The Critical Spirit

By Edward H. Levi

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The paper that follows was the Convocation Address at the University's 310th Convocation, in June, 1965.

This is a time for congratulations. We are proud of you. There is even a certain amount of envy in this edifice as we think of your future. The degrees to be conferred today by President Beadle represent a hope for further work to be done, for a deepening of understandings, and for that service which comes from those specially endowed and trained. I trust you carry within yourself, in response to these expectations, the proper mixture of confidence and anxiety.

It is the University which brings us together. Each of us has been touched and changed by the experiences of this place. We do not all share the same values. The skills which have been perfected here vary enormously. Yet the power of this institution—because of its restless, critical spirit, its hospitality to many cultures, the supremacy which it gives to the intellectual disciplines, the recognition it asks for excellence—compels a unity among us.

It is a tribute to the Founders of this University that the institution they created is now so much taken for granted. When it was organized, almost seventy-five years ago, it was a new kind of institution, borrowing from the structure and aims of German and English Universities, joining the gentlemanly tradition of zeal for good works of the New England Colleges with the con-

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The University of the Future

By Philip B. Kurland

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One of the more engaging customs at the University of Chicago is the annual dinner given by the University's Board of Trustees for all Faculties of the University. Traditionally, there are three speakers at these occasions, the President of the University, a Trustee speaking for the Board, and a representative of the Faculties. Professor Kurland spoke for the Faculties on January 12, 1966.

Mr. Cone, Mr. Beadle, Mr. Ranney, Reverend Parsons, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I hope that you will excuse me if I read this paper to you. But, as some one once said—I've forgotten whether it was Archie or Mehitable—"Art Is Long and Life Is Short" and if I'm to get through this masterpiece in the hour and a half allotted to me, I shall have to adhere very closely to my text. (The fact of the matter is that the paper was written for me by a graduate student who thereby fulfilled his thesis requirement for his degree.)

Not too long ago a vacancy was created on the Supreme

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Court of the United States by the resignation of Mr. Justice Goldberg. As soon as I heard of it, I called on Provost Levi to tell him that I should like the job. He assured me that Vice-President Daly would see to it. A short time later, Mr. Levi called to tell me that Mr. Daly had not reached the President in time and that the job had gone to some outsider named Abe Fortas. Mr. Levi assured me, however, that he would get me the next best thing to a Supreme Court appointment. And so here I am, the speaker for the faculty at the annual trustees' dinner.

The reason that this post is only second best to that of a Supreme Court Justice is that a Supreme Court Justice is free to speak his own mind, unfettered by precedent or the views of his colleagues. My assignment tonight was to speak for the faculty, not for myself. For possibly the first—and certainly the last—time in my tenure at this university, however, I propose to disobey a command of Mr. Levi's. I do so for three reasons. First, by using this platform to express my own views, I will elevate this post to the same level as that of a Supreme Court Justice. Second, as I read the statutes of this university, it is clear to me that only Professor Walter Blum is lawfully entitled to speak for the faculty. Third, since the faculty is always unanimous in its views on any subject, in speaking for myself I'm sure that I speak for all of us.

Let me turn then, if I may, to the subject of my talk. Since you are all interested in the history of great ideas, I thought that I would reveal to you the genesis of my topic, which is The University of the Future. I am a member of the faculty committee on the 75th anniversary year. Since our assigned concern has been the intellectual as distinguished from the fiscal aspects of this celebration, you can readily see that there hasn't been much for the committee to do, and least of all for its law school member. But in the course of the meetings we were constantly admonished by President Beadle and Mr. Cone and Mr. Lloyd that the celebration was to look forward rather than backward. My thoughts naturally turned, therefore, to what a university would look like to the student born during this anniversary year who would matriculate some years hence. Moreover, because I assumed that one of the other speakers of the evening would address himself to the topic: The Future of the University, I thought I would vary the fare a little by speaking about the University of the Future. Thus are great thoughts born.

Unfortunately, there has been a great deal of writing on this subject and I cannot canvass the field in the short time allotted to me tonight. Not untypical of the writing is the piece in a recent issue of The American Scholar entitled Cleric or Critic: The Intellectual in the University. It begins this way:

Is the main function of the University teaching—that is, the transmission of knowledge and the values of the culture to future generations? Or, is the main function of the University research, the discovery of new knowledge? The tension generated between these two questions we recognize as basic to the definition of any institution of higher learning. It is a tension that has a long history which derives from the different ways of looking at the University, different ways of looking at the meaning of education, different ways of looking at the nature of mind itself.

