

Fairness of Affirmative Action

BY TOM MCGONIGLE

In last week's Aquinas Jack Dougherty presented a clear and rational defense of Affirmative Action. Although it was, of course, overshadowed by the more significant social evil of the track marathon, Jack's article did provoke a howl of indignation from that poor, oppressed minority, the great middle class student. Sham! Fraud! Unfair! was the general reaction. Affirmative Action is nothing but an euphemism for reverse discrimination! And the good Lord knows that the middle class is already dumped upon.

Ever since robber barons became passe and black segregation deteriorated into a crudity reserved for southern crackers, demagogues and political hacks of all sizes and descriptions have developed a new issue: the

affluence of the middle class.

Steak, while not a staple, is no stranger to his supper table. He watches a color TV from the big Lazy Boy chair in his ranch home. His clothes are fashionable, clean and far from

Action or not, we are devoid of any handicaps. Our own ability is the only limitation on our lives. We are free from the albatrosses of disease, hunger, or poverty.

The great majority of students here share no ancestral guilt for

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threadbare. He has ready access to at least one of the family cars, and is probably among the first of his family to attend college. His neighborhood is predominantly white, and his only connection with blacks comes from either television or short visits to a major city. In short, he has lived

slavery or Jim Crow — our ancestors had no position of power (they probably were not in America) during the formulation of the policies. To that extent, Affirmative Action is not a "mea-culpa" for past sins. What has happened is that the federal government has designed a program to aid various segments of the population shackled by limitations besides those of

ability. Poverty and race are, quite simply, great barriers to success. Affirmative Action, then, should be argued on the merits of its success or failure in achieving its goal — the selfish whine of discrimination by the middle class should be beneath discussion.

In other words, the next time you sit down, kick off your Adidas sneakers, flick on the N.F.L. and munch on your ham and cheese sandwich, you ought to realize that there really are people who don't know where their next meal is coming from or where they are going to sleep at night. Not everyone's Daddy brings home a regular paycheck. And

the good, sheltered life of a white, middle class kid, and he has enjoyed a standard of living he did nothing to earn.

Into this context, then, comes Dougherty's article. The reaction is nothing less than absurd. For the great majority of students on this campus to complain that an Affirmative Action program gives an unfair advantage to a minority student is so much self-serving dribble.

Folks, we have been given every break in the world — the deck has been stacked in our favor. If we can't fulfill our life's

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ambition, or if the chips don't fall as we like, there is only one person to blame — that figure in the mirror who stares out at us every morning. Affirmative

most importantly, realize that in any competition against a person aided by an Affirmative Action program, you already have a head start.



A Little Soul-Searching For SOM Seniors

BY DENNIS HAGEMANN

Soon will come the time when shall be praised the accomplishments and prospects of many an ambitious, enthusiastic senior, whether he/she be a developed cut-throat biologist or a semi-pious theologian, or something in between. Soon we will assume our roles in "the real world," we seniors, an educated, cultured generation imbued with confidence and dreams. And soon must come an evaluation of our talents and limits, our strengths and weaknesses, our goals and resources.

As every previous senior class (and generation) has asserted, we are convinced that we are unique, that we are the hope, the pride, the saviors for a brighter tomorrow. But let's snap back to reality!

We are little more than a flock of over-perfumed peacocks, who live and die by our respective majors and departments, whether joined out of conviction or apathy. And we have played lap-dogs to the experts and curricula of our respective majors and departments, and live and die by the methods and matter of our fields.

It is time we take inventory and ask ourselves what schemes we will embark upon and what futures we will build. The complexities of past college days cannot be justly resurrected; we can only hope to realize what we stand for — as related "majors" and prospective professionals.

Beginnings are often arbitrary, so, let me address the businessmen and women of the Class of '79, be you young and aspiring accountants, managers, financiers, marketeers, or pseudo-tycoons. The foundations vary — your Bibles may range from the Wall Street Journal to Samuelson to some other "expert" — but the delicate balance between profit and humanity always tilts on the side of the buck. The business

world is devoted to the green-back, and understandably so.

The industrial revolution not only changed the physical characteristics of this nation but the character of its men.

Over the years we began to equate merit with money. (Our society trained its young first to make money, and second to serve humanity, which should not be confused with serving humanity by making money.)

The result is that for decades now this nation's best minds have entered the nation's corporate structure, and with sufficient reason. Corporations pay most for those with profit-making abilities.

But look at what has happened to many of our leading corporations and the businessmen who run them. They have undermined American ideals by developing secret slush funds, bribing foreign leaders, making illegal campaign contributions, cheating their stockholders, falsifying their books, embezzling securities, corrupting their own colleagues.

This is not to condemn big business out of hand. There are certainly thousands of honest, righteous, patriotic corporation executives who would sooner resign than turn a dirty trick or violate the law. It is merely to point out that a climate of moral malaise seems to have infected some sectors of this country, particularly in the businesscosm.

And it would be self-defeating if this class of intellectuals from our School of Management followed in the murky paths of past business irregularities and shortcomings.

Considering your spirit of excellence attained from your collegiate education, your level-headed, even-spirited, well-adjusted feeling for humanity, tell me, what will you do and what will you not do to turn a profit?

COMMENTARY

exploitation of the middle class by knee-jerk liberals for those lazy poor people while the rich escape even the most meager burden. Notice how cleverly robber barons and racism have joined forces and resurrected like a phoenix upon the modern political scene. What is even sadder is that the middle class actually believes it's being exploited.

From my observation, the average student at Scranton is white, lives in suburbia, and comes from a family with an income between \$15,000 and \$35,000 a year. He is no doubt the great grandchild of poor immigrants who worked from dawn to dusk in a mine or factory for an employer who would never be accused of enlightened attitudes toward labor. His grandparents and parents continued up the economic scale to achieve the

We Hardly Knew Him

The Legacy of John Paul I

REV. VERNON SATTLER

When Cardinal Luciani was elected Pope on the very first day of balloting and showed his warm smile to the world, he chose the name of both his immediate predecessors. The world thought this indicated that he would attempt to wed the kindness of the "peasant Pope" John XXIII to the awesome serious intelligence of Paul VI. But the secular press largely turned to Catholic critics of the leadership of Paul VI for a set of guesses as to what would happen under the new Pontiff. The media presumed to suggest what his priorities should be. They suggested that he should, as soon as possible, turn his attention to a reconsideration of Papal primacy, to give a second look at the traditional doctrine on sexual morality and divorce, open the priesthood to women, permit priests to marry, and lift the ban on contraception.

(Strangely, there was little speculation on what he might come up with as a leader in evangelization; work for peace and justice; concern with end of war in the world; the fight against poverty; for human dignity and freedom; peaceful dialogue among nations, ethnic groups, and peoples with cultural or religious differences.)

John Paul I died suddenly before any evaluation could be made of him and his work. But he made a little known address to a group of American bishops on September 21, just a week before his death. In this speech, he made it very clear that he was in no way considering reversing the direction of his immediate predecessor, Paul VI, but that he was going to continue, implement and develop in that direction.

I can do no better than string together some of his statements

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