

# Looking Backwards

By Fr. Andrew Greeley



I will confess to being something less than enthusiastic about the wave of nostalgia which currently seems to be sweeping the land. It seems to me that nostalgia anesthetizes us to the implications of the past by changing the past from reality to sentiment and using that sentiment for entertainment.

Nostalgia eliminates the pain and the suffering of the past, and in the process, also eliminates those elements which would improve our understanding of the present.

I am arguing that nostalgia is a logical result of the obsession with the future, manifested in different ways by Alan Toffler's extremely poor book, *Future Shock*, and Charles Reich's infantile projections in *The Greening of America*, and by Margaret Mead's senile youth worship in her *Culture and Commitment*.

But if my capacity for the enjoyment of nostalgia is limited, I do not normally find it offensive. However, one recent exercise in nostalgia struck me

as being profoundly offensive, and that was Gary Wills' "A Farewell to the Catholic Liberal," in the recent nostalgia issue of *The Critic*.

What makes Wills' ridicule of the recent past so offensive to me is that he manages to do it in a style which seems sympathetic.

The fashionable Catholic intellectualism of the present day denounces both the American tradition and the Catholic tradition. What counts is not the past but the future, not what men have thought down through the centuries but what we feel now.

I am inclined to think that human progress represents a very wavy line moving slightly upward rather than a firm straight line taking off toward the omega point. I have a hunch that when historians in the next century get around to sorting this one out they will look on the era of the "Catholic liberals" as a thrust of the line upward, however tentative, and the present period as a thrust downward, not at all tentative.

# A Collegian's Dilemma

By Father Paul J. Cuddy



Here is an excerpt from a letter from a collegian at an eastern university.

"I suppose I came to the university like an innocent lamb because about all the people I knew at home were normal. My family are a normal, middle-class people of Italian descent who rose from poverty to middle-class through hard work and careful management. My teachers in the public high school were great persons and the coach we all idolized because he was a real square shooter. Our parish church was a holy place and the priests were priestly and even if their sermons weren't exactly inspiring, the priests were, and that's the best sermon of all to me. Now after a year at the university I'm angry and sick with the religious setup.

are the only Christians. Even the Catholic Church is represented as a decadent relic of feudalism, "which supports the exploiters of the poor and the blacks and is comfortable in its comfort." And all this talking against the institutional Church is all said jumbled up with exhortations to love and more love, and to be concerned and all that. Father, I'm fed up to the neck.

"I won't say anything about the Mass itself. As they say in the book flaps, any comparison of it with the Mass at home is merely coincidental. Father, I'm sick of the whole mess. It's because I do love the Church that I'm angry and sick. It seems to appeal to a small group of weirdos but the kids I know best hate the whole thing, and feel let down and helpless.

"Where does that leave me?"

"Dear Tom,

"It leaves you in a dilemma only the chaplain's bishop can solve. I've often wondered that bishops tolerate some conditions. I suppose they are using the parable of the wheat and the cockle, allowing both to grow lest the wheat be destroyed. Frankly I don't see the application of this at your university.

"However, don't assume your chaplain is typical of the Newman chaplains. I know many in my own diocese. They are faithful to the Church in the service of their people. It is true that collegiate chaplains tend to be more 'progressive' than the

usual parish priests. It is inevitable given the milieu of the academie, and the psychological thrust of maturing manhood. But from what I can observe they are sensitive to the fact that the Catholic Church is the greatest of all visible communities, and they do work conscientiously to help their charges to understand the Church as the Church presents herself. Despite the weakness of ourselves who are priests, it is Christ living in the Church who is our guide, our chaplain, our priest par excellence. There's a nice quotation from the Council Document on the Church which expresses this. It reads: 'The Church is the sheepfold whose one and necessary door is Christ. Although guided by human shepherds, her sheep are nevertheless ceaselessly led and nourished by Christ Himself, the Good Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep....' (The Church: No. 6)

"I can't imagine getting much spiritual strength from the unfortunate man who ranges your campus as the representative of his bishop. As I recall, aren't there several parish churches in the city? Better go to Mass there. You won't lose the faith under your campus minister, but you may well develop ulcers—which come mostly from drink and from frustrations. I wonder if I were in your shoes if I wouldn't have ulcers by now.

Regards to your folks—and thank God and Our Lady every day that you have such a wonderful family."

## The Slot Man

# When a Legend Steps Down

By Carmen Viglucci



They came from all over the area and from back through the years.

They arrived without being asked specifically to come; they were just notified that the affair had been scheduled.

They came at \$5.50 a head.

Some were just too far away, so they telephoned, or sent taped messages, or wrote the flowery prose they had spent their lives avoiding.

Messages came from such places as the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, The Washington Post, the Philadelphia Dispatch, Florida's Today.

Those there represented a veritable history of the newspaper business in Rochester—Joe Adams, Red Vagg, (emcee), Vern Croop, Tony Powderly, Paul Tanner, Jack Heselden (present GM of the Rochester Gannett papers).

There were some of today's big bylines—Cliff Carpenter, Des Stone, the younger lights—Gail Meadows, George Anderson and his bride Nancy Shaw.