You will be surprised, as I was, to learn some thirteen pages later that the author reached the extraordinary conclusion that there is a place in a true university for both teaching and research. That they are but two sides of the same coin. And I think that he is probably correct in his conclusion.

It appears to me, however, that this answer does not reach the fundamental question. As Provost Levi has demonstrated so cogently in his program for five undergraduate colleges, the primary problem is not so much substance as it is form. And the faculty of the university of the future, like the college of today, if it is to attain its promise, will require fundamental reorganization. Instead of the vertical organization that now exists—by vertical organization, I mean, the line that travels from instructor, to assistant professor, to professor, to university professor, to distinguished service professor, to dean, to provost, to president, to vice-president for public relations, to the pinnacle, vice-president for development—instead of such a vertical organization, I hope to see a horizontal organization of the kind I shall describe to you. In short, I find W. H. Auden's praise of the vertical man in preference to the horizontal man misplaced. The future belongs to the horizontal man. For it is the horizontal man that is most compatible with the new society.

The first of the horizontal faculty categories is that of the teacher. This will of necessity be a small group, its members will devote all of their time to teaching students. It will be a small group, in part, because of the force of the prediction of one who even The New Yorker has recently acknowledged to be one of the greatest thinkers of our time: Richard Buckminster Fuller. Fuller has authoritatively stated:

"We'll get rid of all the teachers who are just holding their jobs in order to eat—all the deadwood, which is the biggest problem in a university anyhow. . . . There will be a large technical staff making documentary movies. The university is going to become a really marvellous industry, with tools like individually selected and articulated two-way TV that will permit any student anywhere in the world to select from a vast stockpile of documentaries on any subject and watch it over his own TV set at home. And the great teachers won't have to spend their time delivering the same lectures over and over, because they'll put them on film."

Thus, as you can see, this teaching division will need only a small staff. Its personnel will be recruited from Ph.D. candidates who have not yet written their theses and professorial types that have become redundant in the other
branches of the faculty. Any notion that teaching requires dialogue rather than monologue is simply old-fashioned and inefficient. Members of this branch of the faculty will be identified by shoulder patches reading: "Persona non grata."

The second division in the university faculty of the future will be the research division. This will be made up of two parts. The first and smaller part will consist of those who have ideas that they want to explore and for which they can themselves successfully beg, borrow, or steal foundation or governmental support. But by far the larger portion of this group will be made up of the more versatile, the more flexible, the more universal men, "The New Men," who will contract to execute any research project that any foundation or governmental agency desires to have carried on. The emblem for this group will read: "We go where the money is." But the English will be translated into mathematical symbols so that it won't look so crass.

Now a word should be said about tenure for these two divisions of the faculty. A recent article in the new magazine called The Public Interest makes it abundantly clear that tenure for faculty members is an anachronism. Nevertheless, I submit, it should be recognized as a tradition not lightly to be forsaken. There is, however, one fundamental change that is required in the tenure policies of the university of the future. The essential change is that all teachers and researchers shall have life tenure as herebefore, subject to one condition. The right to tenure shall be lost by anyone who spends more than three consecutive years in residence. Long-continued, unbroken service at a single institution is stultifying for several reasons. First, it is conducive to the development of a loyalty to the university which, after all, is only a juvenile form of patriotism. And patriotism is a coin that has long since been devalued. Second, it makes for the possibility of cooperative efforts among teachers and researchers, thus stifling individual initiative. Third, it makes for continuity of supervision of doctoral candidates' research efforts, which would have the horrific effect of doctoral degrees being completed in a much shorter time, thus contributing to the glut on the market of trained teachers and researchers. And, finally, it deprives the individual professor of a major basis for negotiating salary increases. For these reasons, and others, it will be necessary to confine the right to tenure to those who do not abuse it by remaining at the university for unreasonably long periods of time.

