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How Nixon Used the Media, Billy Graham, and the Good Lord to Rap with Students at Tennessee U

by Garry Wills

Jesus wept

America, student radicals claim, is all a war zone—with one exception. The war, they say, is over on the campus and the students have won it. The enemy may not enter this liberated territory. As if to prove this point, Administration spokesmen gave their commencement speeches last year at garrison colleges (West Point, Annapolis, Air Force Academy). But then Nixon, in a brilliant stroke, seemed to destroy the thesis—he went to a large university late in May; was enthusiastically received; left a happy glow behind him. One had to admire his nerve and calculation, timing and choice of place, his orchestration of all circumstance to optimum effect. In fact, the more one knows about that blitzkrieg of improbable tranquility, the more awesome it becomes. This was perhaps our greatest "non-event"—not the kind Daniel Boorstin analyzed, the contrived TV "happening," but a real non-event, one that *did not happen*. The campus did not invite Nixon, did not receive him, did not enjoy peace when he left it. Fact was everywhere at variance with appearance. And because it *did not happen*, the campus is still liberated territory.

What, then, did happen? It is hard to see, so fast the hands make the shells fly, hiding the pea. Like all slick con games, it looked simple, but wasn't. The first trick, no mean one, was to get Billy Graham onto a campus, Crusade and all; then to have the Crusade invite Nixon, and pretend he was invited by the campus; then keep the campus from the Crusade, while claiming that Nixon's reception by the Crusade was really acclaim from the campus (now where's the pea?)—and *voilà!* student resentment would vanish.

It was touchy work, each step of it. First the campus had to be large and "representative," yet relatively safe. The University of Tennessee was fine, Knoxville campus just fine, East Tennessee, that Republican ear of the state, what Kevin Phillips calls "the hill vote," so crabbed and parochial it fought its own neighbors in the Civil War (East Tennessee did not join the Confederacy till 1954), the land of Alvin York and "The Vois" (Volunteers), so called because, when there is dying to be done, they are always first to get in line.

Though Knoxville is the largest campus in the South, it does not house a statewide university. Four other campuses in the state system serve places like Nashville and Memphis. Those who came to Knoxville were always either East Tennessee or they got East-Tennessee-

ized very rapidly. Football players, of course, were sought everywhere, but they soon learned to join the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (some of them would guard Nixon's platform on the twenty-yard line). Football, fundamentalism, and fraternities controlled the campus. Clean living meant confiscating *Playboy* and killing the other team's quarterback. There was no town-gown tension. Every Saturday Knoxville emptied into the stadium. Stores and streets were splashed with the team colors (orange and white); and the region proudly calls itself Big Orange Country. Campus leaders without the giveaway *i-for-e* of "East Tennessee" were unthinkable. Fraternity leaders, inducted into a super-fraternal secret society, the "Scarabeans," graduated from college into the First Baptist Church, as the ruling elite of Knoxville.

The people of the city always felt this was *their* school. Local kids, at the Saturday game, grew up with a single ambition—to sit in a fraternity bloc marked out, in the stadium, by its own banners and cheers and cheerleaders. The town recaptured its youth at these games, reliving early escapades—fraternity indiscretions winked at here, where bootleggers and Baptists, in alliance, prevent sale of liquor by the drink. Maintaining the fiction of "private clubs" and the omnipresent brown bag (to keep booze decent), Big Orange Christians confess their sin of drinking even as they commit it.

So Billy was bound to come, and to this stadium. The First Baptist city fathers wanted him. The football field was already sacred, consecrated by a stirring liturgy (variable, bringing tears to alumni, adopted alumni, prospective alumni, pretended alumni, everybody, all Knoxville—first the band and *The Tennessee Waltz* and the prettiest drum majorettes imaginable, trained up all their lives to this orange explosion of loveliness; then the hush of *The Star-Spangled Banner*, and finally the whole town turned to one throat as the team came, one by one, announced, up the stem of a giant T formed by the band, then peeled off, alternating, along the arms of the T, poured onto the field and into local history, a dynasty, a succession of names remembered as, in other places, kids recite the list of Presidents).

Other teams had coveted this field, its rubbery artificial turf—pro teams offering cash to play on it. But the temple was not profaned. Only Billy would be worthy of it, hold services as awesome as those of The Vols, decanted out of their T, in a sacrifice to local gods.

