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Dialogue

Staff and writers of Dialogue

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You start with a gimmick—an image, a startling phrase, a controlling metaphor; you discourse stirringly on your goals, aims, aspirations, lofty hopes; you admit you’re being idealistic; you try to project an appealing image (you deny strenuously that you are putting out an effete, over-intellectual rag); you beg on your editorial knees for contributions and involvement from the students. What have you got when you’ve done all that?

That annual event, the Dialogue first issue editorial.

This year, this is the gimmick—no gimmick. If you want to know what we want Dialogue to look like this year, read on. If not, move on to the next piece.

This year, Dialogue commits itself anew to being a publication of the students, by the students and for the students. This year, when we say that, we mean that Dialogue ought not to hand over most of each issue to a certain very limited segment of Calvin’s population. Instead, every issue of Dialogue should contain some features that can be worthwhile and enjoyable to almost every student. Dialogue, we believe, ought to be a part of the Christian liberal education that Calvin is supposed to offer. You should be able to open any issue of Dialogue and find articles that tell you, not too simplistically or in terms too specialized, about some area of learning or art that you didn’t know anything about before. You should be able to find a variety of pieces on a variety of topics. You may find something that will focus on things at Calvin or in Grand Rapids, or you may find something that will expand to a treatment of an entire discipline, of the world, life, abstractions, whatever. There is nothing so big or small that Dialogue cannot deal with it—if we find someone to produce a piece on it that is both competent and interesting.

One of the consequences of this point of view is that this year Dialogue will not be limited to one major topic per issue. This is different from what has been done in the past. In previous years, every month’s issue of Dialogue was something like a round of
Russian roulette. The staff fired off an issue, and if a student was interested in the topic, he would read the magazine, if not, he probably wouldn’t even want to bother looking into it. Another problem with the topic method is that the topics chosen tend to reflect too closely the interests of the editor, his staff and his friends. Indeed, when it comes down to it, it is that editor, that staff and those friends that write most of the magazine.

This is not to criticize past editors or even to reject the method they chose. The fault lies not with the staff or the approach, but with a college that is recalcitrant, irresponsible and sometimes even irresponsible. A glance at this issue’s table of contents shows you that our staff has written an alarming proportion of the magazine; Dialogue simply has not yet found the necessary interest and commitment (four people agreed to write for us and then cancelled within a day or two of the deadline). Still Dialogue is not supposed to be a staff-written publication.

So, this year (I repeat for those of you who are just skimming over this) Dialogue will not feature specific topics in each issue. Instead, Dialogue staff is going to try and find out what people at Calvin—you—are interested in and willing to write about. We want pieces accessible to bonafide college students that initiate them into some conceivable aspect of created reality. It’s a big field to cover, and the Dialogue staff can only beat so many bushes. If you have a piece that you think might be publishable, submit it. If you have an interest that you want to pursue in our direction, come in and discuss it with us. If you have ideas about what should be in Dialogue but don’t want to produce them yourself, let us know about them.

Articles: factual informative pieces about a person, a science, a project, about anything. Essays: thoughtful, theoretical or reflective pieces about anything: disciplines, philosophies, moralities, ideas. Interviews: important people talking about what they know or think. Reviews: essays on books or art work that expand beyond the work to link it into a context, showing its importance or relevance. Letters: short letters on any subject. Literature and Art: of any sort. These are some of the kinds of things Dialogue wants to print this year. And no matter how many times you have heard it, it’s still true that without the help of the college—primarily students, but faculty as well—Dialogue cannot hope to be what it should be.

--Paul Baker
What You Will

In this issue, Dialogue introduces "What You Will," a monthly feature of incidentals. In each issue, this section will include printable letters we receive, as well as small pieces about this or that by the editors. We hope that "What You Will" will be a place where the same old things may be examined in a new light, not only a place for new things that might come up. If you have something that you think should be printed, but which really isn't long enough or doesn't fit the usual categories, put it in a letter and send it on. "What You Will" may be the place for it.

Yankees Go Home

On Friday afternoon, five of us left Calvin for Detroit. We were one long-suffering Tiger fan, one jubilant Yankee fan, two seekers after adventure, and one suffering Tiger fan, one jubilant Yankee fan, too far back in the standings to pose any threat, were attempting to play the role of spoiler. Nobody in Detroit likes the Yankees: the Yankees get paid too much; the Yankees are playboys; the Yankees get too much attention. If all this were true, and if the Yankees were losers, no one would care. But the Yankees win.

In fact, this year the New York Yankees, with the best record in baseball, know more about winning than anyone else. And Friday night, as we all expected, the Yanks learned more. Ron Guidry pitched for New York. In 1978, at 25-3, Guidry was the best pitcher in the world—nobody has statistics like that. Once a player has a great year, like Guidry in '78, or Mark (the Bird) Fidrych in '76, all fans wait and watch and hope for a repeat performance. Occasionally we are rewarded with a comeback, and if the return to former glory comes late in a career everyone gets excited and people call it a miracle. But generally our hopes are ignored. Guidry's record this year doesn't compare with the past; still, maybe he'll redeem himself in the playoffs or Series. We all wait to see again what we saw in '78.

On our Friday night, Guidry didn't need to be great—the hitters were behind him. In the 3rd inning, the Yankees put on a display of their highly-touted, highly-feared power for a highly inappreciative audience. We were treated to eleven batters, three singles, two doubles, and the grand event: with the bases full of Yankees, Soderheim, the designated hitter, sent his first pitch wailing over the wall into the empty general admission seats. All in all, six runs scored and the Tiger pitcher was mercifully removed.

By this point the Tiger fan had become cranky, while the Yankee fan was trying not to gloat. The would-be adventurers were catching on to the intricacies of being active spectators—going after more beer and popcorn, and ice-cream, while the Expos fan was keeping his eye on the scoreboard, watching for the up-to-date information on the Montreal/Philadelphia game.

After the 3rd inning, the game was essentially over. The Expos fan and the Yankee fan still dutifully recorded each batter's deeds in their scorebooks. And both teams even scored more runs, but the Tigers knew they were beat. And they were.

[On Friday, October 10, the Yankees lose their third straight game to Kansas City, eliminating them from the pennant race.]

You know what's wrong with the Yankees? They get paid too much, they're playboys, and furthermore, they get too much attention.

The Seduction of a Staff

A political candidate's staff, like a celebrity's ghost writer, though it goes unnoticed, often controls the image of the candidate that the public receives as much as the candidate does. Obligated to exhibit himself to the voters at countless public functions, the candidate does not have time to oversee the complete execution of the campaign plan. Understanding the campaign staff's perspective is necessary in understanding the confusion and possible deception of a campaign.

The staff almost always includes the politician's future legislative staff, unless the candidate has interested friends or employs college students, as state senator Steve Monsma did this summer when I worked on his congressional campaign.

The arrangement is understandable; a new legislator wants people around him he can trust. If the candidate is an incumbent, several of his staff members may work in the legislature, but they probably began their careers in campaigning as well. Unfortunately, the skills needed to get elected have little to do with the skills a candidate or his staff will need to operate a government.

The momentum of a campaign may cause ethical political activists to compromise their own principles to elect their candidate. The long hours, constant pressure, and all-too-visible enemy often create an atmosphere in which staff members become ready to subordinate everything to the goal of electing their candidate. Furthermore, when ill-paid members of a staff have spouses and children, the prospect of defeat and unemployment focuses the staff's attention on the urgent need to win. The staff is no longer campaigning for a different policy choice but solely for individual victory. The candidate becomes the cause.

A staff with this "crusading" spirit would be more willing to distort their candidate's position on controversial issues if they think it would help him. The staff might resort to slanderous attacks upon the opposition, as happened.
against Monsma. At worst, the staff begins to coordinate illegal activities such as the Watergate break-in. The political process is weakened when a candidate or his staff compromise their principles to obtain a political office. Once compromised, elected officials and their aids will be more easily seduced by opportunities to win unearned power or prestige by ignoring the interests of their constituents. When this happens, popular election becomes a fraud.

Seeds

"MINISTER: This time of high civilization in which science has given us the tools to explore the infinitude of space and matter and to open up the immensity of time requires ever increasing information and knowledge. Nevertheless, information and knowledge, however important, are not enough.

CONGREGATION: Our high enmeshed, interdependent and sophisticated life requires a great deal of power to maintain civilization and to protect our hard won rights and privileges.

MINISTER: The individual, the group, every business, every city, every nation needs the protection of power—but nevertheless, power is not enough.

CONGREGATION: To see us through all these confusions and infinite varieties of opinion, prejudice and judgment, we need principles to guide and direct us, to give our lives purpose and meaning.

MINISTER: Principles are important. They raise us above the confusion of time and place and person. They may indeed be man's highest intellectual and spiritual achievement—but even principles are not enough."

In the sombre light that fills the vaulted hall of Fountain Street Church, Dr. Duncan Littlefair hunches over his massive pulpit and declaims words of radical tentativity. The congregation intones the responses from plush velvet theater seats. The hall is scarcely half-filled; from the balcony one sees mostly balding heads and grey hair above fur-trimmed coat collars. All around, one senses an austere blending of traditions. Saints and patriarchs from the pages of scripture face heroes of the American Dream staring out of stained glass windows across the congregation. Traditional angels and Christ Pantokrator brood over high Roman arches and neo-classical decorations. The air hangs heavy with dignity. The best of humanism, rationalism and enlightened thought weds the splendor of the universal myth of man, stripped of its narrow circumscriptions. Warring philosophies merge, distinctions blur: is the eagle on the pulpit of Patmos or the U.S.A.? The choir, spotlighted high above the people's heads, proclaims the glory of God made of Man. The speaker is eloquent. He delivers his message to the comfortably convinced.


The Calvin College Chimes ad calls students to the premier of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship's multi-media presentation, "Habakkuk." On the second of its three performances, the plush seats of the Fine Arts Center are full to
overflowing; they are turning people away. The stage is hidden behind a curtain of white cloth, the screen. Facing it, halfway up in the hall, batteries of computer-coordinated slide projectors preempt valuable seating space. The show's introducer prefaces his commentary with a prayer. As the plastic ice cream buckets are passed for the freewill offering, he explains to his college-age audience how "Habakkuk" came out of the team of producers grappling with the implications of the text of Habakkuk in light of America's problems. "It is a very American show," he says, "and one in which negative aspects of our society have not been avoided." He talks to a restless audience; they want to see the show. "As Christian producers," he concludes, "we're convinced that the answers to the questions in this show are focused in the person of Jesus Christ, but," 

For Duncan Littlefair, "the sign of our times is an abscending from responsibility, from the terror of what can happen." Narrowing of life, selfishness, unwholesomeness; instead of sacrifice, irresponsible teachers and parents, demands for personal rights, carping criticisms, strikes, drugs, cults, alcoholism. "No one talks about the quality of life; we seem to be reduced to nothing more than power units fighting each other for more rights. Why? Why, when we should be testing the rightness of our actions on the basis of how difficult our decisions are, how tremulously we deal with our problems. We must enlarge and extend every decision to include our environment: our family, friends, our job, our society, the future. Depending on how intelligent we are, the formula deepens and thickens, the problems increase. But our humanity will depend on how much we see, how much we include and how well we integrate it all."

