

~~Lyman, Richard~~

FILE - LYMAN

NOTES ON RICHARD LYMAN INTERVIEW WITH BARRY HILLENBREN  
AND DON NEFF OF TIME MAGAZINE 9/30/70 (Bob Beyers)

(Close paraphrase unless quote marks are used)

Why did you accept the presidency? Why would anyone?

learn  
Had a chance to ~~know~~ quite a bit about it as acting president and provost, although you never really know until you're actually in it.

Anyone who accepts a presidency should have a pretty strong commitment to higher education in general and to the particular university that asks. (Ed. note: see transcript of 9/25/70 press conference)

College presidencies are faced with conflicting demands as to the direction of their leadership, and these get a little more strident each year. As noted in freshman convocation talk, as the uncertainties increase, the talk gets louder.

One of the mistakes sometimes made (by presidents) is to believe that you can keep everyone happy and reconcile conflicts. (Some conflicts may be reconciled, others not.) It's better to be clear and unequivocal (than to say different things to different groups). That way, at least, you don't add to frustrations by not being candid.

Doesn't that leave you open to charges of inflexibility?

Candor and devotion to principles may not necessarily be equated with inflexibility. Flexibility itself can be a principle. Some administrators have failed when what they see as a basic conflict with principles actually is not.

But, for example, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ application of a "one man, one vote" method of university governance would lead to "the ruination of a university." (And so would) a return to the style of administration appropriate for colleges in the 1920's.

I admire Brewster's comment that no president is a president for all seasons.

You have 19 years before retirement. How long will you stay?

Not all that length of time. That's a problem on the mind of many search committees (including those at other institutions). Setting a fixed term in advance could prove "grossly inappropriate" when the time came. I don't think anyone would anticipate indefinite tenure of office. ~~xxxxxx~~ (As a compromise between those extremes) say about 10 years at the outside---the very outside.

What about public acceptance, support of universities?

There's been a "very great erosion of confidence in universities" It's financial impact is not easy to assess, on balance (at Stanford) There was a "very significant drop" in gifts from living individuals,



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The problem isn't going to be solved by saying "it's the campuses' baby" or by saying "give us a good foreign policy and you won't have unrest."

What about presidential power within the university?

People interested in reforming the university (generally) have tried to diminish the power of the presidency...yet the same people ask the president to make decisions swiftly. Presidential power has eroded "quite seriously" in universities.

The president has to find time to get out around campus, to meet and listen to people instead of talking. The president runs a great risk if he gets sandwiched behind his desk, buried in paper. It's absolutely essential to get out. I went out to the registration lines yesterday to get a feeling for what students were encountering there.

Do you see an anti-intellectual trend?

"It's endemic and threatening to become epidemic" (for more, refer to Phi Beta Kappa talk in February, 1970)

What about the radical argument that academic freedom is an excuse for the status quo?

By its willingness to abide by the law, <sup>people</sup> and train for existing professions, etc. the university doesn't pretend to (totally) separate itself from society. Yet I personally favor ROTC programs that are run off campus (as an example of where there should be separation)

When it comes to research, some have suggested setting up "commissars" to determine what research is acceptable and what is not. I oppose this. With very few exceptions, Stanford insists that research projects involve students. "The line between research and teaching is not---and ~~must~~ ought not to be clear."

What about Cambodia and strikes?

Students in U.S. universities regarded that as a sign the war was being expanded. The Cambodian government hadn't asked for intervention. But once you start down that road (of strikes) there's no logical stopping place. (Lyman personally opposed the intervention and was one of the first to urge a national "teach out")

Do you regard yourself as a hard-liner?

(Catch words like that don't ~~xxxx~~ help communication) No... "Law exists to serve a purpose; the fact that it doesn't serve to perfection just says it's a human institution."

Again, what about unrest and the generation gap?

"With the exception of those few totally committed to belief in alienation as a way of life, I don't believe it's that hard to find human bonds between young and old" The generation gap "can become an easy excuse for not trying very hard (to listen)---on either side."

Woodstock may seem hard to understand now, yet in 18th Century England there were as many as 80,000 persons who attended mass rallies of the Wesleyan movement (that had some similarities)

What about repression?

I've never heard of a society wit out repressive acts. (But there are clear differences in extent and degree...compares with East Germany) "Genuine emancipation of the individual is much harder to achieve than most people think."

How do you compare America now with the Weimar Republic in Germany?

Not in very many ways...but the attitude of the extreme left in the Weimar Republic (that after Hitler we'll have our chance) compares with what some of the extreme left is saying today in the U.S.---except the U.S. left today is nowhere ~~as~~ as good Marxists as were the Germans. In this one respect, ~~it~~ "there is a very close parallel indeed, very dangerous."

if "If a totalitarian regime of the Right ever comes to the U.S., who plays the role that America and Britain did against Hitler in World War II? Where will salvation come from?"

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*Ono Teme  
is repeated  
elsewhere*