Yet, getting Billy was not easy. The impresario was Ralph Frost, long a power on the campus, now reduced to "Manager of University Concerts." He came to the university years ago, to run Y.M.C.A. affairs; for a long time he arranged fundamentalist religion courses, given for credit, with their climax in a week-long convocation of religious renewal and academic revivalism. Out of his "Y" office, Frost booked the best entertainment and edification, bands and singers and gospel choirs and preachers, celebrities, Ralph greeting stars, stars shining down on him in his office from publicity glossies, some stars greeting Billy, Billy greeting Ralph.

But in time the faculty thought better of these state-school revivals, and used legal objections to introduce a scholarly Department of Religious Studies—which left Frost with nothing to arrange, anymore, but concerts. Nothing, that is, till Billy, his best booking coup.

He had to go off-campus, and he went where the power was, to First Baptist's leading businessmen. A party of them, six in all, including the First Baptist pastor, came to the university's president, Dr. "Andy" Holt (so known to all, and idolized by Knoxville's solid citizens, of whom he is the solidest), with a request to lease the stadium for Billy's coming. Holt and his underlings said yes, and charged the Crusade a mere \$20,000 for ten days (\$2,000 per day-and-night in the giant modern horseshoe, capacity 65,000—a fine rebuff to football teams that bid huge sums for a single afternoon in the place).

Two justifications are offered for this transaction. The first one, stressed increasingly as Dr. Holt disclaimed responsibility for what ensued, was that an outside group—the Graham Crusade—had rented a facility from the university. The school had nothing to do with what happened in that facility during the period of lease. Separation of Church and State, y'know. A straight cash deal. It was all Billy's show, not the university's.

This explanation skids over several things. The ridiculously low rent. The fact that President Holt had signed Ralph Frost's petition asking Billy to come. And Holt not only attended the Crusade, but led

an "offertory prayer" soliciting funds for the Graham organization. Whatever the legal fiction, the university administration was aiding and sponsoring a religious crusade, and doing so with casual disregard for the students' interests. The stadium contains, in its Colosseum's outer rim, two semicircular dormitories, and officials had, in effect, rented out these dorms for the ten nights preceding final exams.

So the Crusade came, with all its hoopla, like a circus pitching its tent on the campus. Two student rock festivals were canceled so they would not disturb the Crusade. Other student gatherings were frowned on, discouraged, threatened. The night was filled with super-amplified Billy sermons. Buses lined the campus streets as crowds ranging from 50,000 to 100,000 came and went, each day, on a campus of 23,000 students. It was all extraneous to campus life, goes Dr. Holt's defense—and, as if to back that up, Graham refused invitations from faculty and students to meet "in a more academic setting" than the stadium. The Department of Religious Studies, for instance, asked to speak with him, and was told Dr. Graham was too intensely caught up in a Crusade to make other appointments during its course. Yet as soon as Billy arrived, local papers blossomed out in pictures of him playing golf with Andy Holt and the pastor of First Baptist. The city power structure, not the students, had invited him, and Billy observed the priorities.

The second line of defense is offered by Chancellor Charles Weaver, technically the custodian of this campus. President Holt is in charge of the whole state system, with chancellors under him to care for the major campuses—though Holt's home and power base, in every sense, is Knoxville. Ralph Frost knew what he was doing when he took his businessman-panel to Holt's office; Weaver was summoned there to rubber-stamp the deal.

Yet Weaver claims it was all done on his authority, and was an educational affair, properly sponsored by the university. "As a matter of fact, frankly, I would not turn down any speaker here, so long as an authorized campus group requested his presence." What group asked for Graham? "The Fellowship of Christian Athletes." Frost, after securing his businessmen and First Baptists, sought ecumenical cover for his operation, suggesting that various groups cosponsor the Crusade—including the Knoxville

County Fellowship of Christian Athletes. But no one, not Frost, not Weaver, not Coach McDonald (Assistant Athletic Director for the Knoxville campus and Secretary-Treasurer of the County Fellowship of Christian Athletes) could give me the name of a single student who requested Graham's presence or took part in negotiations to bring him into Knoxville—though all three men still claim this elusive student and his fellows were official hosts for the Crusade.

"Graham came as a result of our open speaker policy. As you may know," Weaver winked at me, "I, frankly, got burned on the subject of that policy, and now I'm the firmest believer in it." Two years ago, when Weaver took the newly created post of Chancellor, his first act of any importance was to refuse Dick Gregory permission to speak on campus. He was just continuing the former policy. Shortly before, President Holt had banned Adam Clayton Powell Jr. with this avuncular comment: "He preaches hate, and I want you children to hear nothing but love." But by this time, students were restive. A group of them sued the university and named Weaver in the suit, and won a court order for the open speaker policy.

