the Governor rescind the telegram he had sent President Nixon supporting the decision to invade Cambodia; two, to have the Governor send a telegram to Ohio Governor Rhodes condemning him for sending troops onto the Kent State campus; and three, to persuade the Governor to talk briefly to the crowd outside. We failed in all three cases. Concerning the first objective, the Governor told us he was entitled to his opinions just as much as we were entitled to ours; concerning the second, the Governor did not feel it was good manners for one governor to interfere in the affairs of another governor; and concerning the third objective, there was never any hope, for we immediately saw the Governor's nervousness. There were several times during our discussion
when the crowd's chant, "We want Scott!" became so strong outside that a small lamp on the Governor's desk would start shaking. And the shakings of the lamp were almost matched by the shakings of the Governor's hand as he tried to convey a sense of calm confidence to those talking to him.

For my part, I too was scared, but not for the same reasons. I realized that the Governor would not come out and that the statement he had pre-prepared would not satisfy an already angry crowd. And as the Governor left through a side door, we students were left empty-handed to confront the crowd outside.

At this point a key decision was made concerning who was to read the Governor's statement. Praying for some feminine charm and realizing that the primary sponsorship for this march to Raleigh came from the people at State, I deferred to Miss Sterling's reading the statement. That decision was a mistake, for Cathy had no previous experience with handling a crowd and almost totally lost the situation. She said several disturbing comments that were unnecessary, including the ridiculous assertion that Governor Scott was doing more for us students than any other governor. Fearing the worst, and in the midst of students shouting "Bullshit!" Skip McGaughey, who was the experienced of the experienced in this type situation, grabbed Carolina professor Joel J. Schwartz of Political Science and more or less yanked him to the microphone. Schwartz met the occasion. He quelled the crowd by telling them that the meeting at the Capitol was not that important, that, instead,
the people throughout the state were important who were watching the student performance at Capitol Square and who would be able to compare the students' desires to communicate peacefully with the Governor's recalcitrant unwillingness to engage in any dialogue. After those sobering remarks and a well-timed minute of silence urged by an Episcopal minister, a still angry crowd scurried back to the State campus.

Watching the crowd as it scampered down Fayetteville Street, I remember seeing what was not a human group comprised of thousands of individuals, but what was a once ferocious dog who had not gotten what it wanted and was now, fearfully, hurrying back home with its tail between its legs and with all its previous visions shattered by harsh reality. It was a very sobering metaphor, climaxing a depressing day.
And what about the people?

The march on Raleigh was a departure from the sheltered dream world of the University and an entrance into a very different, very other world. Governor Scott told me that his supporting telegram to President Nixon would have been favorably received by a majority of the voters he was supposed to represent. At the time of the strike, I think the Governor was right.

As the strike showed me, convincing one campus that the war has got to end does not convince an entire nation or state. I realized then how much work did lie ahead. I realized then that people do exist who mail letters like the following to student body presidents at their old Alma Maters. When I added to this letter the fifteen similar letters I received, the six hundred letters President Friday received, and the countless letters to the editor sent to papers across the state, I saw a lot of people supporting both the Cambodian invasion and the troopers' actions at Kent State. These people cannot be ignored if this student generation truly wants to effect meaningful societal change.

(Included in whole and without comment, this letter was waiting on my desk when I returned from Raleigh that
dismal Friday, May 8. It is from a lady in Wilson, N.C.,
whose name I choose not to reveal.)

Dear Mr. Bello,

I am writing to you today as a friend—a concerned citizen and a former 'Carolina coed' removed from your age by just a decade. I hope you will know that because I am interested in you that I have taken this time to write you.

May I brag a little to let you know how the University was when I was there? First of all I was very popular and ended up marrying a pharmacy student who has become very successful. Yes, I was popular because I looked like a girl and acted like a girl, was given several honors and dated many boys. My hair was curled, my legs were pretty but most of all boys liked me because I was sincere, optimistic, respectful. Even then there was the typical Carolina coed like the one in the picture 'doing her thing.' And she was everywhere, all the time, doing her thing. The boys at Carolina then were handsome, 'doing their thing' but two things I remember about them then:

1) When something important was going to happen (like the Germans) they would bring in girls from elsewhere and I was always with a date.

2) I never had to wonder when I put my arms around a boy if maybe I was dating someone's sister.

3) On dates we talked about love, and how much the Lord had blessed us and what we were doing then that would contribute to making our world a better place. We were so busy getting an education that we had no time for criticizing.

