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Trouble on the Campus, 1965.

TROUBLE ON THE CAMPUS



Address delivered by
RABBI DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

THE TEMPLE, CLEVELAND, OHIO

May 9, 1965

Some five and one-half million Americans are college students. Among these young men and women, and some not so young, you will find every shade of attitude and ability. Some are dandies and some delight in being disheveled. Some are grade conscious; far more are boy-conscious and girl-crazy. Some jeer at the lonely figure of a negro on his way to class and others spend their summer in Mississippi building churches or registering voters.

This year there have been student demonstrations on most campuses; parades, picketing, and megaphoned protests. This tumult and shouting deserve our interest, but even as we seek some explanation let us remember that only a minority have marched and studied-in. The closest the majority of students came to active demonstration was the annual football rally. For the many playing it cool is still "in." Cartoonist Jules Feifer capsuled the collegiate mood in a strip which shows a gangly, fidgety sophomore seated across the desk from his faculty advisor. The advisor speaks, "Roger, it is my job to ask you, what do you want out of life?" "Well, sir, when I get out of school I would like a job that doesn't have to be great or anything, without too much responsibility, a job that I can stay in for the rest of my life. And after a year or two I would like to pick one of the girls I've been dating and marry her. She doesn't have to be a knock-out or anything, but I'd like her to make a good appearance in front of the guys where I work and my friends. And if she can keep a home, so much the better. Not a big home, mind you, maybe two or three bedrooms, a workshop, a garage and a T.V. and a stereo. And for my wife, a washer and dryer. And a kid, if I get a promotion. And we will live in the same neighborhood as the guys I go to school with so every once-in-awhile I can meet them some place and have somebody to talk to. That's it, I guess. But you know me sir, I'm an idealist."

President Clark Kerr, of the University of California, observed some six years ago, of that year's graduates: "Employers will love this generation. They are going to be easy to handle." This past fall and winter more than eight-hundred of Dr. Kerr's charges were arrested for disturbing the peace and for violating campus and community regulations. There are a growing number of students who are not easy to handle; still, the vast majority remain tractable; driven on by profound nesting instinct; much more concerned with how far a college degree might stretch their earning powers, than with how far a college education might stretch their reasoning powers; and quite convinced that this world which they never made is, probably, the best of all possible worlds.

There are more porcupines, but there are fully as many rabbits. A few of the habitually unruly may need to be reined in and domesticated; but I confess that most students rouse in me an urge to reach out and shake them awake and to convince them that there is more to life than a steady job, a split-level home, Saturday night out and Social Security; that beyond the gentle virtues and the gentle vices, there is a surging, exciting world, ripe with high adventure, arching opportunity and profound responsibility. It is tragic to be a twenty-year old mummy — already dead to this bright awesome world of ours.

Joe College is a familiar, and rather amiable, if dull, fixture in college life. The young rebel, bearded, disheveled, dressed in too-tight slacks is rather new and anything but dull.

It all began at Berkeley in the fall of the year. Thousands of protesting students literally brought that campus to a stand-still. At issue was a University mandate denying the use of a certain square near the main gate to political and protest organizations for posters and for the solicitation of funds. It began at Berkeley. It spread rapidly. Causes varied, but hardly a major University remained unruffled.

At Yale, students marched long into the night to protest the refusal of tenure to a popular Associate Professor of Philosophy. At St. John's College in New York City, students demonstrated against what they called the "paternalism" of the clerical administration. In nearby Oberlin the issue was a serious one, indeed; a rule required that when girl visitors were in the men's dormitory rooms, doors had to be kept ajar so many inches. The administration insisted on four inches. The student body said two. At the University of Syracuse, thousands turned out to convince the Chancellor that he must add three days to the scheduled mid-winter vacation.