"We say 'where's God?'" The sound track crackles above the images of decay, "but as we look at our country today, didn't God do something? There is justice; it's built right into the system." The intricate integrated mechanisms of all human reality contain God's machinery for judgment. Exploitation of God's earth blankets that world with pollution. Wasting oil leads to oil shortages. Our sins return to us with God's judgment. And still we worship the works of our own hands and minds—cascades of dollars, of transistors, cult heroes, sex goddesses and pagan idols mingle and dance across the screen. Habakkuk's young voice calls out the Lord's scoffing answer to selfish and shortsighted fools: "Now it is your turn! Drink and be exposed! The cup from the Lord's right hand is coming around to you, and disgrace will cover your glory."

"To whom much is given, much will be required," Dr. Littlefair tells his audience, "This seems to be a foreign concept to people today, and if it is, I have my doubts about the quality of any future society."

"When God's judgment comes"—the glowing screen suits the pictures to the words—"the righteous will suffer too; we will be involved" in the fall of Babylon—or the U.S.A. But God's people trust in the majesty of God. His splendor and goodness fills his creation with wonder and glory. The stage-wide screen unfolds a marvel of natural beauty, and a mirror ball flashes stars across the auditorium.

"I would like to be refuted," Duncan Littlefair says, "but I am troubled by my vision of our world. Do we not have some obligations to others, to society? What's wrong with a little sacrifice? Burdens like these are the mark of our dignity, of our freedom and humanity, the mark of our infinite involvement. We must aspire to an aristocracy of service; we must strive to realize the infinite possibilities of the goodness of God."

"Yet if the righteous must suffer and even perish along with the wicked in God's judgment, how are we to live?"

"We must have some criterion for choosing right from wrong in our daily struggle to make choices."

"The righteous shall live by faith." God came! The letters glow golden and gigantic. Christ, the anointed one, came! The wicked shall perish though they
flourish for a little while. Christ focuses our life of faith; Christ crucified and multiplied tenfold dominates the screen.

"Our criterion? We must do that which will contribute most to the possibilities of creative development. Good is what promotes freedom. The question is, will the world follow this humane way of freedom, or will it fall back on authority based on narrow and rigid religious principles?"

The sound track sings to a picture story of a modern conversion, "I've been depending on my own strength all along. Now I'm living by faith." Man cannot save himself or his world; he must have faith in God's just rule, and he must be renewed by a saving Christ.

"We say that God and the imagination are one." Man must solve the problems of Man through responsibility to a strenuous pursuit of freedom and his infinite possibilities.

The service ends. The choir sings the "Pax Dei" of Johann Sebastian Bach as Dr. Littlefair stands brooding behind his pulpit, his back to the congregation. As he descends the stairs of the platform, he brusquely flings his hands up. His people rise and follow him out.

The round of images returns to the apocalyptic clouds banks of the beginning as a message flashing across the bottom of the screen, proclaims the captivity of Israel and their deliverance. The pictures fade out. As the lights come up, the audience begins to applaud the indictment of their way of life.

"A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns which grew up and choked the plants."

"I heard and my heart pounded, my lips quivered at the sound; decay crept into my bones, and my legs trembled. Yet I will wait patiently. Though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, yet I will rejoice in the LORD. I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights."

He who has ears, let him hear.

**Travelling**

I had a writing assignment due today, but I just couldn't get started. The pressure, the "have to," kept strangling my imagination. I was at a loss—I refused to be poetically subjective, but I had no desire to peel out crisp facts, either. It was impossible. No cause, no matter how altruistic or urgent, seemed worth the effort. After five minutes it became clear to me that the muses had declined my invitation to sit at my shoulder.

I finally gave up and set off on my bike for home. I dodged through the campus crowds and flew past the natatorium, the wind slapping rosy red onto my cheeks. I swerved past a dead squirrel on Lake Drive. I bumped over the crumbles and cracks in the road, praying (as usual) that my spokes would remain where they were and hoping (as not so usual) that the jarring would reactivate my slumbering brain. No such luck. The sun came out, and I managed to strip through a few layers of insulation (mittens, scarf and sweater) without falling off my bike, thereby proving to myself that I was at least physically capable of complex activity.

Once home and safely inside, I turned my attention to a crumpled mountain of mass confusion leaning against the corner of my room. I gathered my laundry together and headed for the laundromat. Once there, having squeezed my last pair of jeans into the steaming froth, I suddenly realized that I had forgotten my books at home. Three weeks worth of laundry to do and no homework to justify the wasted time! I made a quick decision. Argos Used Books was just down the road; its musty, hidden-treasure atmosphere could always arouse—and satiate—my curiosity. As usual, I encountered another world between those towering, tottering shelves. Even if one doesn't appreciate Byron, who can resist an 1867 edition of his work complete with gold leaf and vellum paper? Pure character makes the difference. Within a few minutes I had ferreted out one very large, colorful copy of Homer's *Iliad*. Thirty minutes later, I stood at the counter decisively juggling the *Iliad* and a suspiciously romantic-looking book called *A Book of Love Poetry*. Somewhat chagrined, I finally chose the love poetry (after all, the collection included works of the venerable John Donne, William Shakespeare, Geoffrey Chaucer—and if it's inspiration you're looking for...)

Coming back to reality, I hurried back to rescue my clothes with John Donne *et al* tucked safely under my arm. My necessary duties attended to, I slumped back into the window sill, away from the grinding, choking machines, away from the whining kids dripping Baskin-Robbins ice cream down their fronts, away from the irate and harried mothers. I opened my new book and immersed myself in Theodore Roethke's deliciously satirical *I Knew A Woman* (lovely in her bones!). Still savouring this bittersweet commentary, I reread one of my favorite cummings poems, "[somewhere i have never travelled]", with its exquisite ending: "nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands." As I read on, captivated, it seemed to me that even Arnold's Marguerite or Raleigh's nymph were inspired. But the pragmatic demands of my task finally broke my poetic reverie, as my dryer ground to a halt.

I returned home, and the evening wore on. Restless, I suggested an evening stroll. I set off with my housemate; the sun struggled with the clouds as it plunged toward the horizon. Within minutes the sun had had its last laugh on the stratosphere, painting the ranks of forbidding clouds an irreverent pink as it disappeared behind the trees. In the dusk, the air seemed to clamp down its chilly teeth, and our breath flourished feather-like against the twilight. I looked up at the layered sky (hoping to find at least one star to wish on) and thought that truly tonight should be a night of inspiration.
Self Portrait as a Jewish Alchemist?

Tim Grubbs
Political campaigns can bring out the worst in people: ambition, jealousy, prejudices, deceit, and apathy run rampant. Generally the people ignore political deception and lies, usually because they are not listening. The voters, political analysts conclude, care more about the candidate's image and popular standing than his positions or promises. Polls report that blue-collar supporters of Ted Kennedy are going for Ronald Reagan. In the fifth district congressional race, incumbent Republican Harold Sawyer contests second-time Democratic challenger Dale Sprik: "The courage to do what's right" versus "we can get back to basics." Many politicians are elevating euphemism to an art.

Dialogue and most other newspapers and magazines attempt to decipher the political rhetoric into tangible positions. Writers, with the time and interest most voters lack, offer readers an understandable translation of the politician's verbiage. The interview form is very useful for this task because it limits the bias of the writer while focusing and shortening the rhetoric of the candidate. Outside of the presidential race, which abandoned policy analysis hours after the party conventions, the most significant race in Grand Rapids is the race for Congress. Dialogue tried to conduct a written interview with each of the candidates—with limited success.

After assurances that their reply was in the mail, Sawyer's staff presented a well-thought-out response fresh from the type-writer in the late afternoon of the due date. Less organized, Sprik's staff misplaced the questions until the day before the first deadline, delivered the questions to the wrong office, and missed the deadline. Given another deadline ten days later, his staff repeated the farce, despite persistent phone calls from Dialogue. Finally at the end of the third deadline, we picked up their response. Despite the fact that Dialogue represents the largest college in the congressional district, they offered no answers to our questions, giving us only a copy of their positions papers, short prefab outlines of Sprik's views.

Over a period of several weeks, Sprik's subordinates repeatedly claimed that they were unable to contact their candidate to answer our questions. This is only a confession that someone has lost control. If a person's own staff cannot contact him, who can? His fund-raising mail explains that Sprik is busy shaking hundreds of voters' hands each day, crisscrossing the state to personally reach the voters. But, such a brief handclasp encounter is worthless in trying to understand a candidate's stand on any issue. Sprik complains in the Grand Rapids Press (Sunday, October 12) that Sawyer refuses to debate him personally, but certainly Sprik seems unwilling to confront Sawyer in print. Sprik's aids refused to answer questions for him, while giving us the freedom to quote from his position papers. Under the circumstances, expecting an outsider to hack thirty pages of position papers into an accurate description of Sprik's views, when his staff felt incapable of doing so, is incredible. Still, an interview with only the incumbent would be inadequate, especially when Sawyer's replies often gracefully sidestep certain sensitive issues. The following is a reproduction with commentary of portions of Sawyer's interview and Sprik's position papers.

--Jack Smalligan

Several issues, including foreign policy and education, were completely ignored in Sprik's position papers. These matters, we must assume, are unimportant to Sprik. Sawyer responded more adequately:

DIALOGUE: You have supported efforts to eliminate the Department of Education. What, if any, changes should be made in federal student aid? Would you support a reduction in the funding?

SAWYER: I strongly opposed creation of the Department of Education because of its tremendous cost without a corresponding increase in benefit. One would have thought that removal of Education from H.E.W. would have resulted in a decrease in the H.E.W. budget, such has not been the case and all that has been produced is another huge bureaucracy. My opposition to the D.O.E. should not be construed, however, as an effort to dismantle existing education programs. On the contrary, the most valuable investment we can make as a nation is in the education of our citizenry. I would not support a reduction in the funding of student aid programs, particularly during this difficult economic period which has made it virtually impossible for most families to save the money necessary to help finance their children's education.

DIALOGUE: Bread for the World, a Christian lobby organization for hunger-related issues, has severely criticized your voting record. What, if any, tangible aid should we give to impoverished third world nations?

