

Can You Pray?

"God is great, God is good, and we thank Him for our food; Amen." The prayer above, along with another even less religiously oriented, was outlawed by the Supreme Court in the *Stein vs. Oshinsky* case in 1965. The *Engels vs. Vitale* decision established a thin line between "voluntary prayer" and "prayer which is voluntary" (*Christianity Today*, Vol. X, No. 25, September, 1966). Voluntary prayer is defined as that in which a student may or may not participate. Prayer that is voluntary, on the other hand, is a prayer which the student himself says, determines when and where he says it, and how it shall be said. Much misunderstanding has arisen, many people believing that all prayer has been banned in public schools. The case is not so; only voluntary prayer is outlawed.

In examining other facets of our government, we find certain incongruities. The Senate has a chaplain and provides prayer rooms. Our currency bears the slogan "In God We Trust." The Pledge of Allegiance includes the words "One nation, under God." Public officials still enter office by swearing on the Bible. The President each year asks Americans to observe Thanksgiving Day, a religious holiday set up to praise God for His bounty. Surely if we are going to limit prayer in public schools, we ought to omit the above practices also. But then another question arises. What about Christmas? Can the nation officially observe it? Can children sing Christmas carols in a public school, under the teacher's direction? Could we even allow the use of Christmas trees as a symbol of the eternal life of Christ, to be displayed at Christmas? Wouldn't we be offending someone who doesn't believe in Christ?

Obviously, such questions must be answered No. If such a state of affairs ever did arise in our nation, we as Christians would have to oppose them without question.

But, another question is full of dire importance. Can we, as Christians, permit the Supreme Court to limit our opportunities to pray? Certainly, we do not condone the passing of a law which would make prayers mandatory. But when a law is passed which forbids prayer under certain circumstances, our rights as citizens of a free nation, "Under God" are violated. When actions of faith are forbidden under certain circumstances, is this not in actuality the authorizing of anti-religious thoughts? If we pass laws restricting Christians from praying, must we not also pass laws forbidding atheists to practice and "preach" their philosophy?

This writer has not attempted to go into any great legal discussion or to even analyze the Supreme Court decisions, for this is the realm of those far better educated than he. The writer has, however, attempted to show that as Christians we cannot allow actions expressive of our faith to be controlled by a legislature, for we are therein defeating the purpose of our faith. We have been ordered to pray without ceasing and to pray privately and publicly. We must have full opportunity to do both, without restriction, regardless of the statements of any law or legislature.

J. R. R.

Oh Say Can You _____?

Born Free. That is what each of us claim. With this freedom, each one of us assumes the responsibility of being an American. You may say, "Well, this doesn't mean me, I'm not even old enough to vote." I ask you—so what? You are still a free-born American with freedoms no other people in the world are gifted with. Though you can't vote, you have the responsibility of patriotism. You do remember that word, don't you?

America is something that is so taken for granted that one doesn't stop to think about our freedom until you're sitting at a ball game and over half the people around you can't remember the words to the *Star Spangled Banner*, or maybe it's your roommates making fun of the Pledge of Allegiance. If you inwardly felt sickened by this, that's great. You still have the staunch American stamina that our country needs.

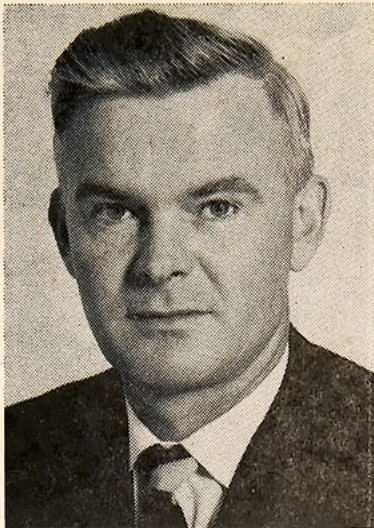
By chance, if you are one of the many thousands in our country that doesn't have time for patriotism, maybe you would just as soon give up everything you've got and move to Russia. Certainly you would be welcomed, but how joyful would you be in ten years when you see your children wanting to destroy any freedom they may ever have?

Yes, laugh about the flag now, but if you ever happen to be called upon to sacrifice someone or something for America, we'll see how funny it is.

It's very sad that Concordians are so concerned about their own private little world here on campus that they can't take the time to look outside to see what the real America is and the principles for which she stands.