"So you see," Weaver expanded complacently, "the courts made it necessary for us to accept Billy Graham. We had no choice in the matter." But Graham was not a lone speaker come to address some student group—he was part of an operation conducted by hundreds of men, working in closest conjunction with the city political structure and police department, bringing in crowds that dwarfed the student body, soliciting and receiving large sums of money, preempting facilities and student affairs, distracting the whole campus on the eve of exams. How can you treat him as just another speaker? "Well, when Kunstler was here recently, outsiders were free to come and listen to him, too." (Kunstler, much on Weaver's mind, came up again and again, haunting our conversation. All Knoxville had choked with rage at his appearance. A local politician won favor by saying he should be executed.) What about the fund-raising aspects of this "educational" event? "Freedom of speech! Kunstler could say anything he wanted—from advocating violence, to praising marijuana, to asking for money."

But the open speaker policy stems from the university's academic function, and the Graham Crusade was called a religious service by Knoxville police. "Well, if the campus Catholic Center wanted

to call in a priest as speaker, we would have to let him speak under our open speaker policy." And if the Pope came to hold Mass every day for ten days in the stadium, while collecting large sums for Catholic missions, would you let him? "Well, frankly, if the Catholic Center asked us, we would have to." As an academic duty? "Yes! In fact, to tell the truth"—he continually lets one in on secrets—"it was the educational value of the Crusade that made me especially glad to bring it onto our campus. People at a university tend to exist in an ivory tower; they forget the many different types that make up the outside world. What the students saw, rolling in here by the busload, was the *real* America." A new, an iron note had entered his voice. Now students were not being taught by one speaker, whose presence they had requested; they were being impressed by thousands of "good American" types they ignore or do not know about (and therefore could not request as "speakers" or supplementary teachers). "It was a cross section of America they saw." Yet it was only that kind of American who goes to Graham Crusades, a type these students see all about them in the Knoxville community. The point of Weaver's sudden Agnew outburst was not that the kids do not see good Americans, but that they do not—not even here, on the Big Orange campus—heed them enough, grasp their number and importance, fear them adequately. These buses rode, with their silent majority of bitter kid-hating Christians, as the Klan once rode, to impress men with reserves of force to be summoned at need. A lesson was being taught. The experience was educational.

Yet the point of the open speaker program, as it touches on education, is that the university is *responsible* for allowing or not allowing speakers to address students—so responsible that it could be *sued* when, for instance, Dick Gregory was banned. President Holt, nonetheless, claims the university had no responsibility in the Graham affair—an *outside* activity performed on land leased away from the school. "Well, I don't know about that. All I know is that the open-door policy is here, and Graham's appearance was the big spike that nailed that door open." Yet Graham's appearance was not controversial with the surrounding community—not an extreme instance, proving how far the mandate stretches—as, say, William Kunstler's appearance was.

Why wasn't it *Kunstler* who nailed the door open? "Yes, but don't you see? Now I can say, to anyone in Knoxville who objects to a Kunstler, or whoever, that he appears because of the same policy that let Billy come onto the campus. And who can object to the policy then?"

He smiled beatifically, like one who just found the philosopher's stone.

That was how Billy came—making it possible for Nixon to come. The President had been invited, by Andy Holt, to appear on the very day when he did show up (May 28, a Thursday), as part of the school's 175th anniversary. But Nixon, invited onto a campus, has tended to be busy and regretful, even when the campus is full of Volunteers, of Southern football lemmings and military suicides. Now, however, Dr. Holt's golf partner, Billy Graham, could call his friend the President on in, with the assurance that 100,000 avid Crusaders, psychic bodyguards in this harsh academic terrain, would emanate warmth all around him in the stadium like a living protective shell.

And Knoxville police, looking about for applicable laws, had found one to protect him from "political" dissent. Tennessee statute TCA 39-1204 forbids anyone to disrupt a religious service. That would allow cops to take away political placards, ban any political shouts (even those for Nixon), expel all who indulged in politics during "the service." So much for *outside* agitators. For *inside* ones, the police had another inhibitor. After a disturbance on January 15 of this year, police had identified and arrested some of those present, with the help of photographs; now they would ostentatiously shuffle those same photos while taking new ones, pointing (pointedly) at known campus radicals; promising, by that simple act, more arrests of the January 15 sort. Just to make sure that the nonpolitical nature of the meeting was understood, the campaign manager for Republican senatorial candidate Bill Brock, on the night before Nixon's appearance, talked with a Nixon advance man, Dick Andrews, and told Y.A.F. people not to bring their placards to the stadium—instead to line the motorcade route with them.