SAWYER: The issue of world hunger must be given a higher visibility and immediate attention. The U.S. should undertake to implement and promote several substantive and effective steps that could help alleviate the sufferings of millions of people. These actions should include greater assistance for food production and consumption in developing countries; support for research, training and technical cooperation; U.S. food security reserve; and additional incentives for greater private-sector involvement. The problem of world hunger cannot be solved by the U.S. government alone; however, we
must be closely involved in global efforts to address the severe problems of hunger in the world. I am also a co-sponsor of a Congressional resolution to conduct nutrition monitoring introduced by Representative Fred Richmond.

Sawyer's position here on world hunger is no less than amazing. Sometimes candidates honestly and thoughtfully introduce by Representative Fred Richmond: 'must be closely involved in global efforts to address the severe problems of hunger in the world. I am also adulterated his position. A voter must choose between past performance and future contradictory promises.

On other matters, both Sprik and Sawyer support a constitutional amendment against abortion, and support the indexing of income tax rates to inflation. With the exception of a paper on toxic wastes, a relatively uncontroversial area, Sprik ignores environmental questions. Sawyer is more definitive.

DIALOGUE: You have previously supported the Alaskan Wilderness Act. Ronald Reagan, whom you have endorsed, criticized the act in his debate with John Anderson on September 21. Will you continue to support this act if you and Reagan are elected to office and the new president initiates action against it?

SAWYER: Absolutely—it is an important piece of environmental legislation which I have solidly supported. It should be noted, however, that on other environmental issues, Sawyer has voted for a reduction of funds to the Environmental Protection Agency and supported legislation to exempt energy industries from all of the environmental protection provisions of the late 1960's and 1970's, subject to the approval of the Energy Mobilization Board.

Energy policy is a central issue in Dale Sprik's campaign and his position is worth noting:

The removal of price controls on domestic crude oil in 1979 and the gradual removal of price controls on gasoline at the pump will cost a family of four in the United States an extra $2,000 per year for the next ten years in additional fuel expenses... We need to encourage energy conservation of energy practices by income tax credits and at the same time move to more diverse energy sources, including renewable sources of energy, such as alcohol from plants and grains, methane gas from solid wastes, water power, solar power, and the wind.

What we need is a new provision in the Internal Revenue Code to give a Production Credit Allowances to investors, inventors, and businesses who invest, develop, produce or distribute alternative and renewable sources of energy. The production credit allowance won't give a tax credit of up to fifty percent of taxable income from alternative energy enterprises.

It would not require the huge bureaucracy of the Department of Energy now feeding on a twenty million dollar budget to administer such a plan.

Sprik did not specify whether he supported nuclear power or a return of controls in oil and natural gas. The Ionia Sentinel quoted Sprik in the August primary as supporting expansion of nuclear power. Sprik later tried to retract that quote, claiming he was misunderstood. In addition, Sprik enthusiastically supports grain alcohol without giving the assurances Barry Commoner does, that food production will not be lowered. Sawyer is more specific:

DIALOGUE: In terms of fiscal priorities, do you support larger subsidies and tax incentives for oil and nuclear energy or for alternative energy sources?

SAWYER: Domestic energy development must be encouraged on all fronts. During the short term, increased production of oil, gas, coal, and nuclear energy, where proven safe and reliable, will relieve the pressure on rising costs. Development of alternative energy sources represents our greatest long term energy hope, and I have joined in sponsoring and voting for several measures to promote research and development of promising alternative energy technologies.

Perhaps the most important issue for congressional candidates is their programs to improve America's economic slump. This subject arose several times in Sawyer's responses.

DIALOGUE: Frequently congressmen choose a few areas to focus legislative action upon. If you are reelected, which areas would be given priority?

SAWYER: The most pressing problem facing our district is the creation of 80,000 new private sector jobs over the next ten years to keep pace with population growth. The task of providing a climate for the creation of these jobs has become known as the "re-industrialization of America"—It is the area which I will give my top priority.

DIALOGUE: President Carter estimates that in 1980 unemployment will reach 8.5 percent. What specific programs do you support for lowering unemployment, particularly among minority youth?

SAWYER: Employment is a function of economic vitality. To increase employment we must control inflation and restore vitality in the private sector. To put our economy back on the right track we must control government spending, reduce the amount of regulation on small business which collectively is the nation's largest employer, totally revamp U.S. tax laws to stimulate personal savings and investment, speed the recirculation of capital funds through accelerated depreciation on industrial equipment. Given the proper equipment, our workforce can increase productivity, restore the value of the dollar, and increase employment through the resultant increase in economic activity. The "youth differential" could serve as an important tool in our goal of reducing youth unemployment which is particularly severe among our minority youth.

Sawyer's typically republican answer is honest. His use of the term "youth differential" instead of lower or sub minimum wage for youth is interesting. Sprik's position, in a paper titled, "Welfare and Unemployment," is less satisfying:

Welfare reform must make it more profitable to work than to remain idle. We must have a welfare system that will be fair and humane to those who simply cannot work, provide job training and economic incentives to get the able-bodied off the welfare rolls and on to private payrolls, and put an end to fraud, waste, and abuse in our existing welfare program.

We must encourage vocational education and training in job skilled training programs to develop marketable skills.

The democrat's response also seems republican. It is difficult to detect substantial differences on this highly controversial issue. Sprik, however, twists the entire thrust of his position paper, which concentrates on welfare reforms by concluding:

Society does not owe everyone a living. But it does owe everyone an opportunity to earn a living. It is a duty of government to secure the rights of everyone to that opportunity on an equal basis.

The democratic program supports several expensive job programs. It is unknown whether Sprik, if elected, would empha-
size job production at the expense of welfare reform. Often these two goals conflict. Sprik devotes ten times more space to discussing welfare reform but ends up by sounding as though he supports a strict version of the Humphrey/Hawkins full employment bill. Once again, truth is concealed, if not obliterated.

Finally, both candidates stated their positions on defense spending.

**DIALOGUE:** You have previously sponsored legislation to balance the federal budget and have supported efforts to increase the military budget. How substantial an increase would you support for the military budget and what programs would you cut to get that money?

**SAWYER:** In a world beset by major power threats, adventurism, and terrorism, there is simply no substitute for an adequate defense—and no bargain basement way of achieving it. Prior to Vietnam, the Kennedy administration was spending 8.5 percent of G.N.P. on defense. It has now been cut to 5.3 percent. A modest increase targeted to carefully selected programs and systems, retention of trained personnel, more efficient procurement, and modernization of our conventional forces is a worthwhile price for confidence, peace, and security. We cannot continue to pour funds into elaborate hardware items and ignore readiness expenditures which can prove to be far more effective such as spare parts, equipment maintenance, training, and most important manpower retention.

In response to another question, Sawyer supported the M-X missile system. Sawyer does not specify which programs he would sacrifice for increased defense spending. Also, he does not define a "modest increase." If Sawyer's past votes are any indication his increase would be more than modest. Sprik, however, is more ambiguous:

*Every time the defense budget increases by one billion dollars, 11,600 jobs in Michigan and certain other states are lost.* The study by the Public Interest Research Group shows that Michigan lost jobs because of military spending, whereas states such as California and Texas gain jobs.

*I am committed to a strong defense for America. However, just because it is the defense department, does not mean that we cannot closely scrutinize the military budget for waste and expenditures which do not improve our national security.*

Sprik seems to favor a stable or decreased defense budget, but, in the same article of the *Ionia Sentinel* mentioned earlier, Sprik favored increased defense spending. Sprik does not clearly state his position in either case.

Sprik also has position papers on bureaucracy, agriculture, the arts, the equal rights amendment, senior citizens, and consumer protection. We did not receive positions on inflation or the arms race. In general, Sprik avoids antagonizing anyone; he generally highlights uncontroversial areas. Sprik's theme: "We can get back to Basics" is consistent with that strategy. And his explanation of that slogan is equally uninspiring:

*I see a re-birth of the pioneer spirit in America, of developing once again our own way of meeting the challenges of survival in an uncharted future. Yes, it is 'Back to Basics.' Not a worshipping of the past, but a re-birth of the ideas and the very spirit that is America to make America work.*

Apparently Sprik's approach is successful; he lost to Sawyer in 1978 by under one percent of the vote, taking Kent County, but losing in Ionia County. Sprik also defeated State Senator Steve Monsma in the democratic primary by several percent, over one thousand votes.
Our knowledge of art history is often reducible to the contents of a brief but intense art survey course. Necessarily, these survey courses must focus on particular movements, leaving other valuable material behind. In an attempt to fill these gaps somewhat, we invite you to join in our exploration of some of these neglected areas. Each month we will be featuring one reproduction of some piece that we hope will be worthy of everyone’s recognition.

Charles R. Sheeler:
American
Contemporary

Classic Landscape, 1931
Oil on canvas, 28-7/8" x 36"

What does art have to do with engineering? What traffic occurs between painting and industry? What connection is there between the avant-garde and the mundane realists? Charles Sheeler (1883-1965) challenges our stereotypes. His paintings celebrate American industrial achievement, exemplify his common-sense Yankee independence, and combine precisionist realism with a keen interest in abstract form. Sheeler followed his own vision throughout his lifetime, yielding neither to the abstract expressionists nor the regional realists. Recent interest in his work suggests that he is one of our neglected masters finally coming into his own, just as his friend, the poet William Carlos Williams, did a few decades ago.

--Clarence Walhout
The Guardsman:  
Pain in Pretense

Laura Smit

Calvin Thespians' fall production this year is *The Guardsman*, by Ferenc Molnar, a Hungarian playwright from the first half of this century. Molnar should not be confused with seventeenth-century French playwright Moliere, though he did confess himself to be "Moliere's unworthy pupil," and the two writers do not have many things in common. Like Moliere, Molnar often took tragic experiences from his own life and turned them into comedy. However, unlike Moliere, Molnar is not widely studied in North America today, though fifty years ago he was immensely popular.

Today, Molnar is best known for his play *Liliom*, written in 1909 when Molnar was 31. Most people know this play in another form, however: the 1945 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *Carousel*. The play *The Guardsman* may be familiar to some Grand Rapids area theater-goers from its Stratford production in 1977. Drama critic T.E. Kalem called that production a "somewhat fragile comedy" providing "sophisticated comic relief" worked out "like a game of chess with delightful ambiguity, some suspense and a saucy wit."

Molnar is known for light comedy rather than heavy philosophical drama; he once wrote: "Myself, I have always been far more interested in God's thumbnail sketches than in His heroic-sized historical paintings." Molnar examines these thumbnail sketches with finesse, elegance and humor. And, though his plays are sometimes criticized for their frivolity and escapism, such criticism is unjustified, especially in the case of *The Guardsman*. This is often a very funny play, but the playwright's intention is not to entertain. Molnar's autobiography, *Companion in Exile*, explains some of his motivations:

> People have misunderstood some of [my writings]... They laughed at things of mine that weren't made to be laughed at. ... The audience everywhere in the world laughed at a perfectly agonizing play of mine in which a lovelorn suffering actor in disguise seduces his own loose-living wife. Although, when writing it in the hospital, I wanted to work off the most searing pain of my young life.

