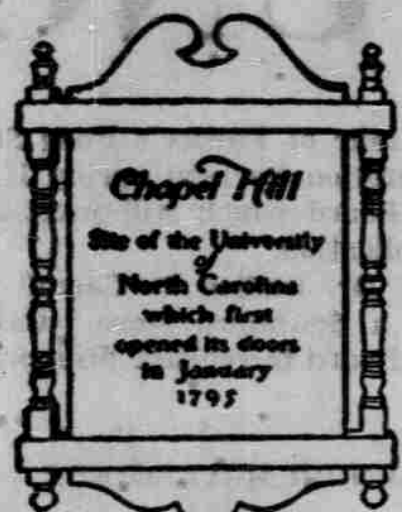


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Stir In The Kingdom Of The Mind

An address delivered before the UNC Faculty Club on Dec. 8, 1964.

By PAUL F. SHARP

We Americans hold curiously ambivalent attitudes toward intellect and toward intellectuals. Most of our definitions are both precious and pretentious and thus unsuited for our use this afternoon. I want to speak to you of the role of the American intellectual in that realm we shall choose to call the Kingdom of Mind.

This Kingdom is unique since its boundaries coincide with those marked out by the fellowship of the scholars, its citizenship includes everyone devoted to the search for knowledge and its use in our daily lives. Indeed, Jacques Barzun's definition of residence in the "House of Intellect" will do equally well to qualify us for citizenship in the Kingdom of the Mind: "persons who consciously and methodically employ the mind." This passport is sufficiently flexible I hope to include university chancellors. I should not like to disenfranchise myself at the very outset!

Provinces of this kingdom reach far into the hinterlands of many professions and activities. But its heartland is on the campus, for here the standards of the entire realm are created and nourished, here intellectual life is primary.

Numerous institutions exist in our society dedicated to the enrichment of personal, emotional, physical and spiritual development. Only the university comprises a community uniquely dedicated to intellect, to the power and dignity of ideas. Here the life of intellect is made attractive; here our hopes for candid and fearless thought get full play—or it is nowhere.

Central to the many and complex functions of the university is the life of the mind. Any other definition of our role suggests that other institutions are better equipped and more properly commissioned to perform the tasks we assume. The campus must truly be a "House of Intellect," to use Jacques Barzun's phrase, or there will be no habitation for rationality, no congenial home for the restless or inquiring mind.

Raymond Fosdick's recent tribute to Woodrow Wilson as teacher in his autobiographical "Chronicle of a Generation" will serve as my text:

"I speak only as a single student at Princeton of over fifty years ago. For me Wilson lit a lamp which has never been put out. All my life I have remembered him as the inspiring teacher who introduced us to the kingdom of the mind, and held up before our eyes what Whitehead later called 'an habitual vision of greatness.'" When the campus ceases to be such a place, then the Kingdom of Mind will become the Kingdom of the Blind from which this vision of greatness will be banished and the one-eyed will be kings.

Today the Kingdom of the Mind appears to be in great ferment. A decade from now we may well regard the 1960's as a watershed period in which a growing maturity forced us as a nation into a new appreciation of those who serve in the household of intellect.

There are modest but encouraging signs that many of our fellow countrymen are slowly outgrowing the crude anti-intellectualism so characteristic of our national behavior. "Egghed" has lost something of its opprobrium. It may even be conferred today with a grudging admiration.

Superficial observers, including certain admirals and publicists, credit Russian scientific progress for this growing awareness of intellect's rewards. Actually, deep seated forces have quietly transformed our era into a national experience quite different from that of the nineteenth century when we equated the role of the intellectual with that of the French dancing master or with the circus barker and the hawk of phony nostrums, all of whom an indiscriminating public called "professors."

Citizens of the Kingdom of the Mind, whatever their field of interest or intellectual enterprise, owe a considerable debt to the scientific revolution of our time. The transformations accompanying this revolution have outdated and swept into discard many time-honored and cherished American fetishes. Frontier mores, so honored as inadequate. The frontier emphasis on egalitarian crudity and on action that took precedence over order or thought created an anti-intellectualism that is losing much of its vitality in our scientific age.

Today even the most obtuse among us recognize that without taking thought of the morrow there may very well be no tomorrow. I need only remind you of the revolution in our conduct of foreign affairs to underscore the great changes since the 19th century when American politicians delighted

in twisting the British lion's tail, in frightening our American neighbors with sword-rattling jingo talk or in manipulating the tariff for partisan political advantage.

