

IV**Apropos Of Nothing****The Sixties.**

Even A dog can tell when he has been stumbled over, and when he has been kicked.

The New Frontier.

The Great Society. Guns and Butter.
Paranoia.

The Sixties and Vietnam only seem to have descended upon us. In truth, these episodes in our continuing genesis should have been predictable, based upon our past performances both as a species and as a nation, despite all the flowery speeches to the contrary..

Whenever strife invades 'our' ranks, it is 'us' lowly ones who suffer the most. True, we may be said to have the least to yield, given that our lives are chaff; but our suffering is intensified since we are least able to effect the course of events. WE ARE ITS VICTIMS, without recourse or hope of compensation..

While the Sixties seemed to emerge with an energy and a vitality that promised to be far-reaching, for some inexcusable reason, upon the threshold, we became dissolute and 'Lost It'; perhaps it ought be adduced, we threw 'It' away. As a species we have been observed to be aggressive, hostile, and destructive, only marginally redeemed as a civilized product effected through a variety of half-hearted restraints.

Therein, somewhere, lie what might be characterized as a schizophrenia; a duality; the two faces of Janus. Whether the ultimate genesis can ever become a 'civilized' (product) society, precluding the manifestations of aggression, hostility, and the destructive propensity peculiar to hominids, may never be learned. Intelligence cannot be carbon dated. However we are delivered from this circumstance to the next, it must be asserted that this very place exists as approximate an abode and occasion as we shall ever be granted towards the semblance of that Heaven of which our culture encourages us to dream.

Vietnam happened 'over there' - for most of us. Cronkite, Seavareid, Brinkley, Huntley, Smith, Lawrence, Harvey, Smoot, blasted us daily, remorselessly, tallying the 'body' count.; a dull, dry accounting animated with blood and gore, a sanguine testimonial and affirmation of our aggressiveness, hostility and penchant for destruction. While here

at home we 'aimed high' on the platitudinal plateau of social equity and betterment of the human condition..

While it may become self-evident why one chooses to obviate his own efforts in titling his work "Apropos of Nothing", it may be said, in all truth, much of what one is and does is aptly embraced by that denigrating observation.

While the Sixties and Vietnam are inseparable in time, and in their interwovenness, the author has elected to treat these 'descendings' as separatenesses, their occasional overlappings becoming unavoidable.

When one speaks of the The Unfinished Business of the Sixties, he is apt not to draw a large crowd. One surely may conjecture that the aspirations of his youth are a summa summarum of poppy-cock when stacked up against the REALITIES of LIFE.

Although at this late date (as the author writes, in the Eighties), faced with the dire problems and entrapments of these times, one feels those ills experienced, even in the recent past, are so remote as not to summon any effort towards their remedy. While it is true the last Zion will not be satisfied until he has collared the last Nazi, who is it that will make reparation for the confiscation of property and the incarceration of the yellow Americans of Japanese extraction during the Last 'Good' Great War? A Conspicuous Silence ensues. Tough! Such are the the Fortunes of War. Reparitions, as human and Christian acts, are only token; the stronger relegate and patronize the weaker, as well as dominate them. Are we more aggressive and hostile than 'human' or Christian? There seems always to exist more than enough grounds upon which to become a complainant in search of justice. How many of the avaricious, who fostered, sponsored and promoted the 'evils' that brought about the Great Depression, escaped culpability during that great general malaise? Who will have the last word between the Hatfields and the McCoys? Revenge tasteth sweeter than honey? Characteristically, Justice goes begging.

It is said one cannot live in isolation (in 'radical soitude', that one cannot be an island unto himself (that radical reality). The author does not know from whence such an expression originates and whether it means each of us lives a life of forced interdependence or whether our needs for companionship inevitably drive us together, even in disharmony. The author can well imagine the 'manipulators' (he has a whole pile of names for this category of homo sapiens) of our marterioconsumereconomical system would find it more convenient if we all existed on a conveyor belt, or were strapped to a lazy-susan. It is assumed they would not advocate the meager profits to be gleaned from a freer life in the outback, hoping to attract the passer-by with an innocuous shingle. The authorI wanted to say there are islands of

peoples, even within the metropolis. The wealthy form their own islands, truly isolated from the masses. These islands represent and exist as an unfinished business, as all unremedied inequities fall into the category of Unfinished Business. Its not that wealth is an unremedied thing; it is that it feels it can isolate itself into its own kingdom squandering something of which the balance of humanity is too hapless and too unfortunate to partake.