There is a new assertiveness, a new sense of power and, in many cases, a new maturity in today's college population. During 1945 and 1946 hardened and disciplined World War II veterans came onto the campus and managed for a while to erase most of the tinsel and the

rah-rah of pre-war days. Well, in many ways we now have a new generation of veterans on the campus — veterans of the war on poverty, veterans of the war on race, returnees from Peace Corps service. Many have gone into the battlegrounds of our slums and into the front lines of racial demonstration. These young people spent their winters tutoring and stimulating self-help in the center city's slums. Some heeded the call of Dr. Martin Luther King and other civil rights leaders and went South and stood unflinching before police dogs and helmeted deputies. They listened to President Kennedy and joined in service to the needy of other lands. They went out docile, certain only of their concern with the American promise; they came back impatient, determined not to be put off by vague promises. They are prepared to protest for redress.

What are their grievances? Grievances vary. Largely, they grow out of the sad fact that universities tend to treat these adults of twenty or twenty-two, as if they were teenagers. Most universities have faculty-student committees. Good educational practice advises that you listen to what the students have to say about courses and college life generally. But in most places these faculty-student committees have been a public relations gimmick, mere window dressing, so that predetermined administrative decisions can be passed down and placidly accepted by the student body. In many dormitories students are ordered to abide a discipline of check-ins and curfews stricter than any they know in their homes; if, indeed, their homes insist on such rules.

Grievances vary, but behind them all can be found an unfortunate truth. It is this—on the modern campus the young scholar is taught, but is no longer educated. Today's student is an IBM card: date of admission, dormitory, tuition, courses, grades, probable date of graduation; not a person. It is possible to earn an A.B. degree—put in four years of study—and not have spent a single hour in discussion with a senior member of the faculty. Most teaching is done by graduate assistants and instructors, often hardly a year or two older than the class. "Newsweek Magazine" recently featured a photograph of a Freshman Course in Psychology at the University of Minnesota. You saw a high platform in a vast amphitheatre from which a lone professor was speaking to two-thousand students. Students are housed in student compounds, where they meet adults, to be sure, experts in diet, experts in discipline, all non-academic people. At a modern college there is more filling out of forms and passing in of tests than meeting of minds.

The university was once a place where able and trained minds reacted upon untrained, but able and eager minds. Out of that exchange and that spark came intellectual growth. Today's universities are knowledge factories. The student is the raw material to be turned out

by a carefully engineered assembly line as a competent technician, guaranteed as to skill and parts. The university capably apprentices a young man for his economic role, but remains largely irrelevant to his citizenship, his philosophy, his understanding or his humanity. There are many reasons for this. Colleges simply could not staff themselves to cope with the student explosion. Then at the very time when tens of thousands of additional students descended upon the schools, many on the faculty, in effect, withdrew from teaching. Research became their profession and many came to look on the classroom as a time-consuming nuisance. Government and foundation grants help to balance enormous academic budgets, so the universities encourage their people to apply and make no complaint when they busy themselves in full-time research. Many faculties promote junior members on a basis of publish or perish. Under such pressure it is understandable that instructors and associates look upon teaching as an intrusion on their laboratory or library time. Universities bid eagerly for the names in the academic world. Faculty prestige rests with the famous, and these men and women write their own ticket: Yes, they will come to Harvard or go to the University of California. They expect, and rightly so, a fine salary, furthermore, they expect to lead their own lives. Of course, they will be happy to teach a graduate course in their specialty every three or four semesters. If they have a graduate assistant or two in their particular field they will guide him toward his doctoral degree, but that is it. Today's professor lives off campus. Often he is away more than he is in residence and he is usually seen by the undergraduate only at a distance. Students suffer the anonymity of the mass society and pay the full price of spiraling academic costs. They know that they are only a statistic. At the University of California a large placard carried by one young lady read, "Dr. Kerr, I am No. 17436257. Do not bend, mutilate or spindle. Dr. Kerr, I am not a number, I'm a human being."