The "perfectly agonizing play" at which so many laughed is *The Guardsman*. First produced in 1911, it was written shortly after the collapse of Molnar's first marriage.

Since, as the above example suggests, much of Molnar's work is heavily autobiographical, it is worthwhile to know something about his life. Molnar was born in Budapest, Hungary in 1878. His father was a wealthy Jewish doctor. Toward the end of his life, Molnar moved to New York to escape Nazi persecution, and, as a protest against the Germans, he changed the family name, which was originally German, to Molnar, the Hungarian word for miller. Molnar was educated as a lawyer, but he went into journalism instead. In fact, he considered himself a journalist and a playwright second, though all his life was wrapped up in the theater and even much of his journalistic work consisted of reviewing plays.

Molnar's explicit use of his own life and experience in his theatre was revolutionary, since drama had never before been so obviously autobiographical. In a series of articles on Molnar which appeared in the *New Yorker* in the summer of 1946, S.N. Berhman says:

> Molnar's theme is himself, and he has taken his society right along with him and confided to it expansively in stage whispers... When Molnar, who was always engaged in feud, lampooned some current enemy in a play, the audience knew whom he was transfixing and watched the victim's expression in the stalls... When, in a play, Molnar allowed himself to run through the statistics of an actress's infidelities, the audience was in on the count.

Since his play so directly reflected his own life, and since his own life was so concerned with the theater it naturally

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followed that the theater should be a major subject of his plays.

In fact, Molnar developed a whole new genre of theater about theater. Certainly, he was influenced by Shakespeare who often used the play-within-a-play technique, but Shakespeare is not primarily concerned with the theme of the theater itself and its presence all around us, as Molnar is. Most of Molnar's plays deal with the theatricality of reality. According to Molnar, everyone acts many parts in the course of daily routine. Sometimes we ourselves don't know when we're acting and when we're being sincere; usually the two elements are so mixed that they can't be separated. Since Molnar's time, this has become a rather common theatrical theme, but he was among the first pioneers. Many dramatists such as Molnar's contemporary Pirandello, are now more well-known, but, in fact, they were directly influenced by him.

The mixture of theatricality and reality is very obvious in The Guardsman. The two leads, Nandor and Ilona, are the stars of the Budapest theater world in the early 1900's. In some productions they are not given names, but are known simply as The Actor and The Actress. They both act in their relationship with each other as well as on stage. Their own offstage identities seem to have vanished into the identities of the characters they play. Thus, in an especially tense confrontation with his wife, Nandor can only draw on several past plays and declaims this speech: "My heart's impulse drove me to the deed. For ancient Cyprus calls me, and I come. The foe my sturdy fortress now doth threaten: I come with faith and hope, high mounting...."

Bringing out this theme of theatricality is a challenge, especially for young actors. Just acting is enough of a challenge for most college actors, but in this play they must always act as if they are acting and sometimes even act as if they are acting that they are acting. They must somehow bring across the artificiality of what they are doing, without losing the very real pain and agony that is also present. Much of the acting, by Nandor especially, is an attempt to hide hurt feelings. The audience must sense both the hurt and the pretense.

The play is also challenging technically, even for the most professional of companies. The Thespian production will have to overcome the added difficulties of limited facilities and equipment, but Professor Korf of the Speech Department, who is directing this production, believes that these problems can be overcome.

As I have read and re-read this play [Korf says] I have been impressed by the fact that every character is an actor playing at least two roles. This is as true for its lead characters as it is for the maid who

will instantly and convincingly lie to protect her mistress. This is theater on top of theater. What I want to do in a visual sense is make sure nobody misses that point.

Korf plans to do this by putting the play "in as artificial and theatrical an environment as is possible." The audience will watch the sets being assembled, and behind the luxurious opulence of Nandor and Ilona's living room, they will see the stage lights, the props, and the stage manager at his desk running the show.

Traditionally, The Guardsman does not open with the first scene of the script. The 1931 film version of this play began with Nandor and Ilona actually playing the last scene of another play. However, in most stage productions, the curtain opens on an empty stage, empty except for Nandor and Ilona. They are far back on the stage with their backs to us, taking a curtain call from an unseen audience. We hear the applause, the bravos, the cheers; a curtain closes in front of the two actors, and they turn to come toward us. As they walk toward the front of the stage, a new scene is built around them; this scene is their own home. Here they believe themselves to be in reality, but the audience sees that this scene is also theater.

The Guardsman is an exciting and demanding play with an interesting and thought-provoking theme. It reminds us how essential it is that we realize the pretense and theater in our lives; our motivation is often simply a desire to manipulate and deceive. This play forces us, even if it is only for a few moments, to confront ourselves. Thespians have accepted a very large challenge in attempting The Guardsman. It should be interesting to see whether or not they can rise to that challenge.
Adagio con tristezza

*And thence retire me to my Milan, where Every third thought shall be my grave.*

—Prospero, *The Tempest*

Now in the season when the world's run dry,
I walk; Prospero, master of all Milan,
Walks to watch the leaves of autumn die

And fall, brittle and dessicated, upon
My ducal palace gardens' wandering maze,
Paths bone-dry—slow, dead, sun wan.

An old man meanders the empty haze
Of a life's year's end; run aground.
The tide's receded, stranding me to laze

Away to dust. Ariel, I drowned
My book, buried my staff—full fathom five—
Broken in the earth, dead-filled, profound.

I am cast up, gasping though alive,
Onto the populous shore, alone and penned
By mountains. Of my island they deprive

Me, and of the breezes the seas send.
Every night, in dreams, I swim out,
Drinking the high waves before me, apprehend

For a moment the wonder of the isle about
Me; in the dark of sleep I cannot see
The blacker abyss of time widening without

Pity behind, the moat to baffle me
So when I wake the Paradisal pearl
Becomes the dun of dawn; aridity

Invades my mind again; my dreams curl
Up to withered shreds under the sun;
The urn-crammed earth swallows the swirl

Of seas before my eyes. Oblivion
Casts out hope. The heat of day will drink
The dew, or cold turn it to frost. And none,

Ariel, none can take my heart and sink
It in the quick freshes my island knew.
None, but see me walking and only think

It strange the old duke should shuffle through
The scattered leaves, murmuring to the air
As though some spirit hovered there. You

Are not there, Ariel, I know; not where
No cowslips are, no blossom hangs, And they,
These gardeners, are right, perhaps; mal de mer

And island exile have turned my wits astray.
I talk to no one, since I made you free
And you, from love immune, went far away.

Still, tossed up, wandering, alone, weakly
Fearing the perilous verge, fearing to hear
Again the chaos roar crash heavily

On the fragile peace I fashioned once from clear
Charity and order's virtue; still,
Though the sky darkens and the garden is sere,

I feel my hair lift with a breath that will
Stir to dancing life these leaves. It smells
Of salt wet spray. The last light on the hill

Turns all soft orient white. Vespers bells
Across the valley with an evening hope:
Will the seas rise? The ocean swells,

The tide turns. South, upon the slope
Of the Appenines, it curls, breaks,
Flows back; waves break again, higher. They'll grope

To the top and over to Milan; their pounding shakes
The sterile earth. Momently, the sea's sprays lace
The air above the peaks. Nature wakes.

Come, Caliban, let us walk and wait for grace.

Paul Baker
William Fyfe, coordinating architect of Calvin College, was recently on campus. He not only consulted with the "front office," but spent five hours talking with Dialogue and Chimes. We discussed his newest building, the Common's extension (see the Oct. 3 issue of Chimes), and he summarized for us his twenty-year work experience here at Calvin. Here are William Fyfe's reminiscences of and plans for Calvin. Through this interview, we at Calvin can rediscover Calvin through the eyes of its architect.

My father was an architect, so I was introduced to it that way, but I didn't decide early on that I wanted to be an architect. I actually started in architecture about 1928—somewhere around there. After I graduated from high school, I worked in an architecture office. I took my pre-architecture work at Antioch College in Ohio. Then I went to the graduate school of architecture at Yale where I received scholarships for the highest grades in the class. About halfway through Yale, I got excited about Frank Lloyd Wright's school in Wisconsin and decided to go there. After two years experience there, I went back out into the world. So, as far as I'm concerned, my official training was with really top architects.

From David Adler, my mentor at Yale, for instance, I simply had an insight into how the finest buildings were built. David Adler was probably the outstanding residential architect maybe in the country, certainly in the midwest. His architecture was eclectic. He combined many different architectural styles in his designs, but they were always beautifully proportioned in scale and color—in everything. When I studied with him, he was receiving a fifteen percent fee; no other architect was receiving that. There were a few who could get ten percent, and it ranged down to about six percent. That is indicative of the quality of work he was doing.

My own architecture and Mr. Wright's is as far away from Adler's eclectic style of architecture as you could possibly get. Mr. Wright has always despised anyone who copied his work. What he wanted to teach was principles of architecture. He expected his students to develop their own style of architecture from those principles. If you study Mr. Wright's buildings you will notice that each of them has a design all-of-a-kind which is quite different from any other building; in each building he has established a "grammar" of design. Very often he was able to do the whole building: the interior, the furniture, the lights, the draperies, the light fixtures, and these would all have been done and integrated in that same grammar of design.

His early buildings are characterized by gently pitched roofs, wide overhangs, windows not just poked through a wall but lines of windows, expressive of what happens in the interior. He described his architecture with an illustration: when you have a pitcher with water in it, then the essence of it is the shape that is inside. That's what does it. To Mr. Wright, the essence of the building is what is inside. No one related the building to the site more closely than Mr. Wright. I probably absorbed that characteristic from him by osmosis. I remember looking through a book with a lot of architects' buildings, and in one I saw a tree so close to the building that I said, "I betcha that's by Mr. Wright." And it was. Just that one thing gave it away.

My own concern when designing a building is to make it a place where people like to be. To do that it has to respond to the program (the purpose of the building). After that, it must respond to the landscape. The building built on the plain, to reach for an extreme example, is going to be exactly opposite from one that is built on a cliff. The same goes for urban center versus rural. In a building, there also has to be some things that are surprises: little seconds of delight. It may be just a view, or the interest you get by letting the corridor bend a little bit.

It is pretty hard to describe what it was like to study under Frank Lloyd Wright. The brochure that I first read described a structured institution with classes. But Mr. Wright had a free-wheeling mind. He just wasn't oriented to structured classes. The classes were more discussions, and the best ones just happened. The school was opened in the fall, and I went up in the summer to help finish some of the buildings. There were about forty apprentices to begin with. There's nothing like it in anybody else's experience. Michelangelo had apprentices; what would they do? Mix paints, run errands, gopher, clean the house. Frank Lloyd Wright's school was like that. We did all kinds of work outside the studio, and in winter a lot of it was cutting wood. It was the
depth of the depression, and Mr. Wright didn't have a lot of money, so we cut a lot of wood to keep the place warm. We were stone masons, plumbers, and carpenters.