All 'Well and Good'; but during the Sixties we were introduced to the all-encompassing slogan "The Great Society". Surely, after reading Michael Harrington's 'The Other America' which 'shocked' J.F.K., that representative of the naive rich class (imagine being that uninformed as Prez of deeze YouKnighited States - even wid a Harvard Brain Bust, it took a bloody Soshulist to tell us whereitzat [once again?]). ('Dont ask what America can do for you, but what you can do for America'); and other subsequent revelations, and sundry embarrassments to the affluent society. A responsive notion of a generally uplifting nature was borne in the idea of the Great Society and in the minds of those still overlooked in the RUSH.

Father capitalized on the embarrassing aspect of the Great Society. He perceived that particular emanation as composed of a shallow, pompous and arrogant dominant types, and those of alienated, abandoned and broken types. Gud only knows what L.B.J. meant [in his heart] when he coined the slogan of 'The Great Society' ('Was it Guns and Butter?'). Everyone envisions, a something or other Superlative State that represents an improvement over the one in which we live, and depending on one's place in the social hierarchy (hierarchy of wealth) one wonders how it will affect him, how he will benefit, what he will be required to contribute (sacrifice, for it is generally known that you can't have something for nothing, even though those who operate the conveyor belts in the materioconsumereconomical society keep trying to find the way). Father believed, even if it had been possible for us to achieve the Great Society, that it would still be riddled with the different types he had depicted. Whether one would truly see the disappearance of certain types as a society attained some Greater Stature is open to conjecture. It is easy enough to parody society as we find it, not simply because it displeases us but because it does not live up to its own thesis. And our (the author's) nation, the U.S.A., has become its own antithesis, a sort of loveless place that perceives reversion to some more primitive type as the way towards a synthesis, all the while believing the opposite is happening. The Name of the Game predicates you make your way on your own, even though no man is an island unto himself. "We" are not 'all in this together', E. PLURIBUS UNUM, as some have speculated. We are involved in some kind of 'materialism' wherein we have imbued cold inanimate matter with a spirituality and a basis for and condition of

existence. Furthermore, none of it is to be shared, but, to Gudammit @\$%&*@!!, be admired; more, it is to be possessed, maintained, guarded - from OTHERS - not animals or proglies or galactic wanderers, but OTHER people, humans, homo saps, two-leggers - our look-a-likes. I maintain: A LOVELESS PLACE. Disjuncta membra.

The aspirations of my youth were most likely fashioned from some truly false prospectus; the author, perhaps being too susceptible to the word, somehow floundering too uninquisitively, or, perhaps more realistically, overwhelmed with my own ignorance; too willing to be impressed. The pre-eminence of the RED, WHITE and BLUE was not easily ignored; somehow this tricolor appeared as a Fantasia that looked after Bambi and Snow White, thriving on lollipops, vanilla, chocolate and strawberry; and sundry other manifestations of a tawdry, saccharine sentimentality, and still does. From the very beginning, without respite, there was the repetitiousness of the laudations emerging from the inculcator's lips; Gud and Country, In Gud We Trust. We sat in ordered little rows, desks and seats bolted to the floor, as if to enforce the imperative nature of the message we were about receive. We heard the extolling over and over again of the Declaration and the Constitution, and the Farder of Are Cuntree, and so on. Well, O.K., jes fine. Its all pretty important that we become like our oppressors. We cannot go back to the beginning. Going back to the beginning would inconvenience too many people who have already manipulated and subverted and usurped the 'system' and the process, making it over into their own exclusive right and privilege. So what!? its a different world, now.

It has been conjectured, the Kennedys might have led us to Greatness, if they had lived. That's what 'they' say. Some more of the deification compulsion. One heard the invocation of 'charisma' in those days. There were those that had it and those that did not. A deity has charisma; he need not even show himself. The author lacks charisma. The whole world is empty of charisma; besides its risky; one becomes a target.

The author admits that Jack was an appealing individual, from a distance. His removal did not seem to solve anything, even for those who hated his chitterlings. Its difficult to know anything for real. Eating of the Forbidden Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge did not reveal what was relevant to Adam. So one relies on his intuition, and his instincts, that necessary quanta, which function outside of the propaganda we get second hand, laced with patriotism, promulgated through the so-called Media. It was not a happy day when Jack left us; odes William:

The wind had shifted abruptly

A sudden slack was felt in the line
His grip grew faint, less tenuous; he slipped down
He struck the sea below with a splashless sound
"Man Overboard!!" "The Captain Overboard!!"