Once upon a time, and not too long ago at that, on many campuses there was a mingling of faculty and students and the mood was correspondingly mature. As the fissure between faculty and student has widened, the mood of the undergraduate has become increasingly juvenile, restless, and rebellious. An undergraduate sub-culture has come into being. It has its own politics and its own politicians, its own language, its own literature, its own music and most conspicuous of all its own uniform—deliberately unconventional. You know it well; scrawny beard, stringy hair, no make-up, tennis shoes, slacks. It is as if the young had set out deliberately to break every rule and discipline which you trained them in at home; and that, of course, is the whole point of it. For this is a *nein-sagers* uniform. The idiom, the language, the attitude are uniformly critical, critical of the adult world, critical of you and me and of all that society stands for.

Many of you have sat across the dinner table and heard your own private rebel tick off his criticism. He does it with remarkable aplomb, as if you were a sociological statistic, not a parent. "Mother (father) how can you live the life you do?" Shallow is a favorite word, so is empty. Another is hypocritic. "How can you go along kow-towing to those you don't care at all about? I've heard you call business a rat race. Why do you stay with it? Aren't you becoming more rodent every year?"! "You say you went out to have a good time. Is seeing the same people and hearing them say the same things over and over a good time? What is small talk but a high wall against thought? All that is important and exciting in life; ideas, values, religion, politics are kept at arms length." I never know whether parents are put off by the ridiculous truth of it all; he tends to hit rather close to the mark for he verbalizes ideas we hardly dare admit; or whether it is the stubble that bobs up and down in front of our face as our private prophet speaks our doom. But this I do know, too many parents pass it off negligently, "we were all young once." I would advise us not to be put off by the excess or by the uniform. The uniform especially gets in the way of our listening. It means not only that he flaunts all in which we take pride; but by wearing it he seems to be alien, if not wicked. Somehow we see not our son but headlines about sexual aberration, drugs, even perversion. Now it is true that there are among the legion of the unkempt a small number of the pathological. Sex is big trouble on today's big campus, as it is in all areas of our society. But I doubt whether the young rebel who talks so much about free love and adult hypocrisy actually breaks the rules any more often than, say, his well-shaven colleague from fraternity row. Casual liaison is, unfortunately, a pre-marital way of life.

Let us not be put off by the uniform. For many this uniform is no more than protective coloration. It gives them a chance to try out the revolutionary ideas he has heard to find out if they fit. His manifesto tends to be parrot-talk; a mixture of sociology lectures and the carping criticism of his friends. Here is his chance to lose himself for a while in a sub-culture from which he can safely challenge the values of his home culture. He has not yet shattered all the values, rather he is searching for values and is confused. He senses that he stands on quicksand and he seeks new foundations.

Don't be put off by the uniform or by the excessive language or by the downright foolishness with which many of these young people express themselves, for there is much in what they say we ought seriously to listen to. They tell us that we are a smug generation—that we are fat, prosperous, complacent, self-satisfied; and we are. They tell us that we do a lot of talking about citizenship, but most of that talk means only that we insist on the right to do business, to pay mini-

mal taxes, and have the privilege of giving a ten-dollar bill to a charity. He hears us talk of brotherhood, once a year in February. Brotherhood comes up again only when Junior informs Father that he is working five afternoons a week in a settlement house near his school. How we can go on being "realistic" about the dangers of walking in and working in the center city! He hears us do a lot of talking about peace, but he knows that when he told us that he was going to Washington to protest the President's military policies in Viet Nam, we sat him down and laid the law down.

There is a great deal of talk—talk, talk and take in our society. To be sure, there are any number of adults who are committed, sacrificially so, to the strengthening and broadening of our democracy. He neglects these, but truly how many are there? Is he not saying to us what the prophet Hosea said to the children of Israel so many centuries ago, "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto you? O Judah, what should I do unto you? Your goodness is as the summer cloud and as the morning dew that so quickly evaporates". Our goodness is more verbal than verifiable. Our citizenship is more a comfortable self-assurance than a sacrificial dedication.

