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Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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## THE GAP BETWEEN THE GENERATIONS

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, in the April 29, 1969, issue of *Look* magazine is an article entitled "To an Angry Old Man," by Leo Rosten. I have read the article several times, and I must say that in my view Mr. Rosten's comments are to the point of what is happening in the world today with respect to the relationship between the older and younger generations.

There have been serious difficulties among young people, to be sure, but there has also been a good deal of fanaticism in reaction. In this situation, there is no justification for pomposity on the part of the older generation anymore than there is for anarchism on the part of the younger generation.

That there is a gap between the old and young is an inescapable biological reality. Nothing can be done about that except to accept it. That there is a lack of credibility or of mutual tolerance of ideas between the generations is also a fact. That difference, too, has a certain inevitability; down through the generations, it has been more the norm than the abnorm between old and young.

We need only go back, in all honesty, to our own younger days to sense the similarity between past and present. There were strains and tugs then as there are now. The principal difference is that we who are older, now, were younger then and were doing most of the straining and tugging.

The older generation has its faults which, in my judgment, tend to center on a shirking of responsibilities toward the young who, in their own way, for better or for worse, are striving to grapple with a world which they did not make. The faults of the younger generation, in turn seem to me to center on a tendency to reject whatever has gone before as, at best, irrelevant. On the part of the minorities, moreover, there is an apparent determination not merely to reject the past but to rampage over past, present, and future and reduce them all to a rubble heap.

What is needed is a realistic appraisal of the situation. The present generation of youngsters was born into a world which they did not make and which we elders helped to make. These kids are not to be dismissed as some sort of monsters from another planet. They are, after all, our progeny. If we start from that point, perhaps we can bridge the gaps between the generations with a degree of honesty and humility, even if we cannot close them.

I would also have the temerity to suggest to young people that they resist the temptation to blame everything on the previous generation. Those of us who are older should, in turn, act our age and stop the flatulent berating of youngsters when we ourselves are not without blame. Young people have to make their own lives. They have to find a way to face the responsibilities which go with life. They have to make and correct their own mistakes along with the accumulated mistakes of the past and, in that way, to come forward, as we tried in our turn to do, with a responsible and reasonable way of life of their own.

I urge my colleagues to read Mr. Rosten's article. In my judgment, he has a lot to say that is worth saying about the difficulties which confront us and about our most profound obligation— young and old—which is to keep this society, this Nation and this world livable not only for ourselves but for those many generations which will come after us.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the *RECORD* the article entitled "To an Angry Old Man," written by Leo Rosten.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the *RECORD* as follows:

## TO AN ANGRY OLD MAN

(NOTE.—I could massage your heartstrings or curl your hair, depending on your politics, by quoting from the torrential reaction (laudatory, furious, flattering, venomous) to my evangelical letter *To an Angry Young Man* (*Look*, November 12, 1968). Before it was printed, a friend urged me to soften my stand, saying, "It may play into the hands of the Right!" And of the sermon you are about to read, others may say, "It will play into the hands of the Left!"

(Both positions seem to me indefensible. Surely, the validity of an idea has nothing to do with who agrees or disagrees with it. To censor the expression of your thinking because of whom it may please or displease is simply to let others do your thinking for you. I detest thought control. Here, *sans* apology, is my answer to some overheated letter writers from the Right.)

DEAR MR. X: Thank you for writing—and that's about all the thanks you'll get from me. You say, "Let's throw all these young rebels out of college!" Over my dead body. Free speech does not stop at the gates of a campus. On the contrary, it should find a special sanctuary there, for it is indispensable to the search for truth. A student has a perfect right to protest, picket, petition, dissent. When students riot, set fires, throw rocks, stop others from attending classes, use bullhorns to disrupt the peace—they are acting not as students but as hoodlums. Let the law attend to them—the swifter the better.

But you want students "thrown out" simply for protesting, which is what the Communists and Fascists do—from Russia to Spain, China to Cuba. They expel, intimidate or imprison those who question or complain. Don't emulate them.

You say, "Draft these college punks into the Army and let our GI's knock sense into their heads!" You horrify me. I don't want anyone to "knock sense" into anyone's head. To put the point sharply, I quote a great jurist: "Your freedom to move your fist ends at the point where my nose begins." I have a long nose.

As for the draft: I consider the present draft impractical, unnecessary and morally indefensible (it would take more than this page to explain why. The young have every right to speak, petition and argue against it (this has nothing to do with Vietnam)—peacefully.

"Why let these creeps wear stinking clothes and beards? Line them up, hold them down, bathe them, shave them, wash out their mouths with soap!" I loathe your bullyboy views more than their childish flight into dirtiness. Kooky clothes break no laws (though courts have ruled on schoolboard regulations governing dress, hair, etc.). Young slob pollute the nearby air—but the courts have not yet ruled on that.

