

Editorial

Do Your Own Thinking!

"I don't agree with what you say but I will defend to the death your right to say it."—Voltaire

Descending from a line of State Champions, Morehead Scholars, Merit Finalists and honor students, our school is acclaimed statewide as a fine one. Still, only a few of our students possess an ingredient vital for advancement — open-mindedness. These are the people who are willing to listen to both sides of an issue before becoming set on one. This same group is willing to change ideas on an issue when evidence indicates that they should. In history, Benjamin Franklin, one of America's most respected thinkers, is said to have changed his mind on many important issues without loss of respect, for people knew he had considered both sides and had firm basis for his convictions.

Why do students accept the opinions of parents, friends, or papers for their own without colselly examining them first? These students would not allow a person to preside over their student organization without first considering his merits, so why do they allow someone to preside over their minds?

This personal closed-mindedness is not as fatal to freedom of opinion as is the condemning of those with opposing view. Why do students think that they have the right to believe what they like, but those with opposing views do not? Why must teachers never mention unpopular views to avoid being labeled a "Communist?" The answer to both is that people are either afraid of opposition, eager to display their great "partrotism," or too narrow-minded to listen to any view other than the popular one.

This all adds up to a situation which must be called "unfortunate" for while gaining nothing by disagreeing with each other, these people are losing much by not sharing and considering ideas of others.

The simplest way to erase the problem of bigotry and close-mindedness is to think for yourself. You don't have to change your views—just consider the rights, ideas, and freedom of all.

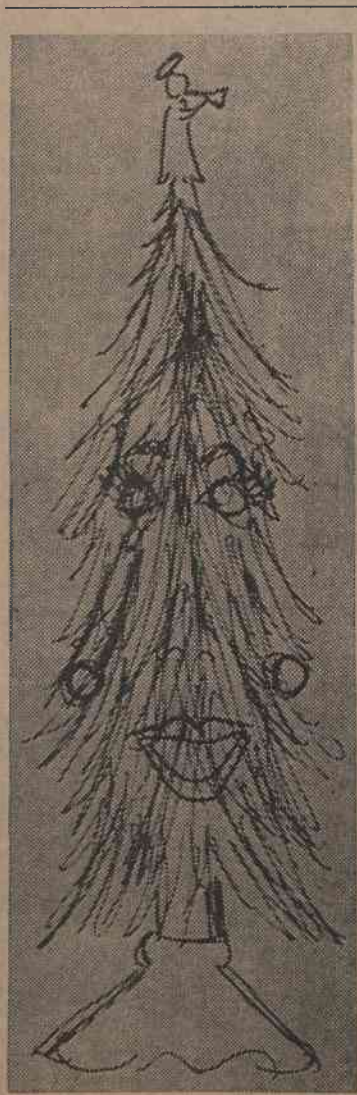
'Tis The Season To Be Creative

"'Tis the season to be jolly" and the National Honor Society and the Good Sports Club are doing their best to promote that extra special feeling of Christmas by decorating Christmas trees.

decorated by the Good Sports Club at their annual Christmas party, stands in the Senior entrance to the auditorium. The National Honor Society tree, in the Student Lounge, is gayly rimmed with handmade, old-fashioned decorations.

A beautiful 10 foot tree, de-

The New Christmas Story, Or An Ode To J. Whitcomb Riley



Christmas Is . . .

Christmas is a porch light on and waiting so a 200-pound Marine can run up the front steps, swing open the door, and pick up his 95-pound mother with her hair in a bun and a tear in her eyes and the words, "He's home for Christmas; my son is home for Christmas," ringing warmly deep inside.

My uncle was a candle.
My aunt was mistletoe,
And both of them were covered up
By grandma, spray-on snow.
My dad was made of styrofoam.
My mom—well, she was, too.
They stayed as one from birth 'til death
Stuck, by Elmer's glue.
Ev'ry fam'ly has a bum,
At least, that's what they say.
Our bad one, cousin "Plastic Ball"
Gets hung each Christmas Day.
While "Ball" swings on a lower limb.
Aunt Angel's up on high.
She watches all the "goin's on"
Through little painted eyes.