The dreadful cry shattered the complacent drift of the moment
before.

A dumb sound rolled this earth over
This surround of Manness, this surround of finiteness;
A cold chill traversed every spine
A pale hue was cast in every cheek.

Tired, overwrought humanity shuddered

Inwardly the crew fell, prostrate, to the deck.

Forlorn, querulous, vindictive, guilt-ridden, they rued, GONE!, a stupid
blunder; Hateful World, Why?

OH! Cry Man!
This reviles our sensibilities so.

OH! He that watcheth over us! How negligent!

OH! Cry Man!
Now is not the occasion for your Damned Apathy
Open the floodgates of your affliction
Show this once you care.

Irretrievable - Beyond our Grasp This shift in the wind.

As for the other F.K., the author felt differently, not for political reasons, but for that characteristic of unabashed blatant opportunism. Indeed he may have been 'the one'. None of us Joe Citizens know the maneuverings and practical realities of those who enter the political arena. One ought to have been concerned politically, even if totally ignorant, considering the expropriation that took place in CHICAGO in 1968. The little usurper who was wit Jumbo all the way ("I'll support Hell Bee Jay Hall Thuh Way" [catchy, aint it?]) would most likely have received the crown from Kink Daylee, the Major Demo of the big meatlocker of America.

You have all heard or read of the big swimming event that occurred in Quickchappeddik, MASS. So it was all over. No chance to be GREAT. We were on our own again, with our paltry selves, the charismas having

played out their declining dynasty. The strain had pretty much petered out by the time it came to the cuddly one. And Merry Jo became a symbol, besides becoming the martyred lamb who ate it in a Masterchewsets Jury-rig. Try that one in Pencilvainear, and see wheretit git ya. Anyway, the Slough of Olds is a saga that reaffirms the ancient conundrum that 'the well-to-do do well and the pore n'er do well'. So much for charismas. Disgraceful. Full of Disgrace. Without Grace. Pretty Shabby Grace. Not very nice, huh, Grace? (Grace is the author's mother's name; she came from Masterchewsets). Sure aint, huh?

We were not left with too many alternatives after that; we had to drag out the old V.P.s to make it look like we knew what we were doing. The author recalls, wheresoever he travelled, behind the steel closed stall, placed there for everyone's convenience and enlightenment one would find inscribed "R.M.N. Memorial Terlet", a thoughtful gesture commemorating the azzole who set the tone for the sighlent major itty. We wuz had from sea to shining sea. Tricky Dick became Prez.

The journey from the New Frontier to the Silent Majority followed some kind of downward arc, getting one helluva boost during the Grating Society.

The author has often reflected upon the conjecture of the Whiteheaded gentleman who carried his heavy cranium about the Harvard Arcadia, speculating on the missed opportunity (missing greatness) for those who occupied the land of the Deer and the Antelope, feeling they COULD HAVE become the GREATEST Nation ever; one distinctly felt that he was projecting a state of Mourning. I suppose we ought mourn our own passing, even though it has never happened, since we have never arrived. A more modern succinctness might encapsulate our failure by simply stating we had not the "Right Stuff". Its possible we had 'no stuff' to begin with. Still as the Whitehead was mourning our apparent loss, he held out some hope (very springy stuff) that somewhere in the Midwest there might (the author was about to use the word 'materialize', but realizes we are so burned-out on materialism [a kind of tactile worldliness] he had thought instead, he had better say) 'arise', what had not yet arisen. Arisenness may suggest a notion of an Advent, something long-buried or latent, having sprung from the ground (dirt). The ()F.K.s were not allowed to pull it off. L. B. Jumbo lost his Rhutz (finding others). I'm repeating myself; but the azzole was just another of the ignorant majority. One has often looked towards the Midwest as the hotbed of the Silent Majority. It was somewhere in Canzass that redbaiter R.M.N. delivered his speech coining the Silent Majority; perhaps as only a symbolic middle point in the area of the deer and the antelope, between sea to shining sea.