The defiant cultivation of filth is, of course, a clinical sign of psychological disturbance. I feel sorry for the kids who can't know the psychological price they will pay for re-

gressing to the anal level. But your excessive response to the dirty is as distasteful to me as their sad glorification of discomfort disguised as "freedom."

You praise me for "speaking out for those students who are not newsworthy because they don't riot" and add: "Defend our wonderful Establishment!" Well, the only Establishment I defend is the one called Reason. I find violence abhorrent, fanaticism disgusting, and demagoguery unspeakable. The terrorist tactics of adolescents may parade as "idealism," but they shatter that consensus of civility that is the very heart of a civilization. Your blind veneration of the status quo cannot help us solve problems that must and can be solved—by intelligence, not force.

You ask, "What do students have to be so unhappy about in our colleges?" A great deal: gargantuan classes and bursting dormitories; professors who hate teaching because it interferes with their research; educator-bureaucrats who reward the publication of trivia much more than dedication to students and teaching; academic tenure, which encourages some pedants to "goof off" in lectures and subsidizes others to indulge their nonacademic hobbies.

But this does not mean we should turn our colleges over to self-dramatizing militants whose most conspicuous talent is a capacity to oversimplify problems whose complexity they do not begin to comprehend. Rabble-rousers (Right or Left) are rabble-rousers, no matter what songs they sing, with what lumps in their throats, with whatever ambiguous dreams in their eyes. Nazi students also flaunted "rights" they held superior to the lawful processes of "hypocritical," "fake" democracy—and many of their professors, in Germany and Austria, cheered them on.

Rebels who think they should prevail because they dissent are deluded: Dissenters have no greater moral of political rights than non-dissenters.

You ask, "What has basically bugged these hippies, anyway?" First, their parents, I suspect, who confused political liberalism with indecisiveness; who felt so guilty about discipline that they appeased temper tantrums and rewarded rage with concessions (forgetting that infants *want* boundaries placed on their freedom); who never gave their progeny a clear model of responsible conduct. I think many militant students are unconsciously searching for adults who will act as adults—without apology or ambivalence or guilt; adults who will not be bamboozled by adolescent irrationality; adults who respond with swift rebuffs to those challenges to authority that are, at bottom, a testing by the young of the moral *confidence* of their elders. Prof. David Riesman says we are witnessing the rebellion of the first generation in history "who were picked up whenever they cried."

You say, "Why not show the young how wonderful our education system is?" It is remarkable in what it has done (the greatest, widest mass education in history) and in what it *can* achieve. But I hold a very gloomy view about schools that can produce students (and teachers) who are so strikingly ignorant about (1) how this society actually works; (2) what the economic bases of a democracy must be; (3) what the irreplaceable foundations of freedom, and the inviolable limits of civil liberties, must be; (4) how conflicts between minorities and majorities must be managed. (Suppose that Ku Klux Klanners in Alabama occupied classrooms, asserted the right to appoint faculty, threatened to burn down buildings, and demanded total amnesty in advance?)

Immature students are mesmerized by utopian slogans that rest on fantasies; and they are ill-educated enough to mouth the obsolete clichés of anarchism, the "revolutionary" nostrums even Lenin called "infantile leftism," the grandiose "demands" that demonstrate a plain lack of sense and a massive ignorance of history. ("Student power"

has simply ruined South and Central American universities.)

You ask, "Why doesn't anyone brand these troublemakers as the Communists they are?" That organizers plan and foment trouble, going from campus to campus, is becoming clearer each day. That they are professed Communists is neither clear nor likely. Student incantations about Ho Chi Minh, Che and Mao are not so much evidence of Communism as of naïveté. The young enjoy baiting their elders with shocking symbols, and ignore what Che, Ho and Mao stand for—total despotism over the mind. Dictatorship is no less vicious because it claims to seek "superior" freedom.

Students who are not Communists are, alas, employing Communist/Fascist tactics: "confrontations" designed to force the authorities to call in the police—and then to force the police to use force, which is decried (and televised) and used for propaganda purposes. They dare not reflect on what Mao has done to the Chinese "student cadres" he encouraged; or on what happens to students who criticize the Establishment in Moscow or Havana.

You say, "Professor Marcuse should not be allowed to teach at San Diego!" Dr. Marcuse has a right to say or write whatever he wants—however mushy, opaque, unsupported by data, insupportable in logic and ludicrous as economics it is. His competence and integrity as a teacher are for his colleagues—not you or me—to decide. And if San Diego has no professors who are able to punch holes in old Herbert's gaseous balloons, it should promptly hire some.

Incidentally, Marcuse, like you, wants to deny freedom of speech to "certain" people; you and he differ only on *whom* you want to confer the blessings of dictatorship: Marcuse has publicly said (at Rutgers, June, 1965) that since Negroes are "brainwashed," and presumably vote in a hypnotized manner, "I would prefer that they did not have the right to choose wrongly." Such thinking fills prisons and concentration camps.

