

Week, She Charmed St. Andrews

sophy

ON HER ACTIVITY IN THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

My daughter was, oh, thirteen or fourteen when I was in the thick of the movement in Charlotte. I'd get "breathers" on the phone at night and letters from the Ku Klux Klan - they were priceless! I treasured them. Then the FBI came along to investigate and took them all away.

At any rate, during those days Carol kept up with my activities pretty closely, and one day she said, "I've decided what to get you for your birthday," and I said, "What?"

"One of those thirty cup coffee makers."

"Why on earth do I need a thirty cup coffee maker?"

"Because when they burn a cross in the yard you'll go out on the front step and say 'Won't you come in and have some coffee..'"

From the small window of the PanAm jet
The gridirons of the towns are lit
Like Christmas trees.
I cannot see the filth of Harlem or of Watts,
Invisible the burned-out fields of Viet Nam.
So it must look to God.
He made it well, this little bluish sphere
He gave to man,
With seas and plains and forests,
And rivers running free.
Then flung it out into the black and endless universe.
Just as I see the world from this high-flying plane,
So God, near-sighted, must see his earth.



ON ST. ANDREWS

I looked out at that sea of bright young faces, most of them born when I was middle-aged, and tried to tell them what it is like to grow old, to be old.

I say 'You must go on growing, go on learning, and them age is not a dreaded thing.' I tell, as illustration, how only yesterday I learned, here on this campus, the meaning of the world 'obscene'. It means 'off-stage'. I never knew that before. And then a voice from the back of the room: "Are you always so full of hope.."

What shall I say.. I find a simile and say 'One always has hope if one is doing something. You would not do it if you despaired and knew that in the end you'd lose. A soccer team that loses every game up to the last, goes out upon the field to win that one.' That brought the house down. I'd hit the mark. This was the truth!

But then I had them, had their ears. They listened then. I went on as far as I dared, to tell them 'No, not always hope. Sometimes despair, sometimes instead of probing death one longs for it.'

They are so young. I saw them play . . . and play it well . . . "Guys and Dolls". It must have been for them a period piece, historic theatre. They had cut their hair! What sacrifice for authenticity!

But then again they are mature. They have a world so different from mine, and campus life, compared to what I knew, of another culture. They call their teachers by first name. There is liquor in the dorms, and not forbidden. The girls are on the Pill. But they work as hard as any regimented group, and with more joy.

And everyone, the English Majors, the Freshmen and Sophomores, still undecided, even the Scientists, all write! They write reams and reams and most of it is good. I sat up well past midnight every night reading the sheaves of papers brought to me. I am no expert critic. I'm certainly not a teacher. All I can tell them is what I like and why.

But these five days have given me far more than I gave.

THANK YOU!

Farion Cannon