On Sunday evening, the most formal part of our schooling took place. We would go for dinner in Mr. Wright's living room, and often there was a speaker, usually just somebody visiting him. One of the most exciting times was when a singer, a friend of Mrs. Wright, came. She sang for us. Wright's living room is a large room. It isn't just four walls. The ceiling is convoluted, and the walls themselves go around corners. I have never experienced music as wonderful. You soaked it up through your pores; it surrounded you.

That was very much in my mind when I designed the Fine Arts Auditorium. That was an exciting room to design. That it is acoustically good has been substantiated by many. The difficulty was that it had to be a multi-purpose auditorium. You don't want to compromise too much. If you do, nothing is very good. The Fine Arts Auditorium had to be usable for organ concerts, as well as violin concerts. When you have an organ, you have a long reverberation time, as much as ten seconds. Think of some of the big cathedrals, they echo for about twelve seconds with Baroque music. If you have a soloist—a violin soloist or a soprano soloist—you want a short reverberation time. So, we designed it so you could tune the room.

To begin with, up in the ceiling there are panels. There's a whole grid system in the ceiling into which you drop the panels. They moved the panels around at first, now they don't do that anymore, because it takes a bit of doing. They found what was optimum for most uses. Also, on the side walls you can draw some curtains behind the screen, so that you can either have a hard surface or you can have an absorbent surface. The hard surface gives you longer reverberations, and the soft soaks it up.

At that time the drama department had to use it as well. If you're giving a little play for, at most, two or three hundred people, it is much different. We tried to make it pleasant for that too.

The lighting is an interesting device. We needed a ceiling that would permit about eighty-five percent of the sound to go through and come down for the long reverberation, and we had in mind screens that would be staggered around in different colors like the foliage of a tree. The lights are on winches so that they can be let down too. We didn't want just a regular pattern, so the lights are pulled off their given position. You get such a mix up there that, it used to be only someone like myself who knows what was up there, could detect that some lights were out. Right now so many lights are out, you can look up and find them.

Another inexpensive feature, is the wall in the Fine Arts Auditorium made of concrete blocks. One time while walking through the campus, I saw these piled on a pallet, ready to go into the building. I just liked the pattern: the way the sun was hitting the ends of those things. So I thought, why can't we use that on the wall? After all, one of our priorities was to break up the sound. After seeing the pile of blocks, I went back to the office and designed an arrangement for it and set up a panel. It worked. I like the idea of using a common, an ordinary material.

The color of seats in the Fine Arts Auditorium was one battle I fought. There are, you know, irregularly scattered colors on the seats. I had to fight our interior department at the office and finally took it to the highest authority, Phil Will, of Perkins and Will, and he supported me. The department didn't think the seats should be random. I think they wanted just all one color.

The one thing Phil Will did was that he pointed to one color and said that it would be too bright and he was right, it was a kind of orange. The rule in Beaux Arts is that color has to be monochromatic. And in making these programs, you put layer after layer of color together to build up the darker shades. So, I was going to do this, and the more I built up, the darker seats looked like they were on fire. It was awful. The dark color was the one Phil Will said was awful, so I didn't use that. Now, I like those seats, I really do. I think they keep the auditorium from being static; the color gives life.

Calvin had three architects: Dagerman in Grand Rapids, Jim Haveman, and Ray Stapert—his son teaches in the music department. They had all been working for Calvin. They felt that they needed someone to pull this group together and give it leadership. But the group of four would be an architectural board. Now, it seems as though I got too much credit for everything. All the time there were so many people working on this the long range planning committee, the architectural board, and the assistant architect—input from a great, great many people. It's not a one-man show at all; it just happens that I'm around still, and I can remember a lot of it. Working with a group of planners, more good than bad things happened than you would ex-
pect. All of this whole campus is the effect of many, many people. It was a problem working with so many people, and it all devolved on me, coming from Perkins and Will. It was my responsibility. I invested a lot of time, time the office couldn't charge the college for and time the office did charge the college for, to insure the cooperation of these other architects. Unwittingly or wittingly, they could have sabotaged what we were trying to do. That was a real problem. It could have been ruinous to what we were trying to accomplish. I'm very conscious that I sent many letters, memos, and made many phone calls, consciously trying to get a spirit of cooperation. Of course, the other architects were part of the C.R. Church. That's a plus to begin with. The people we worked with on this campus are absolutely fabulous. I was rather stupid. I used to feel good about coming back, and I just assumed it was because I liked the buildings and I liked the grounds. Then at one point I suddenly realized it was because I liked the people. They are just great people. I came back a lot—last year I came back at least once a month on business.

When Calvin designed the master plan, it started out to provide for maybe 2500 students. That gradually grew; officially the highest was 5000, but unofficially some were saying 6500. Then it slipped back to about 3500 which they thought for a time was absolutely tops. When it slid back, that was when the College Center was redesigned. Now, in hindsight, everyone wishes that we had done the whole shebang. I was told today probably not to expect any further growth.

That centennial book edited by Timmerman was my main introduction to Calvin. Talking and meeting with people also helped. We had discussions and meetings with every department.

There was a very interesting document that Dr. Spoelhof pulled together; he was an absolutely marvelous man in many ways. One of them was that he insisted on the faculty generally knowing what they wanted to do. To write a good program, you have to know what you want to do, generally where you want to be at the end of the road. Dr. Spoelhof made them do a good program; the end result was that in a couple of months I got a volume that was a couple of months thick. It went through Calvin's purposes, objectives, and needs.

It was my responsibility to work up a master plan, incorporating all the ideas we had talked about. I did this one summer. When fall came, I returned to campus, showed my plan, and we talked it over. Basically, that was the plan that we ultimately implemented with only a few changes. Of course, before making the master plan I had walked all over campus (toe some of my best trousers in the process).

In the beginning, Calvin wasn't really a farm. There were 15 acres around the manor house that were cultivated. Then there was a nursery addition. Beyond that, there were hay fields, woods and hedgerows between fields with trees growing in them. I simply walked over it to get a feel for it.

For the most part we made the basic assumption that we would keep the 15 acres of landscape intact. That was one point to begin our planning. Then from the topographical maps and walking over it I knew where the high spots and the low spots were. We made a conscious effort to put the chapel on the highest point. That began to take shape, which meant that the residential areas would be farther away. One of the criteria was to keep the residential dormitories so they wouldn't disturb neighbors. The thoughtfulness of the long-range planning committee came through on things like that. We didn't want to get the students too near the highway so that their sleep wouldn't be interrupted by trucks going by and such little things like that. The auditorium sort of came in later. The location of the seminary was quickly settled. There seemed to be a little plateau up there that filled the requirement of being part of the campus yet in a separate world of its own protected by a screen of trees, even more than it is now since some of those trees died. These are a few of the little things that eventually added up to the master plan. It is unusual for a campus college, or university master plan to withstand the pressures of time. I am pleased that basically we carried through exactly what we had expected to do. The master plan fit the site well, and the plans and objectives which were devolved by the planning committee were well thought out, so our planning has stood the test of time. The only thing that didn't get built was the chapel. It was to be on the highest point on campus, and the bell tower was going to be part of it. In every instance they built the things that were most urgent.

But even up to just a few years ago, Dr. Spoelhof was still pulling for the chapel. At one point, we began programming for it. As a device to get people talking, I asked each person around the table what he thought the chapel should be. You wouldn't believe the diversity. I think it ranged—from the chapel to a theater seating for 200 up to 2000. Now that is a pretty wide spread. I'm disappointed that we didn't build it because I think it would have been a good addition to the campus. The master plan was centered around that triad: the library, the chapel and the science building. The library and science building are dominant on the campus, and it seems that something is lacking without the chapel. But I think we've gone past the point where we could build it. If someone came along with a lot of money, we could build it now, but we would be hard pressed to find the space. I learned then that it is very difficult to anticipate the future specifically.

I believe that you are influenced by things standing around you. Now people around you influence you more than anything else, but the physical things do too. In my mind architecture does that subliminally, and lots of things happen to you. It is as much a building's function to be pleasant, a delight, and a good influence as it is to be warm, give good light and ventilation—those things that are normally thought of as essential. Philosophically, we not only tried to plan a functional campus but one which could best represent a Christian college. For this, we picked the triad design. So many Christian colleges put the chapel right in the center, plop. I didn't want that, and I found support for that from the planning committee. I felt if you did a chapel it should be positioned so that, as you move around the campus, it would be omnipresent but wouldn't dominate. It would be an axis. As you went by on the driveway, I wanted you to sense this large building and know that it was an
important building, and probably, if it were well designed, you would just know that it was a chapel from the way it was designed. As you walked across the campus in a distance, you would sense it. I'm not a member of your church, but to me that is a sense of what you do. Your religion seems to be part of your everyday life. You dedicate more of your time and wealth to the church than most people do so that it is omnipresent in your daily life, but you don't wear it on your sleeve so that it becomes obnoxious to other people.

I'm rather embarrassed to say this, but I used to have the idea that I wanted the buildings... if Jesus came to see them, I thought He would feel good about them. And that meant not making them pretentious. If you think about it, not many of these buildings have a main entrance.

With most of these buildings, you can't tell where the front and where the back is. There isn't any main focus. I did feel a responsibility to make a welcoming experience for parents and students who came for the first time. That we tried to do in the college center. It sort of has a reception area, but there are no grand columns where you walk in. Walking under low ceilings is an intimate experience.

They had a problem building the College Center because of underground water. For the longest time we didn't know how we were going to work our way out of it. They dug a lot of well heads around, and drew it off. There was a watershed that found its way down and went across Burton Street during wet weather. But we did not anticipate the underground stream. I don't know where it went. But the worst area was where the ceramic room in the College Center is—that corner and partly back towards the theater. They just couldn't get the water out of there. But the problem was solved once they got themselves built in—it's like a bathtub, sitting in water.

There are some very interesting features in the College Center. I have tried to make these features integral to the building. If you stand around me long enough you will hear me saying "integral" and "integrated" all the time. One beautiful feature is the stairway in the lobby of the College Center. Have you ever wondered what holds this stairway up? It's freestanding. It is built using a basic engineering principle. You know that if you supported a stair here and it is just a straight run up, then the stairs are a beam supported at both ends. Well, if you double it back, it's still a beam. I was skeptical; I knew that this was true, but it was hard for me to believe, so I hedged. I knew that if we had to come back and put a beam in to support it, we could support it using existing pillars. Another problem was keeping people from bumping their heads on the stairs. We solved that by putting large plants around. Dr. Spoelhof was very anxious that this lobby have an impressive, unique, or unusual staircase. I was challenged to do something that was not expensive but would still have a little elegance. The texture was made by sandblasting. The fire marshall had us put the glass in up above. I had it open and wanted to leave it open. But no go.