Finally, to my angry old and young compatriots: If we cannot pursue knowledge with moderation and mutual respect in our colleges, then where on earth can we? "Society cannot exist," wrote Burke, "[without] a controlling power upon will. . . . The less of it there is within, the more there must be without. . . . Men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters."

LEO ROSTEN.

P.S.—Once, after long and sober research, I estimated that 23.6% of the human race are mad. I was wrong. I am now convinced that 32.6% are.

Mr. AIKEN subsequently said: Mr. President, I rise, first, to express my wholehearted agreement with the remarks of the Senator from Montana (Mr. MANSFIELD), the majority leader, which were made at the beginning of the morning hour.

I would like to add further, however, that I hope the public is not condemning the youth of today. In my opinion, it is a very small percentage of youth, the lawless and the extremists, who undertake to commit acts and demonstrations which could lead to a breakdown of government, or at least to a breakdown in the management of the colleges and universities which they are attending.

Unfortunately, it is the worst element that gets most of the publicity. Sometimes I think this worst element monopolizes the news media. I am sure that 90 percent of youths attending college or other educational institutions today are seriously concerned not only with the

functioning of their government but also with their own welfare and the welfare of the world generally.

Furthermore, it is not always the students who create difficulties. Sometimes it is the management of the institutions. I am sure of that. Sometimes it is members of the faculty. I might point out that a few days ago I read a report that the faculty of Tufts College voted to do away with the ROTC, when a great majority of its students asked that the ROTC be retained.

I feel that we should be very careful, and not condemn the great majority of law-abiding students for the reckless and irresponsible acts of a small percentage of them.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed at the conclusion of my remarks an excerpt from the annual report of Lyman S. Rowell, president of Vermont University, entitled "The Challenge to Our Nation's Colleges and Universities."

There being no objection, the excerpt was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE CHALLENGE TO OUR NATION'S COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

(Excerpt from the annual report of Lyman S. Rowell, president of the University of Vermont)

Colleges and universities all across our country are being challenged by new and sometimes conflicting forces.

Students have made clear they are not satisfied with colleges the way they are, at the same time that they compete in ever greater numbers and ever greater intensity to enter college.

Perhaps unfairly, those students who have made the most noise, who have been most disruptive, and who are least representative, least sincere in their desire to win constructive changes—those students have won most of the headlines, most of the focus of television cameras.

Less known to those constituencies who are not closely associated with college life today are the more significant efforts of a majority of today's students to obtain a meaningful and constructive dialogue by which they may work with administrators and faculty to make the college and university of today and tomorrow a better, more responsive institution. Perhaps it is wrong to limit this to college and university students, for today's high school students are very much a part of this student activity.

Traditionally, faculty members have tolerated administrators as, at best, necessary evils. Today, teachers are more concerned with participating in the administration of colleges and universities. They are seeking membership on board of trustees, participation in all levels of decision making including key roles in the selection of college presidents.

Part of the renewed action by teachers for a greater role is the result of an awakened understanding by teachers that students are often more critical of faculty rules and regulations and attitudes than they are of college and university administrators.

Students wish to participate in faculty evaluation, in changing curricula, and—in particular, in introducing more courses reflecting current social and political concerns.

Colleges and universities are being challenged as well by a free enterprise society which more than ever recognizes a dependency on U.S. higher education not just for a continuing supply of recruits, but for a growing program of research and service. Any county, state or regional development orga-

nization can attest that business and industry today more than ever prefer to locate in communities, counties, states or regions where there are strong higher education institutions—preferably with graduate and research programs.

Perhaps the greatest challenge to higher education today comes from government—from the smallest local to the largest federal unit. More and more do governments look to higher education to provide resources which government may bring to bear on the most pressing array of problems which society has faced.

At the same time, the rising costs which have affected all sectors and activities of our free enterprise economy have greatly complicated the relationship between government and education. At the same time that education is seen as a cornerstone upon which continued freedom and prosperity rest, the cost of funding quality programs of education from kindergarten through post-doctoral levels has increased and will continue to do so.

The federal government, since WWII, has invested vast new sums in support of higher education. This support, however, has tended to go to areas and programs of special interest to the Congress and to the President and the men and women in this Cabinet. It has tended, as well, to go to the nation's largest and strongest universities.

It is significant, I think, that in November seven major U.S. higher education associations joined in urging direct federal institutional grants to all accredited higher education institutions, public and private, two year and four, colleges and universities. Their statement, which I endorse, called institutional support "the number one unmet need in the pattern of federal relations with the academic community," and said a new program of institutional grants should complement, not supplant or diminish present federal programs.

Never has our future been more uncertain. But I choose to interpret that positively. Never have we enjoyed a greater opportunity to seek and find in an uncertain future those certainties which advance the continuing potential that tomorrow's children shall have a greater opportunity than today's.