The author adjudges the Whiteheaded man in the Ivory Tower was probably a wishful thinker; we find it difficult to believe the worst

about ourselves; we fantasize instead. And surely one would think the occupant of the wide-open spaces, with his feet in the dirt would be imbued with a different spirit than the rest of mankind. Alfred North W. was a spiritualist who failed to note the power of the materioconsumereconomical ethic, and the flesh and blood entities that gave it motive force and reason to be. He was a philosopher (and perhaps a metaphysician), not a psychologist. By the Sixties A.N.W. was an old fella in a tomb, having exited in the forties, pretty well fixed in his circumstances, and spared an even greater wreckage of his aspirations. At one time he might have imagined that the high-minded doings taking place in campus arcadia constituted an all-encompassing disease that would eventually infect everybody, then everything would be all right. Great Expectations. Perhaps he could see it all too clearly, afterall, that it just wasn't so.

Obviously the author is some kind of reactionary, who by this time would probably advocate a totalitarian state under the leadership of the 'familiar' benign dictator; one who, nonetheless, would take a personal and active interest in all matters of State, perhaps in the tradition of the famed and illustrious Don Quixote, accompanied by, and routinely set straight, by his equally famed appendage, Sancho Panza.

The author is not asking you to swallow any of this 'hogwash'; it represents only a disgruntled, futile engagement in horseplay. He is not an ennobler, and find it difficult to acknowledge half-measures. He pretends to be thought-provoker. He has his shortcomings. The way he became familiarized with his shortcomings is to read the critics - of others - his unfortunate upstart brethren. As he become absorbed in the fascinating details of their humanity, or animality, whichever the critic [biogossipper] seems to be aiming at, he said to myself: "Boy, that sure could apply to me", or "Holy Cripes", that's me he's talking about", "It don't sound none too friendly or complimentary". By GUD, they're shortening his legs again. Its so sad, after so much effort, to witness it all going to naught in the hands of the scandalmongers. HELP! Talk about (Pit) Bull Terriers!

Well, we all pretend to aim towards something 'higher' - a little bit off the ground; no chance of soaring anyway - but a teeny bit of elevation wouldn't hurt; the spirit attempting to lead the body upwards. Then there's them crickticks lettin' the air out.

We are in need of something new; the little green men from some other solar system, dressed like Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, and haven (having taken) the vow of poverty.

We project our teeny tiny selves upon the Universe, we serve as its model - as they say, 'GUD was created in the image of man' -likewise the balance of the big U. - and its living maelstrom.

Imagine - STAR WARS! Nuclear War in outer space between our little orbiting toys. Can YOU imagine it? The author will tell YOU, this one reactionary sure cringes when he thinks of the bucks and rubles wasted on that 'Wrong Stuff'. Harty, Har, Har; entertainment for the masses; an outlet for their predisposition towards war (aggression, hostility and destructiveness); its called - sublimation. We have a long long way to go.

His name was Libby; he was full of beans. As an enlightened (assumption) Physicist, he was attempting to relieve our minds (give them a physic) (puny little man) by informing us that 96% of the People could survive a Nuclear freak-out. We could hide. The author supposes he would feel O.K. if he was only 96% there, since most of the time he feels like he's functioning with a whole lot less. But it is also possible he might be amongst the 4% who were mortally trampled by the other 96%.

Well, the Puny Little Man spoke, and we listened, and we heard him. There was a 'run' (feverish activity) on fallout shelters (you remember all the Megatonning?); his was the simplest and cheapest, erected with a dual purpose; first, to validate his own claims, and, second, to inspire confidence in the 'boy scouts' whose fingers were on the button. He had erected his 'shelter on the range' in Southern California, naturally (I think). That particular fairyland exists as a rather low flash point in its very hotness and dryness, and does not sustain or forgive carelessness in man's toyings with the Promethean gift, nor does the place oblige its resident population when Zeus hurls his 'thunderbolts'.

To make a longer story shorter, this puny fellow, who is full of beans, and who administers physics, erected a fallout shelter in ole Southern Californneeeiiiiiaaa, in the incendiary Prometheus-Zeus belt wherein huge conflagrations rage throughout the canyons and hillsides producing horrendous, uncontrollable infernos, which couldn't hold a candle to a Nuclear - Oh! My Dear! He dug a hole, covered it with railroad ties and sand bags, leaving a small opening throughinwhich a burrowing 'animal' could creepeth and crawleth.

All the author is able to say for him, its a good thing he was not in his survival chamber when the 'blazing' inferno passed thereinthrough, engulfing his 'something or other on the range' in flames. Of course the sand did not burn, and the hole did not burn, but the railroad ties and the bags holding the sand did so burn. No doubt, part of the Bean's Physic would have burned if he had been encrawled in there. It was no great loss however, since it only cost thirty-five bucks.

The author believes he should review and revise his Calculations.

Anyway, Fallout Shelters were a phenomenon of the early Sixties.