Similarly, the commercialism of our 19th century cities, expanding, dynamic, overwhelming in its impact, left intellectual enterprise to a small band of men and women, usually thought eccentric by their contemporaries. Indeed, "culture" was left mainly to the staff members of the community and took on a feminine cast from which it has only recently freed itself to take on a new life of respectability. Today even those most devoted to the market place must master a learning regarded a waste of time by their fathers.

So too, the decline of religious dogmatism, always an enemy of free inquiry, has changed the environment for American intellectuals, particularly within the church itself. By the same token, it should also be noted that the lessening influence of the high priests of modern secularism, Marx, Darwin and Freud, all of whom belittled the force of reason as a factor in human affairs and exalted irrationality, has materially contributed to the decline of anti-intellectualism in recent years.

Finally the great schism between men of action and men of thought has narrowed somewhat, whether for good or ill. When captains of industry must rely upon Ph.D.'s to provide the new processes that maintain margins of profit and keep the firm ahead of its competitors and when captains of commerce look to economists and others to provide data for investment, marketing and planning, we are indeed in a different world from that requiring only audacity and greed to bring economic rewards and social status.

In all this there is the real danger that the Kingdom of the Mind will become an occupied territory, a satrapy serving the needs of foreign masters. Free inquiry may turn to directed research, love of truth may degenerate to self-serving and intellectual energy may be dissipated on mental gadgetry or other trivia. Our own proved abilities to debate intellectual enterprise through the "publish or perish" doctrines demonstrate that we sometimes do not need outside leadership to lose our course.

We run the risk that rather than intellectuals we will play the role of academic entrepreneurs. Indeed, today we quite often confront the choice of being intellectuals or academic carpetbaggers, looting, rather than giving, diminishing rather than enriching, enervating rather than nourishing. This is more than those obvious distinctions emphasized in a study such as Caplow and McGee's "Academic Marketplace." It is really the choice we make between viewing the university as only a kind of boarding house we pass through rather than an intellectual castle from which we make whatever forays seem appropriate from time to time in the discharge of scholarly duties.

Certainly, intellectuals find themselves playing a new and unaccustomed role. I do not share, however, all the apprehensions of some of our colleagues that as this role takes on new meanings our intellectuals are necessarily further estranged from our society. On the contrary the intellectuals' understandings of the profound changes in our society make them all the more valuable. This changing role of intellectuals is most marked on the campus itself. Indeed, when a mass media magazine calls attention to the fact that the football hero is no longer the center of feminine devotion but is replaced by the PK key, we have turned a corner!

There are unmistakable signs of change on the American campus. We are surely outgrowing much of the tomfoolery and humbuggery in higher education in this country. Slowly, imperceptibly at any one moment we see a growing commitment to the serious purposes of education.

In spite of this, however, the mechanics of public information continue to emphasize on occasion the exotic and inconsequential on the campus. It is still true that even the best publications will give more attention to how many students can fit into a telephone booth than how many students are forced into disgracefully inadequate school buildings throughout the nation; it is still true that food riots on the campus will get bigger headlines than the research in our laboratories designed to solve the food shortages throughout our starving world; it is still true that the record attention is paid to the time consumed in a telephone conversation than to the quality of conversation in the Student Union and to how many revolu-

tions in a commercial dryer a student can survive rather than to what he knows about the forces of revolution at work throughout the modern world.

On top of this, new groups clamor for public recognition as citizens of the Kingdom of the Mind. The group to attract most attention, of course, is that fringe element known as Beatniks whose espresso coffee shops on the campus are their stamp of approval of the intellectual vigor of the institution.

Today's beatniks are surprisingly similar to the self-styled "Civilized Minority" of the 1930's that represented itself as the sole residents of the Kingdom of the Mind. There is something of the same combination of intellectual arrogance, inflated self-esteem and social irresponsibility mingled with liberal doses of self-pity, undisciplined talent and preoccupation with self-gratification. The "Lost Generation" of the Twenties saw no hope for Man and with the Beatniks of the Sixties share the inspiring, though somewhat contemptuous, spirit of not give a damn.

Undoubtedly great talent will emerge from this generation of young intellectuals. But I doubt if much of it will appear in the extreme ends of the spectrum of our youthful society. If clarity of expression, economy of words and commitment to truth are virtues, then there seems to be only Hobson's choice between the smooth, calculated nonsense of Madison Avenue or the undisciplined effusions of the Beatnik writers.

Now all this attention focused on a few unshaved, dirty, young men whose herd instinct drives them into intellectual ghettoes really misses the point. One can hardly apply for citizenship in the Kingdom of the Mind simply because he wears smelly socks, a dirty sweat shirt and dungarees or reads second rate poetry. Nor is it really enough to recommend citizenship papers on the basis of absence of personal property—though this does seem to be a virtue shared by many citizens in good standing!