Would the plan work? Secret Service men, after careful soundings, decided that it would. After all, this was Big Orange Country. The school belonged to the commu-

nity, which belonged to the First Baptist Church, which was heart and soul (if only he would have them) devoted to Billy, who is servitor and celebrator of any President (of *power*), but especially of his friend and fellow addict of success-religiosity, Richard Nixon. Town, gown, bank, church, and Crusade were of one mind. Even the Mayor of Knoxville addressed the Crusade, sang in its choir, and acted as counselor to those coming out of the stands, after Billy's sermon, to make their decision for Christ on the rubber turf. He also issued a proclamation to all city employees, telling them to renew their commitment to God. The police chief's daughter told the Crusade why she was an American. A high-school graduating class held its baccalaureate service at the Crusade, in its gowns and mortarboards. If this was not Nixon country, then what is?

But what of the university's own students? Would they join this universal hymn of praise to God and Nixon? The question hardly crossed local people's minds. The U.T. product was well-known—the perfect fraternity man, the perfect sorority girl. Call them Ken and Barbie—they were mainly wardrobe. "The first thing we did to a pledge," one senior remembered for me, "was grab his shirt by the collar and look at his label. London Fog coats, Gant shirts, Canterbury belts, Haggard slacks, a red carnation on one's blazer, three-piece suits—that's what we looked for."

It made a pretty package, whether male or female. Barbie, for instance; Tricia Nixon corn-fed to pleasanter roundnesses—a Tricia with a body, as it were; and with the same fixed smile, the lidless doll-gaze, to proclaim unassuming dutifulness. Barbie is pretty, glib, obedient, glowing—every Big Orange footballer's patriotic wet-dream.

Or Barry—Barry Bozeman. His father, a local politician, was the university's head of student activities as an undergraduate; his mother was editor of the school paper and a Torchbearer (one of the all-round top-seven seniors). Barry had not missed a single home game since he was six years old; he had acted in the university's theatre for children. Easily, with no effort, he became president of his freshman class (in which capacity he led a demonstration in favor of the Vietnam war), president of his fraternity (Phi Sigma Kappa). Pinned for a while to the Phi Sig National Moonlight Girl, he re-

turned to his high-school sweetheart, the storybook ending. Another perfect product, Ken-Barry matching Barbie-Sue, ready to be set up like a trophy in some cushioned Knoxville office.

But what happens when Perfection displays a crack or flaw? Terrible things, in Knoxville. That is what happened with Barry. Last fall, while he worked as booking agent for a rock band, he *begun* to let his hair grow. All his father's friends noticed, and whispered, and his father noticed their whispers. Which led to an ultimatum by Christmas—cut his hair or get out of the house. Barry got out; got arrested with twenty-one others in the January 15 campus disturbance; joined a March Against Repression led by Jerry Rubin, in Nashville; ran—and ran strong—as a radical for Student President this spring. Something bad was happening on campus.

So Barry, once the rah-iest of rah-boys, was there, with two hundred others, on the day before Nixon came, plotting ways to show student disapproval of his coming. It was a small group but influential, containing most of the active politicians on campus. Even the new Student President, a conservative, was there—John Smith. The Student Government Association used to belong to the fraternities, but changes had been taking place across the last four years. John Smith, Barry's Phi Sig brother, barely squeaked in when the school's Left vote split between the "radical" (Barry) and a "liberal" candidate. Smith had Y.A.F. people on his ticket, but he knew the temper of the school was still set by his predecessor, an immensely popular, darkly skeptical young man—and a black. Jimmie Baxter was the first black Student President of any major white Southern university (bad things were happening on campus). Baxter, in his customary Levi's, "shades," and Afro, helped shape this meeting's decision to disinvite Nixon. A telegram was drafted, and John Smith agreed to send it.

Then Mr. Smith became most elusive. While the meeting had been in progress, three of his friends were on phones to White House aides, asking that "Johnny" be allowed to see the President. The response was heartening—they were already answering questions suggestive of "security" clearance for Smith. In this area, his credentials were very good, very conservative—except for the damn telegram.

He decided to sit on it. And when he heard that night about uncomplimentary telegrams sent to the White House by students, singly or in groups, he feared that Baxter or others might send something in the Student Government's name, even send the telegram drafted for his signature; so, without telling anyone but his three friends, he sent his own telegram at one-thirty Thursday morning (the day of the visit) welcoming Nixon in the name of the student body. At the very last, the eleventh hour, things had all fallen into place for the President; even the campus had joined the chorus of universal praise.