The whole idea behind Fallout Shelters, besides confronting the inevitable, was to find a way to survive long enough to be able to witness the results of our brainchild, before we kicked the bucket. Like the Bean man I'm sure some would have lived to see as well THE FALL OF MAN. As measure, besides Hiroshima/Nagasaki, we now live with the dread of Chernobyl (more publicized than Bikini).

The Fallout Shelter idea generated some interesting moral twists, one in particular that received some notoriety in the Fourth Estate, which the author will recall briefly. It appears a butcher residing somewhere in the Midwest (notwithstanding A.N.W.'s hope for this area), (Iowa, the author believes), had erected for himself and his family, a substantial Concrete Bunker, fully-equipped (with a King James Version) to house and support his contingent for some nominal two-week period (while waiting for things to cool down a bit [the author supposes], and provided all family members were trained in those disciplines which make it possible to live in close quarters without releasing all their pent-up aggression, hostility and penchant for destructiveness upon each other {going stir-crazy}).

When you do not have a choice, you do not choose; you mumble something like "So long as there is life there is hope -". So that is just what the butcher did; he just did. When they asked him if he would share his shelter with another, if worst came to be the worst, and someone had begged of his compassionate, humanitarian, altruistic, and/or his Christian spirit, he said, "Hell No, I'd shoot 'em first." When it came right down to the nitty-gritty, Peer Gynt just simply let the cook drown.

There would probably be some survivors; Peer Gynt survived. So far we have all survived. The author is not in a position to know to whom he ought attribute, and thank, for this stay of execution. He supposes he is thankful, although he has lived with a nuclear anxiety for some time now, and knows our Imperialistic outlook is as much responsible for this Guddam inner-know as our chosen bete noire.

Even a dog can tell when he has been stumbled over and when he has been kicked.

We ponder the missing link - WE ARE IT!

The author realizes he can't go on ramblin' this way; even though that's what he does best. That shore was a sahr apple; gotta remember that tree.

When it comes to agitating the author can't hold a candle to the omniscient media, which is born and reborn each time a deranged element breaks loose, or when nature becomes unhinged, and we can all say to ourselves, "I'm sure glad it happened over there". What if we didn't

know about it all? Just imagine nothing happening for twenty-four hours. Could we be impressed by the Silence? Would it be time to trot out the dancing girls and the comedians, or should we rehash yesterday as though it was today, just for filler? The author supposes the event is something we wait for in our tedium, and Silence is a rotten alternative.

He has a great advantage over many of you; he is able to tune out the 'world' for months on end without suffering from the tedium. Don't worry, we shall all meet there, at the sepulcher. You can tell him all about it then, and he can tell you; we may both mourn our own passing - for what we had missed.

Gud, what we wouldn't give to be reborn, so we could do it all over again, or be reincarnated as some kind of observer. GUD speaks: "I tell you what; I'll give you a choice, you can play roulette with reincarnation, remaining earthbound, or you can have after-rapture with me, taking your chances on Judgment Day; but if you follow me, you have gotta leave your EGO behind; there is no place for EGOS in my outfit - only anonymity - the anonymity of a soldier".

As always, the author became a little sidetracked - but whenever GUD speaks, he's inclined to listen, hoping to pick up any cues or clues. Its usually the same though; 'HE' always drives a hard bargain. The author sometimes wishes 'HE' would take more interest in his creation. If our planet is any indication of how out-of-whack the rest of the Universe is, then HE has got his something-or-others full; (I personally think his damned creation has gotten out of control) so its unlikely this little reeking pisspot will ever warrant much attention. Nope, we are on our own to make something out of it or to continue to muck it up.

That hour, that generation, that age (The Sixties) is past; it is done (thy will be done). But it was fraught with our dubious works, meanness and evil nature. Many who lived during those days are now gone forever, annihilated in the course of them, or just leaving because their infirmities have tipped the balance. Those who are no longer here have taken their memories with them. Our case grows weaker. The author's memories are fading, squandered upon the now; but still they recall some things - mostly feelings.

To those of you born during that time or even later, you know those times only as a myriad of stories and testimonials, from which you may glean and perhaps discover something of the truth, or filch support for your particular bias. In the future, the apostles of this time will become subjected to interpretation and perhaps quoted and included in some American Standard Democratic Ta Biblia. And as time recedes even further, with some hope, we will have learned still a little more; and finally the Unfinished Business of that Age, or this Age, and all the ages past, will have been remedied - for all time.