The young rebel sees his parents and many of his parent's friends, getting, spending, taking and demanding, insisting and carping, struggling and status-driven. He is critical. This is not his vision of life. This is not the society in which he would be happy. If his criticism ended here, as a Rabbi I would say "Amen." His point is valid. If his criticism led him to a life of determined action and sound citizenship, I would champion his every cause. We are smug and we need crusaders. But, unfortunately, for many of these rebels criticism is the beginning and the end of it all. They criticize for criticism's sake. And so, despite many apparent differences their lives are as complacent and smug and self-envolved as those of their parents. They live in a world of their own and ask to be left alone. They demand the privilege of criticism, but not the privilege of responsibility. A minority is active in civil protest and in welfare. The majority, however, sit around in their coffee houses and carp and complain. Tomorrow night they will sit in the same place, in the same seat, in the same dirt, with the same complacency and speak the same criticisms. These rebels without a cause have developed an ingenious philosophy of non-involvement. Life is absurd, they argue, and pointless. It is useless to seek solutions for there are none. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Let me read to you a bit of a poem, it is actually blank verse, which was popular at Berkeley:

"One of my old friends of whom I was most fond,
was a sane and a capable blond, who,
except for a habit of taking her own photograph

whenever she felt bad
never did anything out of the ordinary
until that Sunday when she flipped over a
canoe and disappeared in Stow Lake,
surfacing eventually to explain that she had,
while holding her breath submerged, experienced
a new direction, and consequently that same
night burned all her pictures, gave me
the camera and the key to her flat,
and, rotating a gay bandada and promising to write,
flew calmly off to Cairo without
a reservation.

It is one thing to fly calmly off to Selma, quite another simply to fly off the handle. Rebellion, to the Cairo-bound, is admittedly no more than a lark though they will argue that by some strange alchemy, its very folly is its wisdom. These rebels without a cause have developed a philosophy which begins and ends with the word absurd. Life is absurd. Concern is absurd. Virtue is absurd. Don't get involved. All they ask is to be left alone to nurse privately their grievances against life. All they ask is the freedom to do foolish things. The rebellion at Berkeley began over a serious question of constitutional rights. The rebellion at Berkeley degenerated into a rude and truculent protest for the right to broadcast over the campus radio, and to print in the campus newspaper materials which were laced with those four-letter expletives which society considers obscene.

Honesty, truth-speaking, righteousness, full and equal justice are elemental Biblical affirmations. Any criticism which insists upon principle and measures society against high principle is religiously motivated. But when criticism exists only for criticism's sake, when virtue as a standard is denied, when it is assumed that life is utterly hapless; then the critic denies religion. Such criticism is no more than a sniggering cynicism—cheap and cheapening. They see all our vices and none of our virtues. They see the confusions of life, but not civilization. They see the absurd, but none of the profound. But here too, in a strange way, the young reflect the adult world. How often have you telephoned a neighbor and asked him to be active on a school committee or for the Scouts, or for some political cause or some city undertaking, only to be told; "I'm too busy, I don't want to be involved? A few Sundays ago, Adele and I and the children were driving along Shaker Boulevard on our way to the Temple. We came to the busy intersection at Lee Road. A young boy of sixteen turned into Lee, became confused by the blinking light, and crashed into us. It was a bad crash, but accidents will happen. But how do you explain the ten or twelve cars stopped at the intersection which waited for the light to change and

simply drove on. No one stopped. Not a driver offered help. They simply drove on. Where do children learn not to be involved? From you, from your actions, from your priorities, from your conversatin.