Newsman-authors paid their homage—Arch Merrill (whose doctor had to tie him down to keep him home), Henry Clune and Homer King.

The girls who planned the party—Judy Bennett, Shirley Hazel and Jean Walrath—figured there were about 125 there. They were gray, white and black; liberal and conservative; drunks and tee-totalers (though the latter lagged badly in number).

They were honoring a woman who probably never had a byline despite working close to 50 years in a newspaper city room—Beulah Pasch who had just retired from the Democrat and Chronicle.

Cliff Carpenter did a worthy column on Miss Pasch, her virtues, strengths and meaning to

several generations of newspaper people. Suffice it here to say that no one in the newspaper business locally will ever get the turnout of colleagues, past and present, as Beulah Pasch did.

After more than 40 years as secretary to D&C bosses, Beulah Pasch has passed on the torch and was recipient of accolades at a party at the Rochester Club.

The most poignant moment was produced when four former copyboys and one still in harness rose in a body, marched up to the head table and presented gifts and kisses to the bachelor girl who had mothered them through the snarls, insults and bully tactics of dyspeptic word merchants.

The most humorous incident was provided by the present Democrat managing editor, Rick Tuttle.

"It was Beulah who informed me I was managing editor," Tuttle revealed.

One top executive had "indicated" such, another had "hinted" at it, but his predecessor still physically occupied the office. It wasn't until they all were out of town and eight staffers had called in ill that Tuttle earned his spurs.

When Miss Pasch informed him of the crisis, Tuttle asked, "Well, what do we do now, Beulah?"

"I know what I would do," Beulah countered, "but you are the managing editor, Mr. Tuttle."

So fortified, Tuttle recounts, he raised himself to his true executive height, put his most authoritative note in his voice and said, "Whatever you decide to do is all right with me, Beulah."

It was the night he joined the club.

## On the Line

# Legalities and the War

By Bob Considine



The "legality" of the war in Indochina has been formally discussed of late. If any conclusions are reached, we should then resume our solemn discourse on whether a thousand angels can stand on the head of a pin. Or whether Louis could have beaten Dempsey. Diogenes wasn't looking for an honest man. His lamp was searching for a legal war.

Paul N. McCloskey Jr., a Republican liberal from the San Francisco area, believes there is enough of a legal case against President Nixon to at least threaten impeachment action.

First Lt. William L. Calley Jr.'s lawyers, understandably disturbed over the diagnosis by Army head-shrinkers at Walter Reed Hospital that Calley is "normal in every respect," are exploring new means of defending him against the charge that he, "normal in every respect," mowed down 103 defenseless Vietnamese men, women and children.

McCloskey doesn't plan at present to introduce into the House of Representatives the kind of motion that once brought President Andrew Johnson to the brink of banishment from the White House. He just thinks an impeachment threat—even if it is confined largely to himself—should be waved under Mr. Nixon's nose. The only motion the conqueror of Shirley Temple in a California primary now proposes is a bill

that would cut off all funds for the war by Dec. 31, 1971.

Calley "confesses" mainly to being a good, obedient soldier.

He's all Army. See? He got his orders from his company commander, Capt. Ernest L. Medina, allegedly, to kill everything that moved in the doomed village. His defense counsel suggested that he wasn't bright enough to understand the appalling dimension of such a crime, if indeed he committed it.

McCloskey's case against Nixon is that the President opened operations against Laos after Congress repealed the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, the shaky ski-lift President Lyndon Johnson used to escalate the war. That being the case, McCloskey states, President Nixon illegally bypassed Congress by providing still-undisclosed American clout for the attack on the Ho Chi Minh trails.

Calley and McCloskey, a well-decorated Marine in the Korean War, have little in common as military figures. Calley couldn't carry McCloskey's C-ration. But, in concert, they stir up the black cloud of Nuremberg. McCloskey introduced it in the course of his impeachment teaser.

"We are doing just what we executed Germans for doing," he said in recalling the sensitive precedent. "We said it was a war crime, the wanton de-

struction of villages for the relocation of civilian populations."

When Calley points to Medina, as non-com earlier defendants and witnesses pointed to Calley, he lubricates a chain reaction that can only lead upwards through the plateaus of command.

Who was the major who gave the order to Medina; the lieutenant colonel who gave it to the major; the full colonel who directed the lieutenant colonel; the brigadier, the 2-star general, the 3-star general? Four-starred Gen. William C. Westmoreland, a stickler for observance of the "rules of war," routinely commended Calley's bloody March 16, 1968, at My Lai. Westmoreland's immediate superior at the time was Adm. U.S. Grant Sharp, CINCPAC. The admiral's superiors were the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington. The Joint Chiefs were answerable to the then Secretary of Defense, Clark Clifford. Clifford took orders only from President Johnson.

If the Nuremberg philosophy can be carried to the nth degree, former President Johnson could plead with good reason that he simply took over a war that President Kennedy had already escalated from the action that he, JFK, inherited from President Eisenhower. As for President Nixon, he has often alluded to the "nightmare" he inherited from LBJ.