Next day, Jimmie Baxter was mad. He sent his own telegram, as this year's Student President. (Just out of office one week), telling Nixon he was not welcome. Then he sought out Smith, next year's President (just installed), with a demand: if Smith went to see Nixon, he must take Baxter (Baxter could have made it stick before any student gathering). Smith said yes-yes-yes, agreed to meet him that afternoon to arrange things, but did not show up.

What further protest would work, in this Bible-tipsy town, when Nixon's appearance was protected as some kind of religious epiphany? Several hundred people—faculty and students—gathered that afternoon, defying an informal ban on public meetings, to discuss the matter. They agreed on a religious protest, their only signs quotes from Scripture ("Thou Shalt Not Kill"), their only gesture the V-for-peace, their only action a silent filing down onto the field to kneel in prayer for the war dead.

The stadium was packed by late afternoon. A first glimpse (between two buildings), of its great upper tier made it seem like a patch of sky suddenly marbled, a bright mosaic catching the sun's late rays. Before Nixon arrived, the place was overcrowded and its gates sealed. People squabbled with impassive cops at each break in the fence. Maintenance men hung a closed-circuit TV out one window and collected a small mob. Some scrambled up the campus's famous Hill, a Civil War redoubt, and sat on the school colophon (T superimposed on U) poured in cement across the slope—a gift from Barry's fraternity when he was president.

Meanwhile, Barry was inside, with a group of protesters who arrived together and were sealed off in one section by police. They could not get out, nor others in. Some who came to protest were kept out of the stadium with other late arrivers;

others had to sit in small groups scattered through the audience. A few had smuggled in large sheets of paper—cardboard and placards were taken at the gates—that said "Thou Shalt Not Kill," and the main group of kids stood out in this starched Sunday-school crowd by their ragged locks and beggars' clothes.

When a first arrest was made—a boy with long hair dragged out of the stands onto the field, then marched down all its length (stem of an invisible T) by the police—the Sunday-school crowd went wild with applause. The religious service was on. This made it religious. Preachers and policemen chase, assist, become each other here. Workers in the Graham organization, beefy Southwest minister-types, prowled the aisles with plainclothesmen, and looked like them; they are brothers, *alter egos*, *Doppelgänger*s. Billy himself is just God's friendliest cop, preaching "Jesus must convict the sinner, or he would be a liar, he would lose his holiness"—as Barry lost his, by growing long hair.

The kids forgot all their plans to be sedate in this Colosseum of religious hatred. "Outside slime!" one Grant Wood granny shrieked across two sections of the stadium, shaking the black prayerbook or Bible in her hand. Police worked their way all around the "hippie" group, and bunched in front of them on the football sidelines—Vols, twitchy for action; one rubbed his pistol butt lovingly as he watched the kids, meditative masturbation. A photographer for the school paper had gone in among the demonstrators to snap pictures. When he tried to get out of that section, a state trooper stopped him—then, since the boy argued with him, he threw the gate open, braced himself in a half-squat, arms spread like a Japanese wrestler's, uncrotched his jockey shorts with a little deeper squat and jiggle, and

said, "All right, come on, you bastard." A Secret Service man glided up to him, whispered, "Cool it," and closed the gate. The trooper looked about; rage baffled of a target; saw me writing what had happened, and took a taurine swerve in my direction. I backpedaled ingloriously into the stadium's locker room, where press tables had been set up.

There were about two hundred young people shouting slogans against Nixon. Some of these held the paper signs. Others held signs but did not shout. Still others, dressed "straight," simply stood with the protesting faction—some faculty members among them.

There were roughly a thousand dissidents scattered about—one percent of the crowd inside or at the stadium, a number easily ignored. (The TV camera taping the whole "service" never swung in their direction; it was a private crew, hired by Graham; its tape was leased to commercial stations later that night.) But the crowd did not want to ignore these kids. It faced toward the main patch of them, shouted back, pointed out the sinners in their temple with righteous attention and anger—and goaded the kids to new indignities. This was undoubtedly the first Graham Crusade where hundreds of people chanted, in angry replication, "Bullshit! Bullshit!"—seized, it is true, by a surge of mere anger, but also by a clear new realization, with Billy and everybody up there, of this region's whole interconnectedness of bullshit and religiosity.