My brother's down there on the floor.
He's cotton not so white.
Still, he's workin', doin' well—
He hides the stand from sight.
Well, that's the fam'ly,
It's complete, that is, except for me.
I'm the biggest, strongest, best,
I'm the Christmas tree.
Still, I wish I were like them.
They're the ones who're seen.
I'm so jealous I could cry,
So envious, I'm green.
Soon'll be our one big day
And then I'll rule the home.
After that, well, it's bad news.
It's the end of this here po'm.
—By Chris Stanley

Re: The War In Vietnam

Dear Editor:

I would like to commend the Blackbird for publishing the panel discussion on the war in Viet Nam in the November issue of the paper. The article was thought provoking, to say the least, and the points brought out by the participants showed a great deal of thought on their parts.

The reason I wrote this letter was also to enlarge upon some of the views expressed in the column and express a few opinions of my own.

The first question read: What right, if any, has the United States in Viet Nam? It was not stressed enough that if the United States wasn't in Viet Nam, Southeast Asia would fall to the Communists. As it is, even though the United States seems to be intent on a mere stalemate, our country has succeeded in bringing the Communist charge in SE Asia to a temporary halt.

Steve Horne brought out an excellent point when he said that he believed that with each tie the United States lost prestige and, that after a few more ties it would be standing alone.

One thought which kept coming out was the concern for world opinion. I realize that the days of Unites States isolation were permanently ended at Pearl Harbor, but our country has a mind of its own. Our every action shouldn't be hindered by the opinions of the uneducated masses of backward countries. Bobby Fuerst said, ". . . as far as South America goes, they would rather we back out than fight." Do the people of South America realize the fantastic power and

responsibility the U. S. has? South Americans, Africans, Asiatics, and so on don't realize that the U. S. has to take the offensive against Communism, and it is Communism we're fighting. The danger which this "germ" presents to the world is awful; the U. S., the great bulwark of the free world, is the only antitoxin.

Mack Pridgen
Junior

From The Desk Of The Editor

The Christmas season offers one many opportunities for advancement in school. One may read two or three library books for the second semester, study for his exams or practice his senior theme talk.

One May Play

Unfortunately, however, students would rather sleep until twelve or one, play basketball or shoot pool at the Goodie Shop, and date every night.

Others Work

The season also provides a chance to get ahead financially before the New Year. Many students may be found loafing at downtown department stores with the excuse that they are working.

The Long Trip

I'm sure the most enjoyable experience during the holidays is going to grandmother's house. Everyone in the family gets up early on Christmas Day for the journey, hurrying to get dressed and decide which of their own presents to take and trying to find grandmother's and grandfather's under the piles of gift wrappings left under the tree the night before. The family then gets into the car and drives next door, over the new bicycle and roller skates in the driveway.

Why Decorate?

Christmas is a time for decorating. I suppose that is the reason mothers allow dirt in the front hall and little kids around glass ornaments. More to the point, that is why people are willing to work hours stringing popcorn, hanging icicles, and testing lights.



Accentuate The Positive Eliminate The Negative

Usually Senior High students are aware that their school is one of the finest. This pinnacle of excellence is heavily influenced by that group of students who prod the others into action. Due to the "action" people, student government works more efficiently and smoothly. However, more is demanded from the student body. Without commenting on those who support their school, the pupils who are slower to act are berated.

When we have a clean-up campaign, or start a subscription drive for the literary magazine, why not compliment those who work hours after school and plaster the walls with posters?

One of the basic tenets of getting along with people is to make note of their achievements before mentioning their mistakes.

We should definitely try the positive approach. Of course we will have a few students who have no interest in being a part of the school. On the other hand, we have hundreds of students actively working in all phases, literary, sports, publicity, academic, and others. We have a good school—let's say so!

The Blackbird

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