I imagine that you possess many of the qualifications that were so admirable then. It is and will always be, a great honor to be president of the student body at the University. But it is a grave responsibility. You owe much to the students of the University and to those of us who have graduated—for you represent something of each of us. Many will not take the time to write you as I am doing. But I am concerned about your responsibility and your attitude especially your comments—'he has got it coming (President Nixon) and he is going to get it.' Somewhere among your students is perhaps a Lee Harvey Oswald or a Sirhan Sirhan or a James Earl Ray. Or is this what you advocate? How can you object to war in Cambodia and Vietnam and conduct such hatred and dissent as you are doing.
Mr. Bello, it is you and people like you who are responsible for murder of the four youths at Kent State University--much more so than the President or the National Guardsmen for if they (the students) had been in their classes, going about their responsibilities of getting an education and making the world a better place by their production--then none of this would have happened.

If you personally do not want to fight for the freedom of being an American citizen and giving those women and children who can not defend themselves a chance to live, then you have the right to be an objector but as a leader you do not have the right to cause those of us who graduated from the University to be ashamed of our heritage and plant seeds of hatred among students who should be taking advantage of their time in a more constructive manner. Yes, according to my paper, none of the Kent students were demonstrators--they were led by someone like you, to their deaths.

I do not believe in war. I believe in equal rights for everyone. Some of my best friends in our community are Negroes. But I do believe in a person contributing to the world instead of tearing it apart. I believe in a person treating another with love and respect. I believe in a person respecting the good in his elders--parents and the President, etc.--and accepting the bad. And humbly realizing that given the same situation the person might not do as well. The President is elected by a majority--many people who are richer and wiser and better American citizens than you and I will ever be.

We do not have to agreee [sic] on his policy but we do not need to 'talk so much' unless we are willing to do something constructive. Demonstrating is not constructive. It is the most destructive waste of time and lives. You want the nation to notice you. We do and we are ashamed and 'sick-at-our stomachs' at what we see. This girl in the picture, She looks to us like a character from 'Tobacco Road' [referring to an included newspaper picture]. Tell her to bathe herself, wash her hair, cut it, curl it, take off her long pants and use all the Gov-given talents she possesses to be a women. Tell her to spend her time constructively. Tell her there are children to be taught, there are the sick to be nursed, there are opportunities for loving, intellectual women unlimited. But most of all there are fine leaders to be wined and born.
And you, Mr. Bello, from your comments you think you are God's Gift to the World. You are not. When I was your age, I thought I was. But life will teach you a lesson. 'Whatsoever things are true, honest, of just rapport' have been 'the thing' for lo these many centuries and will always be. You object to rules, and law and order but when/if you have a home and family you will then learn to have more respect for your government and the fact that by and large you and they can continue on your 'pursuit for happiness.'

If it isn't too late. In America today 'every person can do their thing' and the parents, President of the University, citizens young and old and officers far and wide can do little because ours is a free country. But if the Communists take over, as they will do in your lifetime, as they are trying to do in Vietnam and Cambodia, you will have a dictator to tell you 'if and when to do your thing.'

Nikita Krushchev said many years ago that he would take over our country without lifting a finger and so he has and is. I favor freedom of choice for Negro and white but this year I am forced to take my children to schools miles away to 'forced racial balance.' So you see my rights are already diminished. All this dissonence in our country brought about by such demonstrations as yours is causing anarchy. 'A house divided within itself can not stand,' you know.

With my concern, . . .
Saturday dawned unlike any of the preceding days of the past week, for it dawned on a dead and empty campus. Many students left main campus that week-end, heading in different directions. I would estimate that about five hundred went up to Washington to engage in a national protest of the Cambodia-Kent State incidents. Over three hundred toured the Chapel Hill community that Saturday and Sunday canvassing voters, trying to reach every home. This effort was part of the activities of the Carolina Union people who were trying to get voters to realize that they actually could influence national policy if they only wrote to their congressmen, called their local government officials, or made an effort to express their personal opinions. These student canvassers went out with prepared statements of objection to the war, prepared statements explaining the strike, and lists of the pertinent public officials, whether local, state, or national. On an individual basis, several thousand students also went home to their parents, not only to rest and recover from what had been for many a week of the most emotional, most intense, and sometimes most disturbing experiences of their lives, but also to explain what had happened on the Chapel Hill campus to generate such
experiences. From hearsay many heated discussions occurred throughout North Carolina that week-end, some involving son and father, some involving daughter and mother, some involving brother and brother. Many discussions were fruitful; however, some students were greeted by parents who could not understand recently acquired antiwar sentiments and who subsequently threatened to pull their children out of school if they did not return to classes. For these students, their participation in the strike, already an emotionally gripping participation, became even more emotionally and personally disturbing. In addition, after the amnesty statement, some students did decide that their strike involvement was at an end. At the same time some students were canvassing the Chapel Hill community, these other students were engaged in a different form of canvassing at Myrtle Beach, Ocean Drive, and Morehead City.