Citizenship in the Kingdom of the Mind requires energy of intellect, an assertion which I expect the members of a university faculty will happily accept. Scholarship or intellectual activity without a work product quickly degenerates into pedantry or dilettantism.

Far more distressing than the claims of the Beatniks to citizenship in the Kingdom of the Mind of beardless beatniks on our campuses though they spurn the dirty dungaree uniform or the scraggly teenage beard of the Beatnik, their claims to citizenship are equally spurious. They inhabit our campuses with the same intellectual pointlessness, social irresponsibility and self-gratification. And quite often they oscillate violently between antagonism and conformity.

These young men and women are of the species mononuclear. They suffer from an intellectual mononucleosis that infects the will and the mind rather than the bloodstream. But it is accompanied by the same symptoms of listlessness and apathy.

Species mononuclear can readily be identified by a lack of will, an atrophy of intellectual interest and social concern, and a lassitude of spiritual sensitivity accompanied by an al-

most total collapse of commitment to anything. This species, I am told by personnel officers, must be treated with tender, loving care or it does not long survive in an academic community. Admittedly, the ecological data are as yet incomplete and these findings are purely tentative.

The behavior of both groups reminds us of Dr. Johnson's famous parable of "Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia in 1759." In this story, the Prince created a utopia of his own, free from the distractions of ignorance, suffering and want; far from the barbarisms of war and prejudice, and unhampered by the insistent demands of self-discipline, work or self-restraint.

Unaccountably the Prince became increasingly bored with the endless round of pleasures that divitized the few who had minds of their own and enslaved the weak. Finally, accompanied by the philosopher-astronomer, Imlac, the Prince deserted "Happy Valley"—that 18th century version of a cold water flat in Venice West, to return into a world of "stubborn, irreducible fact."

Here, vividly portrayed in the life of the Prince, is the dilemma of the American intellectual. Can the Prince desert this utopian retreat, plunge into a world of "stubborn, irreducible fact" and remain an intellectual?

Can he truly remain Emerson's "man thinking" or Barzun's person consciously and methodically employing the mind?

Our answer, I suggest, is conditioned by the forces that created much of the anti-intellectualism of the 19th century and left a gulf of estrangement, rejection and withdrawal. With the decline of frontier crudities and the exaggerated sense of action at the expense of thought; with the penetration of industry and government by science; and through the omnipresent influence of the expert in government, philanthropy, journalism, community planning, and political leadership, something of the prestige of the intellectual in the age of Franklin, Jefferson, Hamilton and the Adams family may be restored. However active and socially useful the intellectual becomes, however, it should be admitted quite frankly that he will never be fully restored to that unique position conferred upon him by the fraternity of literacy, forever destroyed by Gutenberg's press and by free, public education. Certainly, few of us today would claim "benefit of clergy."

Who are these scholars, these intellectuals to whom we must surely look for leadership in our confused and complex age? What do they look like? How do we identify them, even in their native habitat, the university campus? How do they behave, at least while on duty? Obviously, the wearing of cap and gown is no certain identification. More than one gown has sheltered the cold heart of an anti-intellectual as he mounted the rostrum to receive his Bachelor of Arts degree printed on artificial sheepskin and not even in Latin anymore! And more than one brightly tasseled cap has adorned the addle plate of a Doctor more concerned with the peripheral aspects of university life than with the

commitment to scholarship in teaching and research that makes a university great.

In appearance scholars come in all sizes, shapes and forms. Fat, lean, tall, short, blond, swarthy—physical characteristics, except perhaps for horn-rimmed glasses, a receding hairline and stooped shoulders, are of little value in identification. It must be admitted, in all candor, that few in this group are of the Errol Flynn type. But this is so negative an observation as to be quite useless in identifying the species and so depressing to masculine morale that I shall not elaborate.

Nor is it really pertinent, however interesting, to dwell on the fact that nearly every novelist portraying intellectual life in America represents the scholar as the hen-pecked victim of an ambitious and domineering wife. If true, perhaps it is only the reflection of the national mores of the larger community and not a particular hazard of his profession.

