

Editorials

A Christmas Memory

By: Liz McGehee

"It's fruitcake weather, Buddy," Truman Capote remembers the elderly female cousin who raised him in Depression-worn Alabama exclaiming every Christmas in his autobiographical short story **A Christmas Memory**. For Capote, his cousin's announcement marked the beginning of the holiday seasons.

Those words could well belong to my mother who, the week after Thanksgiving, begins my family's Christmas rituals with her annual holiday bake-off. Come December I jars of Russian spiced tea and old fruitcake tins (the fruitcakes having been long ago used as doorstops or sent as last minute gifts to people we don't like) filled with poundcake, orangeslice cake, fruitcake cookies, chocolate chip oatmeal cookies, and graham cracker-caramel-pecan cookies, start to occupy the lower cupboards of the kitchen.

Over the following days my father hauls our boxed artificial, plastic tree down out of the attic and my mother uncovers and then places gently on our good dining room table rows upon rows of ornaments which fit and crowd the branches of our tree. (The branches of our tree are angled perfectly at 15 and 20 degree intervals.) Just two years old, the tree we have now is already showing signs of disrepair. (In fact, buying a tree has become for my family a process similar to that of buying a new car; each year companies keep coming out with trees more sturdily constructed, more streamlined, fire resistant, and imitation forest green than ever known before. Approximately every four years we are forced to carry home the latest model tree from the dealer showrooms.)

A certain kind of love arises from these rituals which carries over into the rest of my year. I think it's the kind of love that Mahatma Gandhi was referring to in the following selection from his **Science of Satyagraha**:

"The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world shows that it is based not on the force of arms, but on the force of Truth or Love. Therefore, the greatest and most unimpeachable evidence of the success of this force is to be found in the fact, that, in spite of the wars of the world, it still lives on."

Indeed, I think this love is the very force which led William Faulkner to conclude optimistically in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech that mankind will not only endure but will prevail. In the turmoil fostered by the arms race, by the strife in South Africa and Latin America, by the plights of the homeless and hungry, by the Marcoses and Duvaliers, I find the notion that we have't killed ourselves off yet sort of comforting. So despite the fact that there are still over 200 shopping days left until Santa Claus makes his next rounds, I plan to keep keeping Christmas in my heart.

Pax Americana

By: Lois Gramley

The first and last thing to remember about foreign policy is that it is determined by each nation according to its own self-interest. The US is certainly no exception, and a military advantage across the globe seems to be a most attractive position in the eyes of our policy makers. We have the most extensive military presence in the world, encompassing 360 major bases and over 2000 facilities which cover nearly every section of the globe.

Diego Garcia Island in the Indian Ocean and California in the US are polar opposites, and each harbors bases for US military installations. Our bases are located from the Caribbean to the Mediterranean Seas, the Indian Ocean, Europe, the Middle East, Canada, Iceland, Greenland, and Asia. Indeed, from one end of the earth to the other, the US exerts its military prowess.

One may wonder why a nation with friendly neighbors and oceans along its borders requires a global network of military bases to protect itself. The rationale behind US strategy and the justifications for its dominant military stance provide a complex matter for discourse. But there are several prominent theories that lay the ground for the Pentagon's reasoning: "national security" must be protected by deterrence and by maintaining resource availability and regional stability throughout the world. National security is viewed on a global scale by the Pentagon because the US has "interests" on a global scale and commitments to other nations (we have signed 43 mutual defense pacts which allow for forward-deployed military facilities, and many smaller nations do request our presence). Maintaining economic ties, assuring use of transit facilities near Sea Lines of Communication, diminishing Soviet influence and aggression, and promoting regional stability and progress are needs which the Pentagon expresses to justify its military posture.

National security is undebatably a necessary undertaking for the government of the US in a world with terrorists, a world where countries are economically entwined, and a world where hostilities among and within nations seem unending. As the strongest democratic nation, America must and does reach beyond its domestic concerns, for isolation would be an impossible position in this age of internationalism.

But, American foreign policy makers have taken us beyond what is necessarily a part of our national interest and have decided that the US merits a predominant military role in world affairs, a job as world affairs overseer and global policeman, requiring bases and facilities and rapid deployment forces on an expansive global scale.