Some Carolina students (the tennis team) spent that Saturday afternoon on the Chapel Hill tennis courts competing in the Atlantic Coast Conference tennis finals. Carolina's number one player, Lee Langstroth, also a fraternity man, decided to don a black arm band in his all-important match. His wearing the strikers' arm band dismayed his coach and disturbed Carolina alumni watching the tournament, but I think the arm band helped him win the ACC tennis finals. In any case, his example brought the strike even to the tennis courts.

For my part, I spent the week-end resting, assisting Student Attorney General Robert Mosteller who was organizing
a symposium to be held Monday afternoon with four faculty members, and catching up on the week's newspapers. In reading the papers, I was startled by the seemingly unique combination of massive involvement and sustained nonviolence that characterized the Chapel Hill campus. According to United Press International wires released in Saturday's (May 9) Tar Heel, more than two hundred universities and colleges were closed by the end of that first week. In the South at least thirty-one colleges and universities were closed. Georgia shut down its entire twenty-six-institution system. National Guard troopers were on campus at the universities of South Carolina, Virginia, Alabama, Tennessee, and Maryland. On the campuses of the universities of Florida, Florida State, and Miami, students were on indefinite strike. Out of the South and away from Chapel Hill, the incidents on this nation's campuses were worse both in terms of destruction and violent confrontation. In reading the papers I could cite many examples, but one should suffice: In Carbondale, Illinois, on the campus of Southern Illinois University, some 2,000 students left their campus early Friday morning and rampaged through the town of Carbondale, breaking at the minimum seventy windows in downtown Carbondale. National Guardsmen were sent in, causing sixty-one people to be treated for injuries, not to mention the arrests of many more. I think Carbondale's example, or Wisconsin's, or South Carolina's, speaks to anyone who might express the philosophy, "It could not happen in Chapel Hill," for believe me,
it could have and almost did the next day.

I think other Chapel Hill people were also reading the papers that week-end. And despite their misgivings about the past week's events on the Chapel Hill campus, when these people compared Chapel Hill to what happened elsewhere, they found themselves patting the University on the back for acting as responsibly as it did act. (I think this is a clear example of people evaluating events in relative terms, defending what is theirs when that seems to respond better than what is not theirs.) In any case, that week-end President Friday would say that the protest on the Chapel Hill campus had "a high degree of accountability and responsibility." Various alumni would praise the University throughout the state; even my friend Governor Scott would later praise the responsible manner in which the University had conducted itself. In addition, many faculty first disturbed by the amnesty underwent modification of viewpoint, now realizing that the "intensity of the situation" at least allowed such a statement. And leaving the campus on Friday quite disturbed at all that had happened, many students returned with a real sense of pride that in a moment of spontaneous expression of anger and outrage, they had conducted themselves individually and in a mass far better than many of their peers on many campuses throughout this nation.
The value of true communication

While picking up the Saturday (May 9) Tar Heel and remembering that Friday's paper had been stolen, I realized that something unique had occurred in my experience as a Carolina student. I would like to relate my realization.

Usually, with the campus spread out as it is and with students going their own separate ways, the Tar Heel reigns supreme as a means of communication and as a means of keeping the campus informed. Yet this past week I had witnessed a better form of communication, not only in the sense of a better exchange of information, but in the more important sense of greater human interaction. Witness the facts: Over six thousand students attended some aspect of Wednesday's activities. Thousands of students had become active either in distributing leaflets, in talking to fellow students, or in physically engaging in a march or rally. At least one leaflet had been slid under every door in every suite, in every hall, on every floor, in every dormitory on campus. Posters and graffiti were up everywhere, from the left-hand elevator in James Dormitory to the eighth floor men's room in Wilson Library. No one could have come onto main campus that week
without seeing signs of what was happening. As parents were
to discover, no one could talk to someone who had been touched
by the strike activities without feeling something of the experi-
ence. A common cause, common dress, and common symbols, limited
in time and space, had generated, if only momentarily, a genuine
sense of community within the Chapel Hill students touched by
the strike. Within this community we were able to communicate,
not by newspapers, but by our bodies. We shared desires and,
most importantly, shared ourselves with each other. We respected
each other. Our fellow students were listening to us, and we
to them. The Tar Heel had lost its importance, for we had a
better form of communication: that of man to man, face to face.
And even better, this common communication of thoughts, feel-
ings, and needs involved thousands.
Monday, May 11

