**Dr. Thomas Auge Journal Excerpts**

**Transcript**

**Nov. 4, 1969**

Yesterday the twenty black students at Loras walked into an administrative office building, evicted the startled staff and staged a sit-in. The reason, the administration had failed to provide a black culture house.

On the surface this appears to be an extreme, unreasonable demand. Loras College does not have a student union, hence none of the students have a satisfactory place for recreation on the campus. Likewise, there [are] 23 blacks at Loras.

Still, when put into the framework of situation of the black man in the United States and especially in white racist Dubuque, the black student request is not out of line.

Objection might also be made to the methods, but since violence was not involved I am not certain this is legitimate either.

Such issues of course bring the race problem to the front for each of us. For most whites, of course, it is simple matters. The negroes are not out of line, extremists and almost entirely beyond understanding.

Indeed a group of white students were prepared to evict the blacks by force. The majority of the faculty were in general unsympathetic, in so far as I can judge. I suppose their reaction is the white man’s reaction to pressure by blacks. Most are not for shooting them down, but the difference is one of degree not of this kind. In other words, one kind of force to keep them in line is what is needed.

Fortunately, Bud Noonan is a sensible, Christian, unprejudiced person. Since he is in the administration his influence is all for the best. As a result, the police were not called in, although, so he told me, the members of regents were on campus that day, advised it.

Personally, I feel great sympathy for these black students, aside from the issue of the culture house. The burden of their race weighs heavy on them, not simply because of white prejudice but because of the pressure of them to resist, to attack. The leader of the blacks is a very fine basketball player. As a senior he should be having a great year, enjoying his triumphs. He may, indeed, be able to establish a career through his ability here. But instead of enjoyment he has a heavy load placed on him.

**Nov. 23rd, 1969.**

The contemporary world arrived at Loras College Saturday evening, Nov. 6th (or 7th), when a race riot nearly unfolded on the campus. The vehicle for the transportation of this riot was the ineptitude, if not the vindictiveness of the Loras President. Violence was avoided only when the President gave into the pressure of a black sit-in and the insistence of neighboring colleges, the students of which were involved, that he do so.

Generally, I was a bystander to all of this. Thursday night one of the black students asked me to testify on their behalf before the Discipline Committee. I left this hearing virtually convinced that no strong penalties would be imposed.

Saturday noon, while getting my mail, I met one of the black students. He showed me a letter suspending him indefinitely.

I was terribly upset. Angry, perhaps, more than anything, uncertain as to staying at Loras since the blacks would have been forced out.

Throughout Saturday numerous faculty called me, most of them upset, although not as much as I.

What I couldn’t comprehend was how the discipline committee could have been so severe. I knew several were quite liberal on the race question. Furthermore, I felt that the defense made by myself, Bud Noonan, and the blacks were strong.

Sunday morning, [blotted name], a younger man in physics called. We decided to call a number of faculty to a meeting. We had learned Saturday night that the blacks had refused to leave and were largely increasing in number as black students from other campuses arrived.

My intention Sunday was to make clear to the President how strongly I disagreed with his decision. I hope to get a number of faculty members to sign a statement to this effect with me.

Unfortunately, [blotted name] called a number of faculty with quite different views. As a consequence the meeting degenerated into a shouting match.

At this the President shared, announcing that under great pressure, he had changed the penalty to disciplinary probation.

After some further sharp exchanges by faculty members, we all went home.

Through Sunday and Monday it became clear the President had actually over-ruled the discipline committee. The letter had sought clemency, but the President had been as harsh as possible.

At the Monday night faculty meeting all was peace and light except for Father Wilkie’s continued attacks on the President.

I was aware that someone could really put the President on the spot. Furthermore, I remained terribly disturbed not only over his decision but over the reaction of many faculty members who regretted only that he had changed his mind.

Tuesday morning my discussion with faculty members convinced me I would attack the President. The times of the – meeting was such that he was apparently getting a vote of confidence. Also, Bud Noonan informed me that Driscoll had insisted that no more black students from the Chicago ghettos be admitted. All in all, he was getting white-washed and the black students were the villains.

Tom Hurm of my dept, who on the discipline committee, he was very upset with the president.

So I decided to attack at the faculty meeting Tuesday afternoon. The weight of the attack was to be directed against his consistent refusal to follow a faculty committee’s recommendation, in this case the discipline committee.

So I took over the floor at 4:00 o’clock to give my point of view. Apparently I talked too long, although I was not emotional or vindictive about it. I received very little support, partly because the meeting had to end at 5:30.

When it was all over I was terribly shook up by it all. Nothing has bothered me so much since the death of my parents.

Several factors led to this: One, its difficult for me not to [feel] sorry for Driscoll, even though I feel him to be incompetent. Secondly, for several days, I received little public support, so that I began to wonder if I had not made it necessary for me to leave Loras.

Finally, I am not particularly a tough man. I know what is right and generally have spoken out, but I have little serenity, little inward peace.

This, as a Christian, I must learn. I must be less impulsive, less quick to speak. When I speak out, I must be clearly prepared to accept the consequences.

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