There was a roar when a black minister prayed for our beloved President. As Graham introduced Nixon with a roll call of other Presidents who had made unpopular (but correct) decisions, the protesters chanted, "Politics! Politics!"

Then Nixon. He rose, at this nonpolitical religious service, from a platform studded with Republican candidates and officeholders. Democrats like Senator Albert Gore (who happened to be in Knoxville that night) were not invited, on the excuse that this was an East Tennessee Crusade. Yet Dan Kuykendall, from farther west than Gore himself, was present and prominent. All the state's Republicans seemed to have got religion at the same time. "Tex" Ritter, to his credit, refused an invitation, saying he did not mix his politics and religion. Nixon's "four years warming the bench" line was inevitable, here on the football field. But he added, "Even if we are on the twenty-yard line, we are going to be over that goal line before we are through"—and the kids went into their football chant: "Push'm back, Push'm back, Wa-a-ay back!" At times he could not go on ("if I could have your attention for just a moment"), not so much because of the two hundred shouters; because of the large crowd shouting back at the small crowd. Nixon, looking uncomfortable, made the best of it—"I am just glad that there seems to be a rather solid majority on one side rather than the other side tonight."

The pitch was to youth, so Nixon used what he has been told is his

surefire youth issue, one his youngest White House aide, Christopher DeMuth, worked up for him—pollution: "I want the air to be clean, and it will be clean." (Kids take up the Jerry Rubin cry, "Do it! Do it!")

Most of the crowd's emotion, heated up before Nixon arrived, was sheer hostility bounced off the kids. But he will settle for that, thank the crowd on-camera for its "warm reception," and trust that the cheers and jeers, mingled, would all sound like hosannas on TV. And they did.

Most of the "longhairs" left when Nixon finished. Only a few stayed for Graham's fervorino, then tried to get onto the field when he issued his call. They were stopped by police, semi-frisked, stripped once more of their signs (those who smuggled them in, or improvised them inside), asked questions, turned back—though some made it through and talked with "counselors" about the war. Some were arrested.

The national press contingent was gone by this time, racing for its plane to San Clemente. It knew nothing of the Crusade's slick operation on the campus, what a faculty member would later call "the rape of this university." Some of the Graham press people told newsmen that tonight's audience of 100,000 was made up of students—eighty percent of it under twenty-five years of age—and contained most of The University of Tennessee student body (both statements false). More important, Graham had welcomed Nixon *not* to the Crusade but "to the campus of The University of Tennessee. . . . In a day of student unrest, here on the campus of one of the largest universities in America." And Nixon had not thanked the Crusade for his invitation, but said, "It is a great privilege to be on the campus of the largest university in the South." The news angle was obvious—even after Cambodia and Kent State and Jackson State, the President could be well-received by college students.

And to cap it all, along came Smith, the Student President. He rode to Air Force One in the same car with Bebe Rebozo (who muttered, darkly, of the demonstrators, "There's only one way to handle them") and H. R. Haldeman's wife. Mrs. Haldeman asked Smith how the university's three-day strike after Kent State had been kept peaceful—he did not answer, what was the truth, that his black predecessor, Jimmie Baxter, kept the lid on, growling at students that they were outgunned by the cops.

On the plane, Nixon asked Smith what troubles the youth of today. Two things, he was answered—they think the war unconstitutional, and they need a higher goal than the merely material things. Smith had just heard both Nixon and Graham say, on the platform, that youth needs a higher goal than the merely material things. This is how the President discovers what is troubling youth. Smith, off the plane, interviewed, photographed, sighed with relief that the President *does* understand and care for the young.

I talked, the day after, with Smith. Short, with a vacant fraternity face, his eyes bleared, he was suffering a political hangover after his bender of publicity. Did he think yesterday's Crusade a religious service or a political meeting? "Political." Was the aim to convince the nation that students would still welcome Nixon? "Yes." Is that a misconception? "Yes." Didn't you help create the misconception with your telegram of welcome and your praise for Nixon? "Well, I do believe he understands our problems." What about the telegram? "I think most of the students here would welcome a chance to see the President." Even under these phony auspices? "Probably." Do you consider that an informed or an uninformed preference? "Uninformed; I suppose." Yet you cater to it? "Well, I just wanted to size up the President for myself. I don't have opinions about people I have not met." You satisfied your curiosity? "Look, didn't I get a chance to speak out against the war?" About its unconstitutionality? "Yes." Don't you think kids would still oppose the war as immoral even if it were legal? "Sure, but I could denounce the war the same way radicals do, and never get a chance to see the President. It is a question of sounding off before 23,000 students, or of giving my views on the war to millions of television viewers." The bleared eyes had lit up, last night fuming once more into his brain, an intoxicant. I left with a strong impression I could not, at first, define—but eventually it came to me: I had been talking to a twenty-year-old Nixon.