Two afternoon events characterized Monday, May eleventh: a symposium and a sit-in. Organized by Robert Mosteller with the help of several faculty members, the two o'clock symposium's purpose was twofold. First, it emphasized the complexity of issues at hand. Second, it provided a firmer, factual background for students participating in canvassing and in the Washington Witness scheduled for the following day. During the televised symposium in the brick pit outside the Student Union, professors Andrew Scott (Political Science), James Leutze (History), Samuel Wells (History), and David Lapkin (Economics) respectively discussed the political, military, diplomatic, and economic ramifications of the Cambodian invasion. From every report I heard about the symposium, it was well attended and the presentations were well made and well received. Although I was also participating in the symposium, I had to leave to take part in Monday's other and unplanned event.

Organized by Casey Donovan and Jan Atkins, with the help of other radical students grown weary of the "Come clean for Gene" tactics of the strike, the hour-long sit-in's expressed purpose was to protest the University's Disruptions Policy.
Leaving the symposium at 2:15, I found the disgruntled radicals standing and sitting in the main lobby of South Building. For fifty minutes they argued whether to stay in the building or to leave after presenting Chancellor Sitterson a 600-name petition signed by students who said they had violated the University's Disruptions Policy. Several students were also in South Building criticizing their radical brothers for this unprecedented and unnecessary action, stressing that the sit-in would split the strike.

I arrived after discussion had been going on for forty-five minutes. Chancellor Sitterson had just agreed to meet with three of the number, and the group decided to send in Martha Smith, Casey Donovan, and John Wheeler, three not to be counted among the dispassionate and logical students present. Having been voted upon, the three went in; feeling I could act as translator between the two sides, I asked Chief Beaumont, who blocked the Chancellor's door, to let me in, and he did. Understandably, Chancellor Sitterson was in a rather frightened mood. He did not want to come out and speak to the students in the lobby and tried to get around making an appearance. Smith, Wheeler, and Donovan pleaded with him to come out. With a look of desperation in his eyes, Chancellor Sitterson pressed me for comment. After about five minutes of harrowing argument from the other three, when I said simply, "Chancellor, you've really got nothing to lose by going out there; they simply want to see you," the Chancellor made up his mind to go out and see the
group. He received the petitions, stating that he could not change the Disruptions Policy but that he would convey to President Friday both the signatures and sentiments in opposition to the Disruptions Policy. The Chancellor expressed his own personal sentiment in favor of changing the policy, turned around, and went back into his office. Since the prevailing sentiment by now was to leave South Building if the Chancellor came out, the crowd rapidly dispersed after his appearance.

As the lobby emptied around three o'clock, I returned to the Chancellor, who was slumped into his desk chair in his office, talking to his chief assistant, Dr. Claiborne Jones. Before I could say anything, Sitterson told me that the students were breaking the law and that he might be forced to call the police if they would not leave. I told him that because of his appearance the students had decided to leave, and I praised him for his courage to come out (Bob Scott would not have done as much). Looking rather startled and pleasantly surprised, the Chancellor nodded his head in thanks, and I walked out.

This entire incident took place during the symposium. Getting back in time to make my contribution, I discovered that somehow I had again lost my prepared remarks and had totally lost my train of thought. Once again I found myself staring at a microphone with nothing prepared to say, and once again I made up, extemporaneously, some statement of defense
for the strike as a viable form of protest.

Later Monday afternoon I remember walking down main campus, looking at the debris in Polk Place, when Forrest Read, an English professor who had been among the first faculty members to promise amnesty to striking students, came up to me and urged me not to go to Washington and not to support students going to Washington, feeling such action would break the strike here. I remember thinking that I wanted to end the strike here, wanted to do something more constructive than marching here, there, and everywhere, and wanted to go to Washington. But Dr. Read was correct in his prediction, for in terms of massive participation in a political or other than personal activity, the Chapel Hill student strike ended when four hundred students, faculty, and townspeople boarded buses for Washington at 5:00 a.m. Tuesday morning. (Of course, the strike as a boycott of classes was successful until the last day of classes, Thursday, May 14.)
Can you explain this logic?