Once upon a time, not so very long ago, the University was a place in which the Freshman was overwhelmed by the vastness of knowledge. His every assumption was put to the test. It was confusing. It was exciting. Hopefully he ended his studies with broadened horizons. Teachers guided his stretch and encouraged his wonder. A world was shattered, but another took its place. Today, wonder and values are not part of the curriculum. The student brings his own confusion and he leaves with his own confusions. No one concerns himself with his "why" and his "which is right?" The University serves a professional not a pedagogic function. That is its shame—and a want which must be recognized by the citizen. Since we can no longer count upon the faculty to talk seriously and maturely with our sons and daughters, we must have the courage to do so ourselves. Most parents shy from such discussion. Many are sensitive to blank spots in their formal education. We are self conscious lest we may reveal our ignorance. We are overly conscious of our own compromises and of our failings. We are conscious that our lives include a certain element of hypocrisy. What life does not? Moreover we are in the habit of treating the collegian as a high-schooler. We forget that at twenty or twenty-two they are physically mature and mentally at the peak of their powers, and that they fully deserve honest answers even if our honesty must include many an "I don't know" or an "I'm uncertain."

Let's listen to what these young people have to say and check up on our own habits. Let us be honest with them but let us insist that an adult has outgrown petulance. Despite its confusion, life is not absurd. Despite the threat of war many work to end war. There are slums, but we are making war on poverty and this is a war that can be won. Above all, let us teach our young people an elemental truth of the tradition. *Al Tifrosh Min ha-sibbur*. "Separate not thyself from the community." Not only is the lone sheep preyed on by the wolf, but the lone sheep becomes wolf; predator, and scavenger. No one can walk alone, even if one desires to, at least not for long. If there is war he will be drafted and he may die. If there is poverty he will be backlashed by the anger of the demagogues. If there is racial unrest he will have a place in the picket line, perhaps in prison. No one can walk alone.

Let me end as I began. There are five and one-half million Americans in college today. Among these young people, and some not so young, you will find every shade of ability and of attitude. They are getting something less of a college education than you received a generation ago. Correspondingly they need more of you. A great challenge

has been thrown to the universities. We pray that the universities will recognize educational responsibility as well as economic reality. But we cannot wait for the university to reform. There are five and one-half million young people in college, your sons and your daughters. Their confusions are your responsibility. Their future, is, in some measure, in your hands. Accept them as adults. Open your minds to them; do not be afraid of expressing doubt, if you doubt; failure, if you have failed; virtue, if you believe in virtue; tolerance, if you are tolerant. Help them to see other human beings and their work and their worries, your woes and your hopes. If they can see a single adult whole, they will have a standard of wholeness and such a standard can not but be to their good.



As your adviser, Roger, It's my job to ask you: What do you want out of life?

(Roger)

Well, Sir -

When I get out of school, I'd like a job that doesn't have to be great or anything and without too much responsibility, that I could stay in for the rest of my life.

And after a year or two, I'd like to pick one of the girls I've been dating and marry her. She doesn't have to be a knockout or anything but I'd like her to make a good appearance in front of the guys where I work and my friends - And if she can keep a home, so much the better. Not a big home, maybe one or two bedrooms, a workshop and a garage. And a TV and a stereo. And for my wife a washer and dryer. And a kid. If I get a promotion.

And we'll live in the same neighborhood with the guys I go to school with so every once-in-a while I can meet them someplace and have somebody to talk to.

That's it, I guess.

But you know me. I'm an idealist.



One of my old friends
of whom
I was most
fond, was a
sane and capable
blond who,
except for a habit
of taking her own
photograph
whenever she felt bad
never did anything
out of the
ordinary
until that Sunday
when she flipped
over a canoe
and disappeared in
Stow Lake,
surfacing eventually
to explain
that she had,
while holding her
breath submerged,
experienced a new
Direction, and
consequently
that same night
burned
all her pictures,
gave me
the camera
and the key
to her flat
and,
rotating a gay
bandana and
promising
to write, flew
calmly
off to Cairo
without
a reservation.



6 years ago Clark Ken - President of school - to only 600 most
return of all copies - was v. y. Cal. in 1911 - connected - 7
~~to be the first~~ of most old, all in 1911

EMPLOYERS WILL LOVE THIS GENERATION. THEY ARE GOING TO BE EASY TO HANDLE.