And Nixon, all the Nixons, won. The reception was warm; his gamble paid off; the con job had worked. Though his son-in-law and daughter could not attend their own graduations (at Amherst and Smith) this year, Nixon could still go onto a campus. A Southern campus, admittedly. The Crusade gave him a sheltering presence of 100,000 hot-gospellers out of the hills, a whole stadium of bodyguards. Still, he did it. Results are what count—that instant impression carried off

to San Clemente in the press plane, filed that night to hundreds of papers. He had made it "over that goal."

And yet, and yet. . . Just as the Crusade crowd could not ignore the small irritant, those hippie-clothed hecklers, in its midst, so Knoxville could not forgo some act of vengeance on the hippies—though this might disturb the impression that Nixon came wafted peacefully onto campus, and left it in tranquillity behind him.

Nixon had appeared Thursday night. Sunday, Graham folded his carnival tent, and left. Students were cramming for exams; but nasty rumors were already circulating—of arrests to be made, of attempts to get at kids involved in earlier protests, of indignation being worked up by local papers and politicians, of "blasphemy" performed at the Crusade and crying to heaven for punishment. On Monday, the rumors were confirmed; police said they would arrest "about fifty" of the hecklers—all those they could identify from photographs. By Tuesday morning, fifty-seven warrants had been sworn out. It was the first day of exams, and rainy. Arrest teams cruised the campus, two men to a car—campus policeman to identify, city police to take in custody. Kids were snatched from church communes and street corners. Two full-time faculty members and two teaching assistants were booked. A dean's office called a teaching assistant ("We need to update department files") to get his address for

the cops. President Holt was out of town. Exams went on. The school paper had closed down for the year. Everything seemed to help the police. Attempted protest rallies on that first day got rained out. The arrest cars came and went everywhere in the downpour, as kids learned to fear the sucking sound of their tires on the wet street.

That night there was a student meeting. Even a twenty-year-old Nixon had to realize these charges were flimsy, were widely resented on campus—John Smith denounced the arrests as acts of political repression. The community was punishing the campus because it did not join the Crusade, heart and soul, in support of Nixon's policies. Eighty professors met in support of those arrested and intended to join the meeting, to appear onstage waving V-signs for photographers—*here*, where teachers had always been told, in a thousand subtle ways, to serve Knoxville's city fathers, not their students. The student meeting had disbanded, but the teachers' protest went on.

John Smith, joined by the local chapter of the A.A.U.P., authorized a telephone call to Nixon's campus adviser, Alexander Heard, asking that the President call for an end to the arrests (Secret Service men had opposed them all along). Len Garment responded with a wire from the White House to Knoxville's mayor: Nixon did not consider the protest violent or disruptive, merely rude; he asked the authorities to be temperate, not to arrest students during exams. The mayor ignored the telegram, said it would be discriminatory, unfair to the nine arrested that night, if all other hecklers were not caught and punished. A teaching assistant, John Riches, appealed to various congressmen. Allard Lowenstein of New York came down and held a tape-recorded hearing. Two of those arrested went to Washington to present a transcript of that hearing to the Justice Department.

Dr. Holt, through it all, was serenely detached. But when he promised to cooperate with authorities in their search, two hundred students signed a confession that they had heckled Nixon, and dared their president to turn them in. He fudged that issue, went back to his stand that the school was not involved. I asked him, if that were the case, why campus police were identifying people. "They just happened to be in the stadium that night—you know, when a President drops by, all local security forces are called on—so they happened to see some hecklers they knew." But it was clear that campus police had not spent much time on their immediate task of keeping the peace Thursday night; they were busily collecting evidence—spotting people, helping photographers—for use in future trials against "campus troublemakers."

I went to ask Chancellor Weaver a question: If Nixon had gone to a Washington church (as he does on occasion) and listened to the sermon (as he does), but then rose to give the very same speech he delivered at the Crusade, who would be considered in bad taste, exploiting a religious service? "That's a good question. I don't know about that. The courts will have to settle it. All I know is that we had to let Graham and Nixon speak, under our open-door policy."