James Simon Kunen reports during the Columbia strike:

Plans are made to get 500 people to refuse to see the dean and then 1,000 to demand the same punishment as the 500. Either they back down or they suspend 1,500 kids. 'We win either way.'

Tom Bello reports during the Chapel Hill strike:

Plans are made to get 600 students to sign a petition saying they have violated the University Disruptions Policy in the same manner as the three students whose violations are still pending. Either they back down or they punish 603. 'We win either way.'

I did not believe it until I saw it. I saw it. Yet I still cannot comprehend what must be the hidden logic. Can you help?
Since the preceding Thursday when the decision had been reached in the meeting of the general faculty to engage in a Washington lobbying effort with North Carolina's congressmen, I had participated with law school professor Dan Pollitt, political science professor Alden Lind, and others in the plans for the trip. In this lobbying effort, termed Washington Witness I, President Friday was always helpful, even sending individual telegrams to all North Carolina congressmen asking them to be available for a large meeting to be held Tuesday morning. In addition, both striking and non-striking students and faculty joined hands to recruit as many people as possible for the political exercise.

With excellent publicity, enthusiastic planners, and vigorous recruiting, over four hundred people met the buses in the 5:00 a.m. chill of early May. Spending a sleepless night in Suite C, I stumbled out of my office and into the morning bedlam of the Morehead Planetarium parking lot. A helpful soul shoved me in the direction of my assigned bus, and I boarded. Safely on the bus, but with no sleep and no speech (to be given only eight hours later to the entire
North Carolina Delegation), I opted for sleep, feeling too
tired to talk, much less to organize a speech.

In Washington I was impressed at the large turnout
both of North Carolina congressmen and of students (over six
hundred strong); the entire House Banking and Currency Committee
Meeting Room was full. My extemporaneous remarks opened a meet-
ing that witnessed some really superior speeches by, to name
a few, Dr. John Dixon, Dr. Fred Cleveland, undergraduate Virginia
Carson, and Strike Steering Committee member Lee Merowitz.
The tone and quality of the speeches, coupled with such a
large turnout of voters (How else do congressmen view people?)
had to have its impact on the congressmen. Once again, it was
clear to me, if not to them, that the Cambodia-Kent State
strike touched far more people than the normal antiwar protest.

From my standpoint, however, the most significant
event of the Washington Witness trip was neither this large
morning meeting nor a rather frustrating 4:00 meeting with
Senator Sam Ervin, but a 2:00 meeting with Chancellor J.
Alexander Heard of Vanderbilt University, Nixon's newly and
admittedly hastily appointed advisor on student affairs. It
was refreshing and helpful to talk not to a politician but to
an educator who understood our situation almost immediately
and who would ask key and very specific questions rather than
worrying about a defense of our attack. The UNC delegation
was the first group to meet with Chancellor Heard, the
arrangements being made by President Friday. Comments made by Skip McGaughey, Professor Dan Pollitt, Miss Anne Queen, Melinda Lawrence, Richie Leonard, and myself emphasized a number of points. We opened by stressing the basic need for greater communication between the federal government and the nation's students to facilitate a greater trust between the two, trust which definitely was not present (nor is now). We urged that the President advocate legislation allocating more money for innovation and experimentation in higher education, for summer internships, and for academic and scholastic aid. We felt that Mr. Nixon should advocate that no guns be used under any circumstances by National Guard troopers on college campuses, urged that some type of advisory council on education be set up, composed entirely of students with direct access to the President, and generally expressed the sentiment that students must be heard before frustration builds to such a point where students feel they have to shout. We felt that antiwar sentiments had been building all year and that Mr. Nixon had done nothing to answer or remedy these sentiments. In concluding, we conveyed to Chancellor Heard our doubts as to his effectiveness with the President in seeking redress for our grievances. The Chancellor admitted similar doubts but asked what else could he do but try. Briefly thinking over his question, we could not supply an alternative.