Another feature is the Gezon auditorium; it goes far into the earth, which required extensive excavation. The problem here was to do a small intimate theater. The Gezon is my theater; I did design this, although our interior department did introduce the lights in the outer lobby, which are fantastic. They were done just before the energy crunch came. Aren't they fun? Those are carbon filaments; they are the kinds of lights we had in 1920. The earlier bulbs were all carbon. The Auditorium Theater in Chicago, a landmark that Louis Sullivan designed, was just filled with these bulbs, smaller ones though, which were all that they had at that time. A few years ago, they refurbished the thing; it had fallen into disrepair (they even had bowling there at one time). These bulbs were not on the market any longer, so they had them made specially for that project. Then they became fashionable, and they are now available. Knowing this, our interior department came up with this, which is, I think, very exciting but perhaps not very efficient. I don't know how Calvin uses these lights, but they could just use them during plays when people are coming in. After all, the essence of theater is to have a lobby where people can mill around and enjoy a certain amount of festivity. But the sight lines and all the rest of it were my responsibility.

Initially the College Center was one or two more bays long. And the resonance of the arches was enhanced by that. Now it's hardly established before they end. When we made the building smaller I should have given up on the arches, I think. Although they make a nice walkway, and you can look and take a swell picture through the arches.

I love the stairway design which I first used for the residence halls. You can see life going up and down on the stairs through the glass. It seems to me that you ought to be able to see out from a stairway; it's fun to see out—to see things happening. So, most of the stairways are good on this campus; they create a vertical line. Another spot of interest on the campus will be the extension on Bolt/Heyns. The new dorm will create a very pleasant courtyard: lots of times you create interest by directing traffic through a narrow aperture which then opens out. You will see that around here, sometimes inside a building and sometimes outside. I was very conscious of designing this as one. You will go through a corridor, and then a vista will open up around the gym.

The next project up for appraisal is the library. The big problem is, what happens to the history and economics departments which are now located in the library basement. The theological collection has really needed attention, but if it moves over to the upper level of Hiemenga Hall, then that crowds out the
language departments; it gets pretty complicated. That's what I'm starting to do right now, work out the options. Then I'll put them in a useable form so that any ad hoc committee, or the priorities committee can work with the options and pull them all together into a specific program. Inevitably, that will result in more buildings or a new story on the library. Hiemenga Hall was designed so that another story could be added on to that; that would be a very economical gain in space, but, in my judgment, and I have tried to make it adamant, that should not be done until another story is added on to the main body of the library. The campus just needs that balance.

The plans to build a bell tower are still on the back burner. I once had a dream of getting some bells from Holland; it would be the Bill Spoelhof Memorial Bell Tower. But now that they've named a building after him, we can't do that.

It's a real benediction just to hear the chimes float down. I've experienced it on other campuses and even in Chicago. The Methodist Church has a steeple right across from the City Hall plaza; the bells ring at five o'clock, just as you are running to catch a train. If you've had a really ragged day, it sort of calms you down.

I think the building that was most shortchanged was the science building. The labs are great. The central core, again, was my idea. In a science building, operating costs, especially utilities, are very expensive, and yet you need the high ceilings. The central core minimized those costs. The character of the peripheral spaces—the offices and labs—evolved from the central core. I consider it shortchanged, because there is no real reception area for that building. It will be rectified—it's just a question of when. The Math department also got shortchanged; they sort of got tucked in where there was room. They could function much better, I think, if they had some additional space.

I can't imagine wanting to build any project that could be better than Calvin. In the first place, it has an absolutely stunning site, as well as marvelous people to work with. I doubted this for a while during the sixties. It has given validity to my life, because I believe in college education.

In the sixties I had seven children who were going through various colleges, and some of them were taking dim views of education and were dropping out; we went through that, and I began to question whether the job I was doing was significant. By and large, I think college education is a worthy thing to be a part of. I count myself unusually fortunate to have fallen into this project.

When we started, the first thing I did was the master plan; I never knew it was going to go on and on. One day the head of the drafting room commented, sort of in passing, as I walked by his table, that I was making a career of Calvin College. At the time, I was doing other projects too. I don't know why, but it has developed into that. I can't tell you how rewarding it has been. (That sounds as though you paid me to say it.) The other day I told Henry DeWitt that I wanted to retire and come on campus with one of those sticks—you know, with the sharp point—and pick up papers. He said I was hired.
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Three property tax cut proposals, representing a variety of conflicting approaches to tax reform, will be on Michigan's November fourth ballot. Revision of complex tax laws by popular referendum is rarely wise; economic and legal repercussions of even minor changes can be overlooked when constitutional amendments are written outside the legislature and subject only to the approval of the electorate. And, although this is a timely year for tax reforms, the tax proposals do not improve the tax system. The Coalition proposal, written by Republican Governor Milliken and the Democratic Legislature, is the only tax proposal which won't hurt Michigan's economy. The other proposals, placed on the ballot by special interest-sponsored petition drives, substantially change the amount of state revenue.

In fact, the existing property tax already contains measures to lessen the burden on lower income homeowners. Specifically, the "circuit breaker exemption" eliminates unusually high tax burdens on low income groups. Though local governments control the property tax rate, the state pays sixty percent of the property tax when it exceeds three-and-a-half percent of a homeowner's income. Renters also receive tax credits when the rent is especially high because of high property tax.

The tax proposals on this year's ballot were generated by voter dissatisfaction with present tax practices. Taxpayers resent the property tax more than any other; polls indicate that people believe they can more easily escape the sales or income taxes than they can the property tax. Actually, state-wide income and sales tax cannot be avoided without significant changes of lifestyle, whereas the property tax is the only one of the three major taxes which is directly tied to voter approval.

Another reason property tax is unpopular lies in the possibility of imprecise property value assessments. If government assessors detect a substantial error in a previous assessment, the property owner can suddenly be saddled with a much higher property tax. Furthermore, the homeowner must consciously pay out his property tax, while his income tax is quietly removed from his paycheck, and the sales tax is automatically added as an innocuous few cents on each purchase. Paying a bill in a lump sum is a direct assault on the homeowner's purse and excites his wrath. Still worse, economists argue that property tax collects proportionately more of the poor's income than of more wealthy homeowners, and early studies confirm this charge that property tax is regressive. Recently, however, more sophisticated studies question this conclusion. Economist Henry Aaron of the Brookings Institute maintains that a consideration of certain income fluctuations alters the picture. In the light of the new data, property tax now appears progressive, taking a larger portion of higher incomes than lower. The "circuit breaker" state compensation—though it favors households in a given income bracket with large property wealth—also improves the progressivity of property tax. So actually, property tax is probably at least as progressive as the sales tax.

The three constitutional amendments cover the political spectrum, with the most reactionary proposition somewhere to the right of Ronald Reagan and Barry Goldwater. Proposition D was written by Robert Tisch, a county drain commissioner who unsuccessfully sponsored a less drastic tax cut proposal in 1978. Proposition D (hereafter referred to as Tisch II), reduces property tax assessments from fifty percent of actual cash value to twenty-five percent of the 1978 value. Assessment of business property and property owned by nonresidents is linked to the Consumer Price Index. In contrast, agricultural and residential property are annually assessed two percent higher regardless of the C.P.I. So, no new assessments would be necessary.

Under Tisch II, the state reimburses the local governments for the revenue lost from the fifty percent reduction but not for the eighteen to twenty percent loss due to the return to 1976 assessed property value. Tisch II reduces both state and local property tax revenues approximately sixty percent, a net initial reduction of about 2.5 billion dollars. Limiting the increase in assessed value for residential and agricultural property allows inflation to erode further into local budgets, diminishing them by about four billion dollars annually after a decade of current inflation. Local school districts would absorb a substantial portion of this loss.

Tisch II also includes extra tax reductions for the poor and for senior citizens. Homeowners in the 5,000-10,000 dollar income bracket are exempt from half of their property tax and those with lower incomes do not have to pay any of it. Senior citizens homeowners are freed from property taxes allocated for funding schools. The state is required to reimburse the local governments for these revenue losses as well. This amounts to a $480 million reduction in money available to the state. And Tisch II leaves the state legislature little opportunity to raise revenue from alternative sources; any increase in state tax or fees requires a sixty percent vote on the electorate in a general election. The last provision may be ruled unconstitutional, but, in any case, the legislature could easily circumvent it, increasing taxes through an amendment to the state constitution, which only requires a simple majority.

Cutting roughly two billion dollars from a state budget of ten and a quarter billion is less feasible than first impressions might suggest. Tisch claims there is two billion dollars worth of "fat" in the state budget, but, unfortunately, about two thirds of that budget is immune from the tax-cutting fever. Federal aid, contributing $2.55 billion is unaffected, as are $1.1 billion dollars of state expenditures which are constitutionally untouchable. Tisch II also prohibits the required state reimbursement to local governments for property tax loss from being included in the 41.6 percent of the state budget already assigned by law to local government. The only reduction in state spending coming immediately from Tisch II is a $320 million reduction in circuit breaker compensation because lower property tax will make fewer homeowners eligible for compensation. The $1.9-2 billion would have to be slashed from a remaining balance of only 3.58 billion; that is a sixty percent cut from a segment which includes funds for higher education, social services, mental
health, corrections, environmental protection, the court system, and other essential expenses. Furthermore, federal funding for many of these programs is provided only when matched by state funds. Consequently a $1.9-2 billion cut could cost the state hundreds of millions more in lost federal aid. These cuts would be made at a time when Michigan is in its most severe economic slump since the great depression. Michigan's current fourteen percent unemployment is substantially above the national average. Available state revenue has already decreased 600 to 900 million dollars because of the recession. Tisch II would make the situation worse, cutting 40,000 government jobs according to a study by Public Sector Consultants.

One of the areas most vulnerable to Tisch II is higher education. Several private studies predict that six of the thirteen state colleges and universities which now receive seventy percent of their income from the state would either have to increase tuition 300 percent or close down. The remaining schools would have to trim their budgets by a fourth. The State competitive scholarship, tuition grant, and all other aid to private schools would also be drastically curtailed or eliminated. Fifteen of the fifty-four private colleges and ten of the twenty-four community colleges in Michigan would probably have to shut their doors. State aid for special education to the physically and mentally handicapped would probably also be reduced or eliminated.