If you are so ashamed of our country and its leaders, maybe you could do a better job. You are all so ready to judge when it comes to political matters, but until you've walked the first mile in our leaders' shoes you haven't got a leg to stand on. Complain all you want, but until you show that you are an American worth this country's respect, don't expect anything in your life to be free. Remember - you were the guy who doesn't even know the words to the *Star Spangled Banner*. Do you know how many stars are on our flag?

J.M.B.



Coleman
(Photo courtesy Michael Myers Studio)

You have asked if I would write a few words concerning the role of the Concordia student in government. It is always possible to approach such a discussion in the very narrow sense: exhorting students to join the political party of their choice and/or work for a particular candidate's election, whether at the local, legislative, state, or national level. Naturally, having a very special interest in elections, I do not object to this kind of participation. Indeed, I welcome volunteer help at all levels. Still, looking at government in terms of political careers is a very narrow view. One which many students instinctively—and perhaps rightly—reject. Certainly there is far more to government than the career of one or more individuals who have chosen the elective process as the way they might make a contribution to society.

Because people in all walks of life have requested some kind of government intervention in their affairs or the affairs of people around them, I think that a student can best serve himself and his community by finding out just why this so-called intrusion is necessary, and what the role of the individual should be under present day circumstances.

Accordingly, I think it most appropriate that students everywhere make a special effort in their undergraduate days to see what is going on, understand why it is most probably necessary, and then begin to do something about the problems and opportunities that face us.

Anyone at Concordia with an open mind can see why it is necessary for government to have an active role in our daily lives if he or she is willing to take a ten minute walk. For within a few blocks of the campus people are living lives of desperation. (And no longer are they living lives of "quiet" desperation.) These are people who understand that things can and should be better but are frustrated in their attempts to achieve the legitimate goals that they have a right to expect for themselves and their families. Nor am I talking only about Negro families. St. Paul has many white families in the same depressed circumstances; families that unless they have assistance will not be able to escape the cycle of poor education, poor housing, poor job opportunities, and tragically wasted lives.

Of course, just "seeing" is not enough. You cannot expect to stroll down the street and come up with a fuller understanding of these most serious problems.

"GALLOPING POLL"	
Soccer Attendance	43%
Enthusiasm	50%
<hr/>	
Total Rating	93%
Spirit has gone up 87% since the first soccer game. Let's make it even better for the basketball and wrestling seasons!	

THE SWORD

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OPINIONWISE . . .

(Ed. Note: Opinionwise is a column which invites leaders from all walks of life to write on topics which are controversial and timely. In this third issue of 1966 *The Sword* features The Honorable Nicholas D. Coleman, State Senator from the 46th district in St. Paul. Senator Coleman also serves on the following Senate Committees: Cities of the First Class, Elections and Reapportionment, Labor, Military Welfare and Civil Defense, and Public Welfare.)

Look Before You Leap

MEMORIES

I remember when . . . the Grasshoppers were hopping, the shaving cream pies were flying, the balloons were popping, and the jail was overflowing; what a night! Yup, I remember. And I can also recall being very proud of the student body that evening, participating in a program that sure showed a lot of people that Concordians do act naturally and can enjoy their Saturday evening together on campus instead of at Bridgeman's or the Prom. . .

Fun to look in the scrapbook, isn't it? Well, when we do, I think it safe in assuming that we will be very thankful to those who made it possible for Concordia to enjoy its first dance. And a big "hats-off" should go to the Productions Committee for the great job they did. The Senate



Marth realizes that structure has definitely not been stressed enough on campus. There are certain problems that arise involving individual classes and only by holding class meetings can they be resolved. Our representatives feel that they can best relate new Senate ideas and answer any questions of their constituents through meetings.

by Dave Marth

Our Readers Speak

There once was a college in St. Paul known as "The Sheltering Arms." This quiet campus gave all girls the privilege of wearing skirts or dresses at all times to all activities. How the students loved their campus! Reasons for this privilege; one was that the college accepted petitions from skirt-wearing girls only. Another was to keep up the tradition that originated with the synod. The coeds did want to follow recent fashions, which were sports clothing after school hours. No, this would be too modern for the campus and the coeds didn't want this. The Head of the Women decided it was time for the campus to come up to date. She felt sports attire would be appropriate. But the loyal students voted this down. They felt traditions must be upheld at any cost, even the cost of blue legs, pneumonia, or other such afflictions. "We must be loyal to tradition," said the students. Keeping constantly in mind the motto for the school which was, "How to teach future successful workers to be frustrated, resentful, and most ideally dependent upon the idealistic type of living afforded only here."

Today the traditional life on "The Sheltering Arms" continues uninterfered by today's reality.

Name Withheld