Generally speaking, I was not overwhelmed with the Washington Witness trip, although I do think it had several
benefits. First, it gave a sense of involvement to people who had not participated in the strike up to that point, to people outside the academic community, and to faculty who, though disturbed about the war, did not believe in the strike as an effective means of expressing opposition to the war. Second, I think the large meeting had an impact on the North Carolina Delegation; if it did not change their opinions about the war, it did at least make them more open to student sentiment. One example is Congressman Roy Taylor, who reportedly spent the entire afternoon with striking students. Later in the summer, Taylor was one of only three North Carolina congressmen (with Galifianakis and Preyer) to vote for the eighteen-year-old ballot. I think his afternoon-long conversations with students helped in his making that later vote. Third, the large morning meeting had a definite impact on Senator John Jordan. When the Senator voted in opposition to the Byrd amendment and in favor of the Cooper-Church amendment over two months later, he stated that his reason for doing so was to fulfill a promise he made to a group of UNC students. We were that group. Fourth, I think the conversation with Presidential advisor Alexander Heard went well and would have been more effective if he had been advising another President.
INSIGHT
SEVENTEEN

Speaking of politicians

Not long ago, California Representative Paul (Pete) McCloskey made the following comment:

You see all of these pressures working on you all the time: stay quiet when you should speak out, vote this way because that will keep somebody from running against you next time. This kind of pressure on a politician gradually causes all of us to be less capable of leadership, less capable of inspiring the people to do the right thing in the country. I don't know; I think maybe a man shouldn't stay in politics very long.

By Tuesday night, I was very tired, my nerves were gone, my throat was sore. In short, I honestly experienced that age-old cliché of "walking death." When I lay down to sleep that night, I had a first-time, ineffable, and never-yet repeated experience of being unable to think. I had nothing inside me: no thoughts to build on, no imagination to evoke affections. I could not even dream, for there was simply nothing there. It was as if my mind had once been a vast warehouse of thought and feeling, but in the last two weeks so much had gone out in times that did not permit replenishment that finally the warehouse was empty. Before falling to sleep, I remember thinking to myself, "Tom, you have to read a book or something. You have to get your mind retooled
or else you will be in bad shape."

Consequently, my original fervor, spirit, and intensity for a cause of peace had been drained away; my overriding desire now was merely to have the strike come to an end so that I could feel relief from the tremendous responsibilities that still lay on my shoulders. I remember ruing that negative feeling then; looking back, I still rue it. Yet as Mr. McCloskey says, the pressures and the responsibilities are always there to wear you down, to make you less effective, to make you desirous of taking the easy way out. I agree--one should not stay in politics too long.
The most significant event of these next two days occurred when I received a phone call from the Dean of Student Affairs, Cornelius O. Cathey. During perhaps the most crucial two weeks in the recent history of the University in the area of student affairs, this phone call marked the first attempt that the man most responsible for student affairs had made to contact me. And in that first phone call, Dean Cathey asked if I could remove the tables and posters that had been, for some reason, cluttering Polk Place for almost two weeks.

The next day in a follow-up phone call, Associate Dean of Student Affairs James O. Cansler talked to me, again for the first time during the last two weeks, reiterating that the tables must be removed.

And so on Thursday, May 14, the last day of classes, the two-week anniversary of Mr. Nixon's unforgettable speech, those tables were removed.
"Carolina is a lot of meandering rivulets up which the students struggle, vainly attempting to spawn."

--adapted from James Simon Kunen's The Strawberry Statement, p. 111.

(Kunen got the title for his book from the following statement by Columbia dean Deane: "Whether students vote 'yes' or 'no' on an issue is like telling me they like strawberries.")

Someday I might write a book on college administrators. The book will be entitled The Banality of Human Existence. On second thought, I have decided the subject would be too depressing to put to serious reflection.
Recognizing within me what William James termed "our indomitable desire to cast the world into a more rational shape in our minds than the shape into which it is thrown there by the crude order of experience," I will not attempt an overview of the events of the past two weeks. Nor will I recommend, from this experience, any norms of behavior, for in similar times of crisis, individual personalities and specific events must be the primary factors in critical decision-making.

Indeed, the Chapel Hill strike was unique in its particular interweaving of individual personalities and specific events, and I emphasize this essay's attempt to capture this unique interweaving through its narration of specific events by an individual personality.