Lansing, of course, is uncomfortable with Tisch II. Governor Milliken released an outline of his budget recommendations should Tisch II pass. Predicted reductions in state services include changes in the following areas:

- **Social Services:** funds would be cut by forty percent resulting in a comparable loss of federal dollars since the federal government provides dollar for dollar matching funds for welfare programs. However, if state programs are reduced below minimum standards, all of the federal matching funds for those programs will be lost. Tisch II would reduce these social services to the most rudimentary levels.

- **Mental Health:** 7,000 patients would be transferred out of state institutions into community programs causing a loss of jobs for 9,000 employees, and the 2,600 patients remaining in public institutions would include only the criminally insane and suicidal.

- **State Police:** 1200 of the 1600 uniformed officers would be laid off.

- **Higher Education:** State funding would be eliminated for all four-year public colleges or universities except Michigan State, the University of Michigan, and Wayne State; their funding would be reduced by half. State scholarships and all direct aid to students attending private colleges would stop.

- **Natural Resources:** eight of the state's sixty-four state parks would be subsidized; the others would only remain open if entrance fees covered operating costs.

Executive, legislative, and Supreme Court budgets would be cut by more than half. The Grand Rapids Veterans' hospital and schools for the blind and deaf would be closed. Employee safety inspections and special education aid would end. Overall, Milliken expects 24,000 state employees to be laid off. The estimate of 40,000 layoffs quoted earlier may include college staff not counted in this estimate.

Milliken's release of these recommendations was, of course, to discourage support for Tisch II. The Governor observed that, "If the picture is [the proposal budget] paints is devastating, it is only because the effects of Proposal D would be devastating." All state legislatures, republican and democrats, from the greater Grand Rapids area share Milliken's opposition to Tisch II. And the only business or union lobby to support Tisch II is the real-estate lobby.

These dark projections may be moderated in controversial areas. Tom Haltan from the state senate democratic staff predicts that special interests will contest specific budget cuts: "courts could decide you have to maintain a certain level of services for the mentally ill, just as they have done in other states with the corrections system." Judges, however, would only be forcing larger cuts in other areas.

Though means might be found to stave off some of the worst budget cuts, Tisch II is carefully worded to block most loopholes. The amendment requires all taxes, including service fees, to be returned to 1978 levels. If the Legislature passed a new tax in forty five days before Tisch II takes effect, the tax would probably be struck down in court. The legislature could call a special election to consider a tax increase with the hope that a lower voter turnout might alter the previous result.

Local governments will not be as seriously affected as the state government under Tisch II. Municipalities would only need a simple majority to raise taxes, not the sixty percent margin required of the state. Calvin College Professor Howard Rienstra, a city commissioner of Grand Rapids Third Ward, noted that increases in many small fees, including building inspection, dog licenses, and water treatment would have to be approved by the voter under Tisch II. Rienstra predicts if we [Grand Rapids] had to lay off policemen and firemen, we would probably go to a vote of the people before doing so." Tisch II would have devastating effects for cities, for higher education, and, potentially, for secondary and elementary children as well, Rienstra concludes.

Should Tisch II pass? Michigan homeowners will not fully benefit from the roughly $2.5 billion tax cut. Business and non-residents will receive $1.1 billion. Federal and corporate income tax will increase $500-600 million because the deduction for property tax payments will not be much smaller. Many low and middle income families who benefit from the circuit breaker program will no longer be eligible. In general, Tisch II favors high income homeowners. Tisch II also will create inequity among taxpayers in different municipalities. Sixteen Michigan cities, including Grand Rapids and Detroit, impose an income tax together with a property tax. While those cities will have a less difficult time funding programs than their neighbors who use only property tax, the residents of those cities will have to pay proportionally more taxes than surrounding suburbs. Many cities may end up subsidizing wealthy suburbs through the state reimbursement.

In addition, restricting assessed property value to a two percent annual increase will favor homeowners who live
in stable neighborhoods where property value is rising and will hurt deteriorating neighborhoods. Lower property taxes, one of the incentives for people to move into transient neighborhoods, will gradually become less significant as inflation lowers the real difference in assessed values between stable and declining neighborhoods.

Proposition 13, California’s 1978 amendment which cut property taxes by fifty-seven percent, spawned Tisch II and is used by Tisch II proponents to defend the tax cut. But the California tax cut, which did not cause serious reductions in services, passed under very different circumstances. The seven billion dollar tax cut was passed during a time of economic growth when the state had a five billion dollar surplus and local governments had a two and a half billion dollar surplus. Unlike the case of Tisch II, local governments were permitted to raise fees for services without a popular vote. In contrast, Michigan is in a major recession with a state budget twelve percent lower than that of the previous year, discounting inflation.

Incidentally, it is difficult to find supporters of Tisch II who are willing to explain their views in print except for brief outbursts of taxpayers’ rage in newspaper letter sections. The only lengthy support I found for Tisch II was by the author himself. In an article in The Michigan Township News (Sept. 1980), Tisch avoided confronting the criticisms against his amendments, resorting to rhetoric and erroneous comparisons with California’s Proposition 13. Unfortunately, enough resentment of property tax exists to give Tisch II a good chance for passing. State Senator Steve Monksma’s district relations aid, Patti Kossman, concluded from her work with the constituency that, “if the vote were held today, Tisch would pass. People have misconceptions of what Tisch is.”

Public officials are elected to weigh the complex choices public policy offers; Michigan’s economy is too fragile and too important to be subjected to a proposal as reckless as Tisch II.

Not surprisingly when the democrats and republicans finished compromising on the Coalition Proposal, Proposition C amounted to little more than a tax shift with a slight reduction in net taxes. The Coalition Proposal exempts $14,200 of residential property’s real value, from property taxes. The state sales tax is increased from four percent to five and a half percent. Establishment of a special fund insures that the revenue collected from the sales tax is only used for tax relief. The state reimburses local government for the full property tax loss the first year, and revenue shortages in the special fund in subsequent years are split between the state and local governments.

The average household property tax reduction would be $350; renters would be given $140 state income tax credit, annually adjusted to inflation. Homeowners over sixty-four years old with household incomes of less than $10,000 would be totally exempt from their first $1,200 in property tax. The Coalition amendment also attaches several reforms of the tax codes onto the tax shift. For instance, the $1,500 personal income tax exemption would be indexed to inflation, causing the state to lose $500 million in revenue over the first five years. This revision, however, is not really a tax cut; indexing exemptions according to inflation amends the present system under which the state benefits since personal income rises proportionally with inflation, but personal exemptions do not.

The full impact of the Coalition amendment is best understood when combined with the existing circuit breaker. As with Tisch II, a substantial amount of property owned by moderate and low income households is already covered under the circuit breaker sixty percent of state compensation. Consequently, the more affluent taxpayers may receive a higher proportion of the new tax break than households with lower incomes.

Including the required state payments to local governments in the 1981 fiscal year, the 140 dollar income tax credit to renters, and the beginning of the phase-out of sales tax on residential energy use, the amendment would reduce taxes by $910 million. The 1.5 percent increase in sales tax, savings in lower circuit breaker payments, and interest in the special fund would generate $889 million, twenty-one million dollars short of the tax reduction. This difference would grow throughout subsequent years. The Coalition Proposal, therefore, is principally a tax shift with a reduction in state and local revenues of about two to three percent. The Coalition Proposal’s net effect on the progressive nature of Michigan’s tax system is unclear, but Proposition C resolves taxpayer outrage against property tax without compromising state services. If both Tisch II and the Coalition Proposal pass, the Coalition Proposal would offset some of the harmful consequences of Tisch II, since the proposal with the largest number of votes negates any other proposal wherever they conflict. The Coalition proposal has been artfully designed to nullify Tisch II if they both pass, with the Coalition Proposal receiving more votes. For this reason alone Proposition C should be supported.

Proposition A, the Smith/Bullard amendment, would transfer taxing authority for secondary and elementary education from local governments to the state. After reducing the current fifty mills maximum property tax to twenty-four and a half mills (a mill is a one dollar monthly tax on every $2,000 of actual value), Smith/Bullard allows the state legislature the choice of replacing the lost revenue with either an income tax or a sales tax increase. Over five years, per student compensation to school districts would gradually be raised to the level in the highest school district, but the local school boards would continue to be responsible for budgetary allocations.

The reduction in property taxes only affects residential and agricultural property. The state would assume authority over the business property tax with the option to continue the property tax or replace it with an increase in the single business tax. The first year cost to the state would be $1.933 million, increasing over the five-year period to $3.113 billion. An increase of the state income tax by two percent to 6.6 percent, along with an increase of the business property tax from 18.9 mills to 26.5 mills over five years, would cover these expenses. If the highest per student district expenditures increases 5 percent annually as expected over the five-year phase-in, the cost to the state in Fiscal Year 1985-86 would be $4.77 billion, requiring income taxes to be raised 8.4
Versus a Friend

You make my heart hurt.

after i've been with you
i feel drained
as if i had been straining
and i have been straining
to gain your agreement.
i fight to communicate
and it seems as though
you are battling equally hard
to cut those lines.

And when i'm trying
too hard
i fall flat
and so i give up
and succeed.

Mary Boerman
By the Silver, Shining Stream

A thick-skinned, moss-slimed sycamore with roots that twisted like limbs of lovers in the heat of passion managed to hold together a point of soil and rock and scattered brush at the edge of the stream. Behind this point the stream eddied inward, working loose a deep sink hole through which the current slid fast and high. Almost any time he wanted, Ned could lay a hook in there and pull in a fat-bellied smallmouth that had been loafing in the current with its jaw flapped open waiting for the water to push a little food its way. A small bit of silver minnow or some insects washed loose from the bank. Or maybe after a rain a swollen worm or two, an appetite for which was demonstrated by those on the end of Ned’s hook. Indeed there were a lot of bass in that hole. It was rife with them. Ned sometimes would complain that he hardly had a chance to settle back against the roots of the sycamore before he had dinner caught.

But there was something else in that hole beside smallmouth bass.

Over the years, during weeks ferreted out of summer months, they had cleared a small stretch of land and by mistake and luck constructed the rude resemblance of a cabin. Once the rough contours were shaped Ned gave the task of finishing over entirely to Reuben, content instead to devote himself full time to fishing. He knew by now the flow and contour of every inch of the stream and thought until this point that he also knew the life of the stream inside and out. Reuben took to calling Ned “Walleye,” although walleye never ventured into the creek from the lake five miles below. The sink hole was one of the last mysteries in that twisting, silver screen of water that Ned had to puzzle out. And it did puzzle him now.

It began with the fact that Ned went three days without catching a fish. At first he blamed it on the weather, a swollen gray sky full of threatening rain. When the sky cleared he blamed it on his bait. By the third day he began to wonder if maybe something hadn’t scared off the fish, a weasel or mink that could snare a fish with one quick swoop of a hooked paw. Or some insects washed loose from the bank. Or maybe after a rain a swollen worm or two, an appetite for which was demonstrated by those on the end of Ned’s hook. Indeed there were a lot of bass in that hole. It was rife with them. Ned sometimes would complain that he hardly had a chance to settle back against the roots of the sycamore before he had dinner caught.