These conclusions, of course, could be much too optimistic. The powers of observation in such matters are limited and the filter of interpretation may have left us with the wrong precipitate. The possibility of error in observation is illustrated by the familiar story from old Fort Dodge: At five o'clock each afternoon the OOD signaled, a gun saluted and the flag descended. A visiting friend once asked how he knew when it was five each day. The officer replied: "I always set my watch with the jeweler's clock in Dodge City. The jeweler has one of the finest regulators in the world." His friend, who was also interested in research, checked with the jeweler the next time he was in Dodge City. The jeweler readily admitted he had a fine regulator which his father had brought over from Switzerland. But when the visitor asked the jeweler how he checked the regulator, he replied, "I set it every day by the gun up at the Fort."

Of this much we can be certain: Citizens of the Kingdom of the Mind are recognized by their activities and by the spirit that motivates them. Citizenship in this realm requires a serious commitment to the search for truth. It demands a capacity for critical analysis that sets the intellectual apart and protects him with academic freedom, provides the financial resources for his work and sustains him in his search. Without critical detachment and the highest order of objectivity the intellectual's plea for freedom and respect is seriously weakened. Without these, his activities become little more than special pleading or artless propaganda.

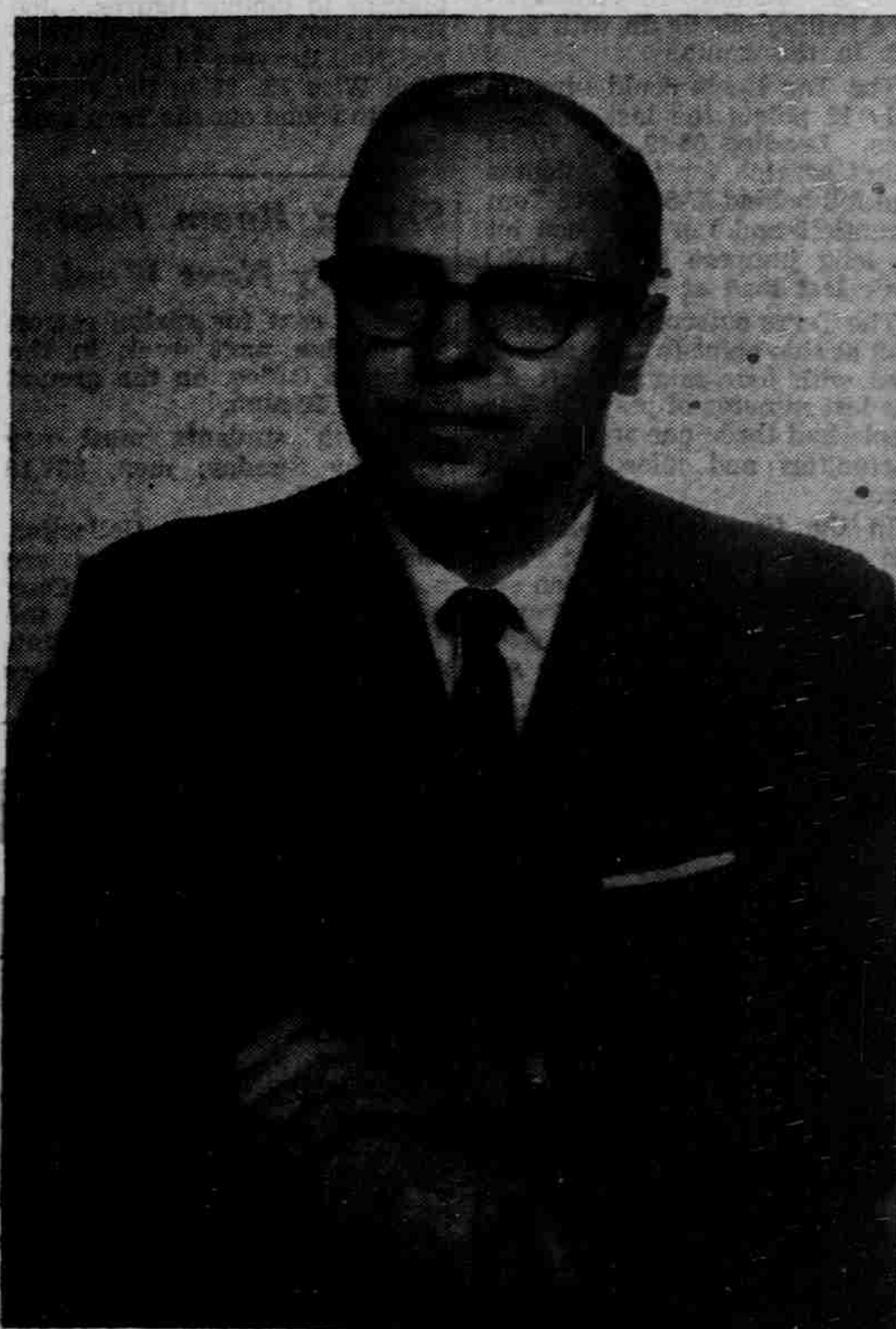
Finally, this citizenship requires that those who hold it must achieve an accumulation of knowledge. The folklore image of the scholar as a collector of "dry and dusty" facts has at base this truth: scholars do accumulate knowledge and much of it seems irrelevant or "dry as dust" to those unacquainted with intellect's demands. Citizenship has other obligations as well. It demands a work-product that pays tribute to the creativity of the mind as well as to emotional vigor and physical energy. Bruce Truscot's famous indictment of British intellectuals in Red Brick University pictures the academic community caught up in a web of pretense and only producing better gardens or more elaborate hedge rows under the stimulus of more free time for investigation and research.