Yet the strike was far more than what I have been able to narrate. The essay has merely depicted the most important activities of one of the strike's leading actors on what perhaps was the center stage. There were many stages, however, many performances equally as important for the individuals involved, occurring all over campus. The medical and law schools each organized and had a small symposium; anthropology and philosophy students both drafted statements of support
and planned their own activities during the strike. Each professor that took time during that period to discuss with his students the ramifications of the Cambodia-Kent State affairs across the nation and on campus, each professor that tried to understand what his students were feeling and tried to show the students he was trying to understand—each individually had significant parts. Every student who carried leaflets, who put up posters, who marched, who went door-to-door in his dormitory, who took the time to talk to fellow students whether he knew them or not, who took time to understand and to express both what he saw others feeling outside himself and what he himself felt inside—all those students, all those professors played very important roles in the non-violent and peaceful drama of the strike. Though not specifically included, all these stages and all these participants made the strike a unique, very complex, mostly nonviolent, and very unified yet very individually felt expression.

I conclude this chapter's rendition of that expression by noting two specific events, two small fires: the first, an ineffectual arson attempt occurring early Monday morning, May 4, on an Air Force ROTC building; the second, a fire doing extensive damage to the second floor of Alumni Building early Wednesday morning, May 13. Bracketing the experience of the strike, these two fires serve as reminders that the strike was always potentially destructive and very unpredictable. However inadequately, they reflect the more
brightly burning internal and emotional fires so many students experienced. For as only a fire can, the strike purged the film of familiarity from our mundane lives, and that purging was as physically dangerous as it was spiritually exciting.
"If a (man) could for one day 'himself submit to ritual,' everyone under Heaven would respond to his goodness."

--Confucius
Analects (12:1)

The strike was many things to many people. During the two weeks of its duration, much happened that could be and has been interpreted in many different ways. Consequently, I do not deposit the ultimate value of the strike in some objective accomplishment that once grasped, the reader is better able to discern the strike's specific legacy. Quite the contrary, for myself, the strike's value lies in what it revealed to me; its ultimate value lies in the subjective revelations that the experience provoked within so many of its participants. Being one of those participants, I experienced, like others, something very personal and very special. Throughout this essay, I have juxtaposed these personal revelations with chronological depiction of events to emphasize their interrelation. In the preceding Event Conclusion, I stressed the strike's interweaving of individual personalities and specific events. In this Insight Conclusion, I try to interpret the strike's magic
and specialness to me, thus concluding my search for Godot in this essay. The interpretation I offer is personal, however, and should not be held to be correct to the exclusion of all others.

Earlier in the essay, I noted Ken Kesey's remarks on the similarity of antiwar and prowar marches and rallies. In at least one sense he is right, for involvement in such activities produces an exhilarating feeling of the self being sublimated into a greater cause, of the self being transcended by something larger than self. In Insight Ten, I tried briefly to consider one aspect of this feeling and its implications. That consideration serves as a preface to its own expansion.

All my life, in literature, in historical writings, in Sunday School, and in the classroom, I have been told of the ultimate ecstasy one feels when he achieves individual identity through immersion in the greater community of man. Yet the notion only seemed a great notion until I was able to live it through the experience of the strike.

In describing that experience, I focus on the following perceptions. First, the activities of the strike—the marches, the memorial service, the emergency meeting, the posters, the leaflets—required not only mere intellectual involvement but also physical involvement of the entire body; deed and thought, thought and emotion joined in an activity demanding total participation. Second, the causes advocated
by the strike—an end to violence, an end to war, and end to man's inhumane treatment of fellow man, an affirmation of love, peace, "mutual love, respect, and understanding"—were and are causes truly worthy of advocacy, belief, and espousal. The worth of these ideals gains even more significance in a world that offers so little. The fellow in Insight Twelve implied a theme common to my generation: life in American society is meaningless; society fails to provide anything worthy of one's fidelity and lacks a sufficient number of activities which could provide their participants a sense of personal dignity. Within this perhaps overstated, but still dismal view of America, the strike's objectives achieved a unique sense of transcendent importance to my generation. Finally, the symbols of the strike—the black arm band and the clenched fist—provided an additional sense of common identity to a group of strikers already unified in being virtually all white, all young, all middle-class college students. By providing common activities, language, and symbols for a cause that was uniquely worthy of participation, the strike generated a community among students who, though always students, only then realized their common identity. In this moment of recognition, the strike became a sacred experience.

Admitting all its other and far worse aspects, as a sacred experience, the strike is best perceived as a religious
ritual. Being a ritual, the strike, as Herbert Figarette tells us, allowed its participants to coordinate harmoniously all gestures according to a pattern expressive of "man-to-man-ness." As a ritual, the strike had a kind of spontaneity allowing it to happen "of itself." The strike's ritual had life because individuals participated in it with inner seriousness and sincerity evoked by marching behind six coffins with 6,000 fellow students in an affirmation of life.