I went to Ed Boling, who will take office in September as Holt's successor. He had worked for Governor Buford Ellington in the state finance department before coming to Knoxville as Vice-President for Development. Everyone knew he was heir apparent, but respectable cover was sought for his appointment—facul-

ty-student "hunt committees" on three state campuses were asked for recommendations. All three rejected Boling for his lack of academic background. Yet the Governor got his way, and Boling was appointed in December. That led to the student protest in which Barry, and twenty-one others, were arrested on January 15. Peter Kami, a Brazilian student organizer (known to the Knoxville community as "Peter Commie"), challenged Boling to a wrestling match for the presidency, since muscle and sheer force seemed the acceptable qualifications. When a crowd gathered on the Hill to hear Kami elaborate his Yippie challenge, police moved in with another of those useful Tennessee statutes—this one against gatherings of more than three where any potential for trouble exists.

Boling, beginning his reign under this shadow, knows who his masters are: "I think it was a religious gathering, and if there is one thing this community will not put up with it is mocking any man's religion." *This community* is his theme. He is proud, not apologetic, on the question of his academic background. "Academician presidents are naturally on the teacher's side, and they have bent over too far in that direction. Now we need manager-presidents to right the balance, repair the damage done by the other type, and make the university serve the community again. When the faculty comes to me with complaints, I threaten them—well, I don't openly threaten them, I kind of subtly threaten them—by mentioning all the letters I got from the community, during our three-day strike this year, asking why taxpayers should pay teachers who do not teach. And I can tell you this: we have an academic calendar announced for next year, and we will stick to it. I will not even deal with those who want to depart from it."

It was Big Orange Country serving notice on the school. When John Smith called another rally on the Hill, repeating circumstances of the January bust, right-wing students brought union men onto the campus to guard buildings and "prevent vandalism." Even a faculty often cowed by city fathers will not long submit to such open coercion by Knoxville's know-nothings. Students were outraged to hear that the Y.A.F. candidate in the last student election was financed by a local businessman.

This is the prospect, then, for the coming school year. While other students, across the country, campaign for peace candidates, a new president will insist that The University of Tennessee's calendar not be interrupted. John Smith will start his

year as Student President having forfeited conservative support by calling the city repressive; yet he is not trusted, either, by the student left. In any trouble, he will not have Jimmie Baxter's moral leverage or radical credentials when trying to "cool it." Meanwhile, Knoxville will have a string of political trials stretching out through the fall, trials of the January 15 twenty-two, trials of the Nixon hecklers. The community will want blood; the administration will profess noninvolvement; the faculty and students, already convinced that the charges (in both cases) are unjust, will harden toward resistance as the local cry for vengeance rises in intensity.

The long-range lesson of Nixon's pyrrhic victory is clear. Even so large and well-oiled a con operation would not work a second time at The University of Tennessee. And if it cannot be made to work here, it will not work anywhere. Furthermore, Nixon left behind him a train of disruptive conditions. Kunstler was opposed, when he came, because he might cause trouble. But he did not. Nixon did. What campus can afford to have the President come if even this campus, while inundated by Graham's Crusaders, could not weather the experience without radicalizing its students?

Those are the lessons of the visit; but Knoxville will refuse to learn them. The city pushes on where even Nixon—or John Smith—would hesitate. It has a growing, quite justified certitude that something has unsettled this hill country's central hearth. Outside forces, alien, professing strange beliefs, have taken their campus away from Big Orangers. And the outsiders are their children.

There will still be Barbies, predictably, sorority Sues, the old product—which Knoxville knows how to humor and honor. But there will also be Barrys, be more of them by this fall, their number increasing all through the foreseeable future—and Knoxville does not know what to make of Barry, or do with him. It must simply, with Ed Boling, not deal with him. It will try to crush the Barrys, thus making their number grow.

And what, meanwhile, does Barry make of his father? "I have given up trying to see him." Why, because you can't make him understand your position? "No, because I might. If I could persuade him, it would destroy him. It would make everything he worked for meaningless. I don't want to see that happen to him."

That sentence tips the balance for Nixon—victory (pyrrhic or otherwise) to defeat. It heralds the end of the hard-hat war on long hair. Age is, by convention, forbearing. It endures youth's indiscretions because it foresees, all along, their term. The high jinks over, serious life begins. But when the elders are too terrified to deal with their own young, unable to imagine any world their garb and locks portend; when, by contrast, the children begin to forgive, confident that time is on their side, not needing to rub in their victory, then that victory is assured. Even here, in "hill vote" territory. In what Nixon, nervous on the twenty-yard line, called "the largest university in the South." #