Similarly Stringfellow Barr's recent *Purely Academic* not only describes Professor Schneider's revenge against colleagues, administrators and students, it also satirizes the world of intellect as inhabited by frustrated petty politicians who find escape in the time honored refuges of liquor, sex and gossip.

Truscot and Barr present overdrawn portraits, or at least we hope they do. They call attention to the fact, however, that citizenship is no guarantee of escape from the frustrations and boredom that plague the generality of mankind.

Life in the Kingdom of the Mind holds out the opportunity of disciplined creativity, intellectual integrity, hard work and dedicated energies. With these, the Kingdom of the Mind is a glorious place to live in—a world of excitement, questing, and fulfillment.

As Yale's President Griswold phrased it shortly before his death: "The American scholar is not Faust at his black magic or a gypsy in flight from his fellow men or a man of a philosophical habit caught in a philosophical vise. He is Man Thinking, hungering and thirsting after the things that make men think. We have those things at our disposal. Let us give them to him, for our own sake as well as for his."



CHANCELLOR SHARP

Bob Spearman: An Outstanding Example

Robert Worthington Spearman is a young man whose accomplishments have long set him apart from his contemporaries, and it is indeed fitting that he

Sanford To Cabinet?

One of the best proposals to be considered in the 89th Congress is the elevation of the Office of Education to cabinet status. The office is presently a division of the hydra-headed Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW).

The past decade has discovered that human beings are a most valuable capital resource. Economically, humans are producer items just like any other IBM machine.

And the economics that apply to IBM apply to humans. One must invest to improve the producing product.

Education has come to be regarded as the method of investing in "human capital." There is no better way to improve the stock of this resource, and thereby improve the economy, than to make it more productive through increased education and training.

Moving the Office of Education up to department status would help channel such investment and eliminate waste. Education funds are handled presently by 40 different agencies of the federal government. Not only is the financial effort diffused, but the planning of educational policy is hamstrung by numerous cooks, many of whom are more concerned with other programs.

If the promotion is made, we would like to see Governor Terry Sanford, now known nationally as an "education governor," considered as the first Secretary of Education.

Present Commissioner Francis Keppel, one of the Kennedy Harvard imports, is the front-runner because of the excellent job he has done thus far and his professional ties with education.

But new blood never hurts, and Sanford has a knack of coming up with really new programs such as the advancement school and the Learning Institute.

Perhaps he is what is needed to infuse some quality with the new quantity of federal investment in education. —PETE WALES

Promises, Promises, Promises, Promises

New Year's resolutions usually have the longevity of a treaty with the Soviets, but, like mistletoe, they seem to be one of the traditions of the season and duty calls upon us to make ours.

In the past we have been moderately honest when it becomes time to implement the promises we made ourselves during the first day of the new year. Of course, we always forget a few, but that can be chalked up to our fuzzy nature the morning after the night before.

Last year, for instance, we promised

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not to go on any safaris, and we were true. We also pledged ourselves to abstain from hashish, and so we did.

So what's up for the coming year? With visions of sugarplums and hopes of attainment, we solemnly promise:

Not to join the Daughters of the American Revolution.

To keep our daily beer consumption below the national average (of Germany).

To attend class regularly (well, once a week is regular, isn't it?)

To do everything possible to avoid becoming a member of the Pepsi Generation.

To do everything possible to avoid Pepsi.

Never, never to watch "My Favorite Martian," "Mister Ed," "The Beverly Hillbillies" or "Petticoat Junction" again.

To try and find a crisp course which our Dean hasn't heard of yet.

Failing that, to try and find a new Dean.

Failing that, not to fail everything else.

Of course, we'll undoubtedly regret ever having put these in print, as people have a funny way of holding you to things you say will be done.

But please, friends, don't turn us in to the Honor Council if we happen to slip up. After all, we did say we would try, didn't we?