To recapitulate: In the Unfinished Business of the Sixties, we had put forth the hopeful prospect, in offering the possibility of a 'Great something, to wit' The Great Society'. The Nation responded with a landslide victory over the man who claimed "In your heart you know I'm right". Alfred North Whitehead thought we had missed our opportunity (I keep saying that too, although the author did not get the idea from him) for Greatness (and a lot of other things as well). Of course, in the Sixties, A.N.W. was no longer with us, unable to lend us the benefit of his wisdom. Thus it appears, even before the Sixties we had missed our opportunity.

The author asks then, "What in the hell have we got to live for? How could anyone even begin to contemplate 'greatness' after the exhibition we have staged? If one views the whole process, beginning with those escaping religious persecution, those escaping imprisonment, those escaping other responsibilities and pressures; those seeking adventure and a new lease on life, one would have to imagine it was a ragtag assortment that had set foot on this New Land in the early Sixteenth Century. Eventually, a 'Nation' evolved, partly barbarian (slaughtering or relocating the indigenous populations), (indulging in slavery), (slaughtering the buffalo), (grasping after riches), and only partly sensitive to the need for social order, and the protection of individual rights; one might wonder if any basis whatever existed for assessing 'greatness'. Quite naturally one would measure the notion of 'Greatness' against past 'civilizations', against some ideal, and against what is probable and practical, given the nature of the beast. If one measures the 'notion' in terms of the successful conversion of matter into a way of life, one can only exclaim and marvel at our cleverness, on the one hand, and further wonder at the guiding principles on the other. And still wonder further if the social gains and preservation of the values inherent in the formation of the Perfect Union have been retained, and whether a compatibility of aims has been achieved?! These accomplishments in themselves would not sustain any argument for attaching so significant and meaningful a label as 'Great' to them.

If one measures all things against a probability instead of against an ideal, we can hardly avoid the familiar assessment "This is the best of all possible worlds", which again may be measured against the effort put forth to indeed assure it is just that - The BEST.

The Sixties, perhaps, emphasized the limits of probability. Finally we were not allowed a free hand in the world. We were accused, rightly so, of being Imperialistic, amongst other things. Many of our own citizenry concurred, rebelling from within against our corporate hegemony throughout the world. However, it was too late to salvage our Inspiration towards that something or other of "Greatness". Although no one had

thought of it, or at least exclaimed it as such, the nation, as a whole (regardless of how we arrived there), because we exercised a seeming restraint in Southeast Asia, may have become something which HISTORY (those who come after us) could perceive somewhat differently than we do, not as a matter of pride or honor, but as a matter of rectifying injustice. The Sixties were VIOLENT times, as were the Seventies, and as are the Eighties, as has been true of the many decades before, and in observance of the fine art of predicting probabilities for the future - well, what can you say? These have not been peaceful times. The very great probability exists that we will run 'true to form'; we will continue as before; a very depressing thought.

It goes without saying "We did not belong in Southeast Asia". However, we need not 'throw the baby out with the bathwater' in our condemnation of ourselves. We should recognize the value of our restraint, however achieved. We must recognize the 'wholeness' of the nation, as well. We had heard often we were a divided nation; and bitterly we forswore the division, calling those 'doves' in opposition 'traitors', while those who promoted and fomented, 'hawks', were called 'patriots'.

The author had received a phone call telling him of the vacancy of an elected office in his local precinct. The one who had called him didn't know him, but had knowledge of his sentiments against the War (no big deal - he was even against 'necessary' and 'Good' wars.), urging that he put his name on the ballot for precinct committee person. The hope was that our county would elect a 'dove' as its Chairperson (unseating the 'hawk'), and develop a 'doveish' political platform, which in turn would support peace candidates. The phone call was part of a concerted effort to 'load' the precincts in a 'grass roots' movement to change the local political emphasis. It was successful both in terms of electing a 'dove', and in developing a peace platform - amidst catcalls, and accusations of treason. In this and other ways the nation exercised its rights, its restraint and its power. Democracy was affirmed, both as a process and as an effective will. The nation was awakening from complacency, and from conceding its vote to the vote-getter. It was recapturing its right to say NO! - division be damned. "Its wrong, therefore we say NO!".

Perhaps there was some measure of "Greatness" in this action, although it was not intended to reflect such; perhaps it is the 'something' we shall salvage from the ruin of Vietnam, albeit, without glory, honor; and perhaps undistinguished as a matter of pride, but more as a matter of necessity.