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UA37/44 Diary to Kelly

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October 17, 1969

Well, the skies did not fall, as some predicted. The militant fraternities backed down; they would have lost too good a chance to show off at Homecoming, for one thing. Of course, the matter is not settled yet and may be far from settlement. But the loud-mouthed ones must realize that they are not so numerous or so powerful as they hoped to be.

And the Moratorium was a pretty minor thing, after all. I felt it would be pretty "small potatoes," but it really was a poorer show than I had expected. The few students whom I have talked to about the matter seemed very sensible about the whole idea. One bright boy said, "Of course, I am against the war in Vietnam; just about everybody is. But this Moratorium is no way to stop it. It will give the Viet Cong a real boost, for they will try to imagine that all Americans want the troops pulled out at once." The participation in the program by some of our faculty was to be expected; I hope that the ones to who took part felt amply rewarded for their being un-grown-up adolescents. Some of them have always amazed me by their ability to get their feet into their mouths. Two of the few are among our best teachers, so I hear from many sources: scholarly, patient, kind-hearted, genuinely interested in learning. Just why they are so adolescent in other ways is a puzzle. I have no unusual wisdom and cannot tell what good or harm was done locally or nationally. The mob spirit is dangerous even when it is right; I see little in this outbreak but some dupes for designing Communists who wear, like the wolf in the fable, whatever garment will give them a chance to undermine our government and our philosophy of living.