In the past 4 months over 400 Bankley students have been awarded
for their superb computer skills - which is very relevant in the college
paperwork which is very busy - but even today -

may be on trial, ~~which~~ ^{drawn on} is a profound psychological,
concerned more with how much a village lawyer will make
than earning power (a matter which a village education will

state was necessary power and quite prepared to accept the
method but the new method as any other method of conduct of business.

There are no paraphrases in before which at least as my understanding
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1. Higher number need to be shaken and 8 times consecutively -
2. shaken but there is more to help can - shaking not, expect lead

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[illegible]

is kept a secret understanding is not denied preferred is not denied

the release is a ^{renewal} ~~renewal~~ of another cycle

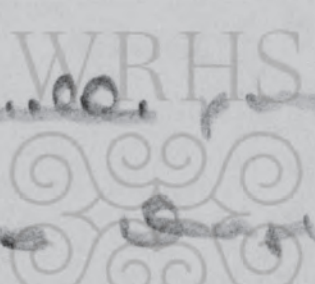
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~~neither~~, ~~for~~ ~~an~~ OR NOR double
~~at~~. I ~~have~~ ~~you~~ ~~be~~ ~~seen~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~found~~ ~~near~~ ~~the~~ ~~entrance~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~building~~ ~~is~~

~~The~~ ~~man~~ ~~who~~ ~~was~~ ~~in~~ ~~charge~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~work~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~time~~ ~~when~~ ~~he~~ ~~made~~ ~~himself~~ ~~felt~~ ~~a~~ ~~competitor~~ ~~to~~ ~~him~~. ~~It~~ ~~was~~ ~~at~~ ~~Bundy~~ ~~where~~ ~~as~~

[illegible][illegible]

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 you longing will put where you deliberately wanted your
small rule - where also the same rule - shallow -
deligion - where ambles - // looking to keep my ambles in
peace - to be known - noted - // you're was at it, and,
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Tina's affairs! You yourself at it, suddenly, a not
now - why are you at it? want you be more what
any you?

I never knew ambles part of my life
almost built of one day - ambles part of my life
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as if we are a clinical specimen - and the INTEREST is a
so wide and stable / - as the stability of your mind
pops up & down
down // The stays here & two big rules and deliberate
which reminds of our young rules have been on for my
all many a phase was in it. It is not just that any more
are young on any rule - but our rules make ambles part of my life
on deliberate disposition of it all. With that in mind, we are in
chance and entirely free here, and then we are in chance
days, if not even old person. There are no rules



devaluing itself - it's up to you what you want
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in February and you - but certainly the whole industry
has to deal by spend more time and much more than
clinging up, pulling up and trailing. Of course, my whole
one entire, dedicated, committed - but how many? In
a new eye view of the full circle, ^{TAKE} ~~the~~ - and each other
at beginning & end. - One thing is sure to be done
perhaps there are to be children of Israel.

o Explanations, and I do into Three
o judges
For your goodness on a moving land
and in the land and paradise.

Handwritten - one goodness in intention not action -

VERBAL MATTER THAN VERIFIABLE
- confutable self assurance and a sample.

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multiply just ^{myself} the ^{complaint} complaint - of the young reader would continue to
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philosophy - a clarification of the observed action
his criticism leads to no
more serious principles of life than the
most mundane practical point which he meets

... didn't want to get involved?

But what is left some way part of a community - of
a group - of a nation & world community? If you see
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the breakdown of the ^{souls} ~~community~~ - & related to you are
essentially. The unlike to the other but along there is
place. ^{Butter for my ship} ~~It is not~~ there is much - & proble-
points - for main not.
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is near - you will be. If there is not power, you will lose
seems by the hot breath of the enemy - if there is no help, you
others who will be destroyed.



There is no need to be in the community -
not out is it
Our way of life is grey; but not black - another but
not dead. Long and our stated will be on these com-
munity our also of power and control will be done can of the
community content and phil phil phil - & long and the community
then stated may power the ancient opponents of community
and community in the past, you are hope - & much and
one core found some but to had see the one but and
could no longer be his side.