But there was something else in that hole beside smallmouth bass.

The rip at the end of the line jerked his arms. It was a steady, rock hard pull slamming away like a baseball leaving the sweet of a bat. The line shivered and sang in the water. A huge black shape surged in the water, turned a silver belly toward him, dove, and was free of the line.

He hauled the line in, stripped free of the bait. The black hook was bent out almost flat like a pin.

Ned sat for a minute or two staring down into the silent water that closed down on his vision like a grave. When he stood up his knees wobbled.

This was his secret. He wasn’t about to tell Reuben. He would carry the huge monster in one way or another. He held in his mind how, when the silver flash of belly spat back at him, the cold, angry, black eye had glared. The eye of a monster. Well, he would tame that monster.

“No luck?” Reuben asked when he got back.

“No luck. Didn’t work at it though.”

Ned dug in the corners of a footlocker, located a bit of thin wire, an extra strand of fishing line, and a file. Along with his biggest hook, the one he thought he would never use, an ugly black chunk of curved metal, he pocketed the wire, line, and file and headed off to a section of woods.

Ned wandered around a bit before finding a stump of a tree they had felled near a clearing. The axe bite left a narrow seat. He set out his workings on a flat rock. The sun glinted evilly on the rip at the end of the line. A nervous, turning sleep full of glaring eyes twisted like limbs of lovers in the heat of passion. Almost any time he wanted, Ned could lay a hook in there and pull in a fat-bellied smallmouth that had been loafing in the current with its jaw flapped open waiting for the water to push a little food its way. A small bit of silver minnow or some insects washed loose from the bank. Or maybe after a rain a swollen worm or two, an appetite for which was demonstrated by those on the end of Ned’s hook. Indeed there were a lot of bass in that hole. It was rife with them. Ned sometimes would complain that he hardly had a chance to settle back against the roots of the sycamore before he had dinner caught.

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The sink hole was deep enough and murky enough that Ned couldn’t see the bottom. The first time he tried an extra few feet of line and cast in the hook, decked out with a fat slug he had picked off the bank, and the line gave a tight tug and fell limp. He thought he had snagged a sharp rock in the current. He had three hooks in his little leather wallet and tied another on. He looped a blood knot and cinched it tight. With the end of a pointed stick he rooted in the muck and dredged out a nightcrawler, thick as his finger and a good eight inches long. He threaded it into the hook just above the blood band, shanked

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held to the darkness as light crawled down the trunks of trees and touched the brush.

Near the stream Ned stopped by a leaffall. Digging into the leaves and damp soil a rich aroma of decay burst the morning air; a sweet, heady smell like seasoned tobacco. Soon he had a full hand of squirming, stretching worms.

“Gotta think like a fish,” he mused aloud. Ned stepped silently to the tangle of roots by the sinkhole. He took three of the small worms and squished them in his hands, rubbing the juices up over his wrists. He rubbed the slime over the hook and line. He let the film dry on his hands. He picked a half dozen angleworms out of the pulpy mass of bodies and, counting to ten in between, dropped them one by one into the sink hole. They disappeared quickly into the dark pool of water.

The sun lit the far shore of the stream as he picked two thick crawlers.

Now’s the time, he thought. Ned eyed the sunlight knifing through the mist on the waters. A chill was in the air. He shivered. He threaded the first worm onto the hook and all the way up over the wire leader. The second worm he snagged three times, at one inch intervals, over the barb and shank of the hook. Gently he lowered it into the water.

Ned normally fished bass with a hand held line. Back in the cabin he had a gleaming fly rod with a beautifully tapered and weighted line that he had long ago quit using. “Stupid, bait-blind critters will strike anything if you meet them on their terms,” he would say. He now loosely held a stout pole fashioned from strong, springy birch to which he had tied the ten feet of line. He figured he would need the leverage to do battle with this brute.

It was a pike, he thought from that one shining, fleeting glimpse. Either that or the granddaddy trout of them all. Probably a pike from the way it tore the hook all out of shape. That was the brute, clean muscle of pike.

Ned lowered the line through his thumb and forefinger, playing out the line inch by inch. The reserve he held in the back palm of his hand. Three feet out. He judged the sink hole to be about six to eight feet, and figured the fish would be stalking, holding in the water just below the current. Say a foot off bottom. With five feet out he held the line steady, held it between thumb and forefinger alert for the slightest tap.

His knees began to grow stiff from waiting. He dared not move. The sun had crossed halfway through the stream. Ned knew that if it hit the sink hole he may as well quit.

A blue-belly fly droned past his eye. He followed it out to midstream where it darted near the water. In a flash of glinting water and clean flesh a smallmouth broke surface and sucked in the fly. Rings of the dive throbbed back toward the shore.

When he felt the line tremble he knew at once that he had struck the hook too quickly. But also knew that it wasn't his fish. He felt the light, little, erratic movements slashing the line. Still and all, probably a pretty good-sized smallmouth he thought as he hauled in.

It was too. Still, he was disappointed as he worked in the angry fish. It wasn't until he had the smallmouth near the surface that he saw the angry glaring eye of the pike rushing behind it. Frozen for the moment he saw the great jaws snap open, the sudden twisting jerk of the massive blunt head, the flare of the open nostrils in the plunging dive as it engulfed bass, hook, and leader and tore downward.

The pole jerked at his arms as if slammed with a bat. The wood rushed past his fingers and he managed only to grab it tight at the butt of the grip. He fell back on his seat and held on not just with his arms but his whole body.

It was like leading a dragon on a ten foot leash. The line shivered and sang but held tight. He expected any moment the dull heart-dropping snap of the limp line. The furious pike broke surface just ten feet away. Ned cursed himself for not using more line to play the monster. The tremendous body arched above the surface in a shower of green and silver, the vicious head jerking in terrible power at the line. Ned dug a heel against the root of the sycamore and held on.

He had only one thought now, hold tight. His fingers whitened on the pole. He never dreamed such a creature could inhabit so small a space. Again and again the monster cracked the surface of the stream and thundered back down like a rock. The terrible head twisted like a serpent. The livid black eye caught the sunlight, knived him against the tree. Smack, the body walloped the water.

And finally the line had the feeling of a dead weight. Ned looked at his hands. Blood trickled from between the clenched fingers on the right hand where the line had torn into flesh. Curious little red patterns played over the wood of the pole. His left hand had gone yellow like old paper, the translucent skin cobwebbed with blue veins. He reached out with the bloodstreaked right hand and hauled in on the line. Slowly the fish rose to the surface.

Ned snatched in hard. The great shape, close to four feet long, waggled tired at the end of the line. The dark eyes had glassed over and become a piece with the smooth, black snout of the head. Slowly he played the fish toward shore.

The fingers that reached behind the head for the eye sockets were stiff. At once he plunged thumb and forefinger down hard into the eye sockets and pulled at the huge fish. He had it lugged half out of the water, flat fierce snout lying against the tree trunk, and was ready to jam his heel down behind the skull when the fish gave one last tremendous lunge. With both hands Ned grabbed hold. He felt the razor teeth rake the palm of his right hand against the tree, the teeth cut into flesh. He looked at his hands. Blood trickled from between the clenched fingers on the right hand where the line had torn into flesh. Curious little red patterns played over the wood of the pole. His left hand had gone yellow like old paper, the translucent skin cobwebbed with blue veins. He reached out with the bloodstreaked right hand and hauled in on the line. Slowly the fish rose to the surface.

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out in a steady stream. He plunged the hand back into the cold water, and wrapped his kerchief around the wound.

Walking back to the cabin he felt only, but over and over, the hard pulsing flesh of the fish under his hands; glad now, in a strange sort of way as the sun slanted down through the forest, that the monster had got away.

His feet slid in mucked up mocassins. A pebble in the right mocassin gnawed at his instep. Well, he had proof enough of the fish to convince Reuben, he reflected. The right palm had begun to ache like a nest of furious bees had been trapped in it. And he was sure he would never see the monster again. But what a fish to have seen. Falling into the sink hole was not so much losing his balance as it was falling over the edge into the fish's world. Ned felt again the hard thrust of muscle between his hands. There was no hope then, but he had had to do it. Make the lunge, the last plunge for the fish that one could never hope to be more than scarred by or to hold fleetingly a handful of thrashing fullness. Most men never got that far. He had got that far, he thought. He felt strangely lightheaded and happy.

By the time he got to the cabin blood was seeping through the bandage and running down his arm. Reuben blanched white and looked sick a minute staring at the wound.

"The axe?" he asked.


"I believe you," Reuben said.

Settling on a stump before the cabin Reuben began to clean the wound. The loose flap of skin swung back like a chunk of blue mottled meat.

"Do I cut it or shut it?" he asked.

Ned laughed then, laughed until he found his stomach knotting, and bending over vomited in the grass.

"Shut it," he gasped, wiping his mouth with the back of his left hand.

Reuben bathed the cut in a shot of whiskey. Lights exploded behind Ned's eyes.

"Drunken through my hand," he muttered.

"Don't get sick again."

"Bandage the thing," he moaned.

After he had staunched the bleeding and wrapped the hand tight in white cloth, Reuben slapped Ned on the knee.

"Tell me about it now," he said.

"In the cabin," Ned pointed at the puddle of vomit that had attracted a swarm of flies. Reuben kicked dirt on it.

"Don't forget the whiskey," Ned said.

Not until he was done telling the story was Ned mindful of the irritating pebble in his mocassin. His hand had begun to throb as if he held a handful of charcoal that ate into the flesh and burned up to his elbow.

"Reuben, do me a favor will you?"

"I suppose now you're going to want some babying?"

"No. It's just that I got a goddamned rock in my mocassin that's been digging in."

Reuben slipped off the mocassin. There, curled up in a hard, little knot of dead muscle, was one of the tiniest fish he had seen. But already the outline of the blunt hard head and the terrible undershot jaw were clear.
The first clue makes you use your head
Go where books are stored and read
(Though some may use it for a bed).
To the music you must tread
To find a maid with shoes of red.
Not love notes, but a clue instead,
She'll give to those who have no dread.

HUNT

RULES

1. The Dialogue Treasure Hunt will be on November 3 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
2. Everyone at Calvin is encouraged to join in.
3. There will be 8 clues. You must collect all 8 to win a prize.
4. The first clue is printed in this issue of Dialogue.
5. You may work alone or with one other person.
6. All staff members of Dialogue, Chimes, Lecture Council, and Film Arts Committee may not participate.
7. The first and second team to finish the clues will receive prizes donated by Musicland and the Film Arts Committee.
8. If you have any questions stop by the Dialogue office in the Commons extension before November 3.