In making the world our sphere of influence, we are finding it easy to spread our ostensibly democratic ideals by quite undemocratic means: intimidation and force. And the tendency of the military mind to perceive the world as a chessboard-type situation is perpetuating a tendency to see it in only black and white. Our allies in Central America, the South Pacific, and Western Europe have become annoyed over US military maneuvers and bases, rejected American warship visits, and rebelled over our missiles. While terrorist crises occur against the US with seemingly increasing frequency, we have little trouble showing Khaddafy what a real bully is. And in Nicaragua, the Reagan Administration remains intent on intervening to overthrow a government by force.

Maybe the best way to prevent war is to prepare for it, but in view of the Administration's apparent need to use bully diplomacy to get what it wants, we're doing more than prepare for war, we're provoking it. The first and last thing to remember about foreign policy is that it is determined by each nation according to its own self-interest. . .

Letters To The Editors

Day Students Overlooked

By: Kimberly Bryant

The Off-Campus students are a vital and important group of students at Salem College. We want to be involved and active in campus events. But, it is almost impossible for us to be included if signs are not posted in the Day Student Center with the important logistics, at least a week in advance. There have been numerous occasions the Off-Campus students have been omitted from campus events (Sophomore-Senior Banquet, SGA meetings, class meetings, yearbook pictures, etc.) simply because someone neglected to post a sign in the Day Student Center. The events listed above are not inclusive and have continued to occur in a cycle for a period of many years.

The assumption of many residential students is that because we chose not to reside on campus, we also chose not to be involved. As President of the Off-Campus Association, I can assure you that this presumption is far from being accurate. The subject of omission and the solution for it have been the topic of discussion at several of our meetings.

I believe that these omissions are senseless and must stop. We, the Off-Campus students, can no longer tolerate these systematic omissions. Whether the omissions are committed intentionally or simply oversights is not important to the issue. What is important is that the students, Off-Campus and residential, take an initiative to ensure that the existence of these omissions ceases. I will be greatly satisfied knowing that new students, who choose to live off campus, will not have to experience the same frustrations that I have for three years which have stemmed from the omissions.

The solution to this dilemma, which is ours as well as the residential students, is simple. Everyone should be extremely conscientious and aware to post a sign in the Day Student Center identical to the one posted in the dormitories and the refectory. Please remember, if you choose not to post a sign in the Day Student Center then you have made our decision for us. And we have not been permitted to determine our own destiny.

Centennial Homecoming

To the Editor,

When I was a Salem senior and editor of the Salemite my definition of an alumna was one who had met all her deadlines, passed her exams and graduated - out of school, off campus and out of touch. Many years later I realize happily that graduation is simply transition into one big class of "study abroad" and that eventually all "independent studies" lead right back to campus.

This is especially true this year when the Alumnae Association of

Salem Academy and College observes its 100th anniversary! For almost a year now a special Centennial Committee has been planning for a giant homecoming and year-long celebration of the treasures of Salem - the history, the place, and the people.

A research committee has organized a comprehensive collection of memorabilia of 1886-1986 in the Siewers Room of the library. Kick-off events begin Alumnae Week-end May 2-4, 1986 with the grand opening of the restored Rondthaler-Gramley House, a birthday party in the May Dell and special dinners and brunches for all returning alumnae. In October alumnae come back to college to study (appropriately) "Historic Preservation".

Local clubs everywhere will be drawing themselves closer to-

gether, having special functions to project the image of Salem to their communities. Special Christmas events, musical concerts, lectures, and art exhibits will carry the sensational awareness of Salem to the Centennial Celebration Finale May 1-3, 1987.

It may be impossible for you, the unborn alumnae, to realize our born again joy, but we invite you to join us and catch our enthusiasm! We especially ask for your suggestions. What part of campus life would you most like to share with us? What would you add to the celebration?

You may write to the Centennial Committee, c/o Doris Eller at the Alumnae House. We look forward to your participation and your responses. See you May Day!

Mary Ellen Thatcher
Centennial Chairman

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