Thus, on the highest level, the strike was a dramatic ritual that demanded total individual involvement of the entire community of participants, and "it is in this beautiful and dignified, shared and open participation with others who are ultimately like oneself that man realizes himself." This moment of realization, where one perceives his individual worth only in the context of a greater community demanding "reciprocal loyalty and respect," was mine during the strike. In that moment my own personal waiting for Godot was no longer necessary. And I was not alone in my epiphany.
AFTERWORD

What happened to my student generation in the two weeks after President Nixon's decision to invade Cambodia is important. To me. To my generation. To this nation. Sensing this importance, I have sought to understand it. As this essay documents, however, I have failed in my search. I have been unable to recapture fully the original excitement and spirit of the strike. What was once so totally overwhelming is now only a memory.

Yet I see value in this failure. Even though I have not totally recaptured the past, I have better understood it. And that understanding offers vision not only for the eventual future but also for the immediate present, since, as Hannah Arendt says, "We are contemporaries only as far as our understanding reaches."

Going back to this one event, I have understood a part of what a sense of history has to offer, namely, that the record of man is a common one; we are all participants. When man's creations, his societies and societal institutions, decay, we cannot stand back. Being men, we are all responsible both for repair and for building anew. And as the "Dear Father" letter concludes, that responsibility for each of
us now includes the entire world. We must work together, for we are all we have.

To myself, a member of a generation engulfed by constant change and too often only aware of what is immediately bad, this vision offers vitally needed tolerance and sympathy.

My essay concluded, I offer two hopes. One, I hope that more of my peers realize the foolishness of a rejection of what is man's past, of what is the historical and cultural legacy of past generations to our generation. For as Percy Shelley stressed, no generation of man "can supersede any other without incorporating into itself a portion of that which it supersedes." Two, corresponding to Shelley's quote, I hope that students of future generations learn to use their imaginations to know what we knew, to feel what we felt, to learn what we tried to learn, and to go beyond.
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

My main sources for this memoir were almost exclusively personal. During the strike, I kept both a personal journal and a copy of virtually everything distributed. The strike journal and files helped greatly in reconstructing my state of mind during the events. Also, a personal friend named David Changaris compiled for me during the summer a manuscript about the strike. This document provided assistance in my keeping an overall perspective. In addition, I kept all the Daily Tar Heels (from Friday, May 1, through Thursday, May 14). These papers helped me discover specific times and provided a first-hand picture of the flavor and spirit of the strike. I did not have time to read any state newspapers during the strike; and, consequently, although they might have supplied general background knowledge, I did not feel it appropriate to research them for the memoir.

Hundreds of published books provided background perspectives for this essay, but here I shall mention only the few books which more or less directly influenced the content, style, and insights of this memoir. James Simon Kunen's The Strawberry Statement (New York: Random House, 1969) offered, in its style, a very humorous, readable, and personal model for a student's first-hand view of a University strike.
The Scranton Commission Report helped me keep events in Chapel Hill within a national perspective, and its conclusions and recommendations are excellent. The subtitle of the paper came from Arthur Schlesinger's article, "The Historian as Participant," appearing in the Spring, 1971, issue of Daedalus. Schlesinger's emphasis on the value of eyewitness history, coupled with the encouragement of my history faculty advisor, Dr. Frank Ryan, provided the incentive for my writing this form of historical document. Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters, in Tom Wolfe's The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test (New York: Bantam Books, 1967) offered me both helpful advice and disturbing insights into a segment of my generation. The remarks made in the chapter entitled Insight Conclusion about the strike as ritual would have been impossible without the last chapter in Herbert Fingarette's On Responsibility (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1967). The book is helpful reading to anyone concerned about the problem of individual ethics and responsibility in contemporary society. In Insight Five, when I was discussing my readings in Thoreau, Gandhi, and Cesar Chavez, the three books I was primarily referring to were: Thoreau's Walden (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1966), Erik Erikson's Gandhi's Truth (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1969), and Peter Matthiessen's Sal Si Puedes (New York: Random House, 1969). Erikson's book is far more than just a commentary on Gandhi; it offers
Stated simply, this essay would have been an impossibility without the loving, slave-labor of Miss Judith Ann Hippler. Almost as much as my actual writing, Judy's typing and retyping, her stylistic corrections, and her warm smile and kind words, went into the reality of this essay. I am deeply and lovingly grateful.