I come then to the third of the divisions, about which little need be said. I refer to the Parkinson or administrative division of the faculty. Its personnel will be broken down, essentially into three branches. First, will be those concerned with academic programs. These officials will be chosen primarily from those who, having demonstrated extraordinary promise in either teaching or research, must be taken out of their roles as teacher and scholar. We must disprove Professor David Riesman's recent dictum "that a faculty member who becomes . . . a dean despises himself and feels alienated." The time has come when a presidency, deanship, or departmental chairmanship must be recognized for what it is, a reward for excellence in teaching or scholarship. The second group in administration will not necessarily be drawn from academic ranks, these are the fund-raisers and public relations experts. Theirs is the more important job, for it is the image of the university rather than the reality that must take priority in administration. So, too, is it the gross amount of money raised, not the uses to which it is put, that determines whether the university is really successful. Academia cannot aspire to such administrative skills as this group requires. Before I come to the third group in this administrative division, I would point out what is already obvious, that administration, unlike teaching or research, does require a hierarchy. And it is the third group that must be accepted as the top of the hierarchy. I refer, of course, to the student council, which must be given total hegemony over the university of the future. For, if the Great Society has taught us nothing else, it has demonstrated conclusively through the administration of the Poverty Program that the success of any venture depends on its being administered by those for whose benefit it exists. This, as I understand it, is also the lesson to be derived from Professor Friedman's and Professor Stigler's descriptions of the operations of the market. And so, quite clearly the motto for this branch of the university of the future must be: Student Council Ueber Alles.

The fourth—and last—division of the faculty of the university of the future will be the public affairs division. This will be made up of faculty members who will make public pronouncements on how government—local, state, and federal—is to be run. It must be obvious that so important a task requires that the faculty members in this division devote full-time to these obligations. There are, here too, a few conditions that must be placed on the exercise of their powers. First, the pronouncements issued must purport to be made on behalf of all thinking men. Second, they must not be made until a petition in support of the position is circulated and endorsed by more than 2% but less than 5% of the faculty. Third, the position must never be occupied by a person with special knowledge of the subject matter. These conditions, I submit, are inherent in the nature of the task. It is obvious then that this division of the faculty will be made up of those who are neither teachers, nor scholars, nor administrators. In large measure it will consist of young faculty who, threatened with failure of promotion, will make public a position that gives the university the choice of promoting them or violating their academic freedom. The banner under which this group will operate will be a series of
musical notes which to the initiate, will be recognized as that once popular song: "Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better."

This, then, will be the university of the future, to which those borne in this 75th year of our university can hope to be admitted. Whether this dream—this vision—can be brought to fruition will depend in no small measure on the efforts of all those gathered here tonight. If there were any wine on your tables, I should propose a toast: LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I GIVE YOU THE UNIVERSITY OF 1984! I don't want it.

The Rieser Society

The Rieser Society, named in memory of Leonard Rieser, a distinguished Chicago tax lawyer who was deeply interested in the Law School and in legal education, continues to make an important contribution to the life of the School. At the Society's meetings, held four times a year, speakers from outside the Law Faculty address members of that faculty and law students on subjects of interest to lawyers but not of a technical, legal nature. Questions and informal discussion follow each talk.

In the Autumn Quarter, 1965, the Society heard LEONARD BINDER, Chairman of the Department of Political Science, The University of Chicago, who discussed "Regionalism in International Relations." WILLIAM R. POLK, Chairman of the Committee on Near Eastern Studies, The University of Chicago, spoke on "Problems of Foreign Policy: Intelligence, Analysis and Planning," at a meeting in early February. The speaker at the Society's next meeting will be ROBERT M. ADAMS, Director of the Oriental Institute of The University of Chicago.

Laird Bell—1883–1965

To expect that a memorial to a remarkable man will convey a feeling of what he was really like and what the experience of knowing him meant, is to expect the impossible. Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon those who admired him to try.

The customary way to begin is to recite the simple, objective facts of his career, what Christopher Fry called "the bare untruth." Following his graduation from Harvard College, Laird Bell entered The University of Chicago Law School, from which he received the J.D. degree in 1907. He became associated with a law firm then known as Fisher and Boyd. He remained with that firm, now Bell, Boyd, Lloyd, Haddad and Burns, throughout his professional career. While actively engaged in the practice of law, Mr. Bell served also for a substantial period as Chairman of the Board of the Weyerhaeuser Company and as a director of numerous other corporations.

His contribution to the Bar and to the community was reflected in terms as president of the Chicago Bar Association, president of the Chicago Community Fund, and president of the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations. These are, of course, only examples from a lengthy list. On the national level Mr. Bell was Chairman of the National Navy Price Adjustment Board, and Deputy Director of the Economic Division of the Military Government of Germany, during and shortly after World War II. In 1955 he was appointed Alternate Delegate to the United Nations General Assembly.

In the face of all this, the outstanding aspect of his career was the prodigious investment of time and energy in the field of higher education. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of The University of Chicago from 1928 until 1953, and was an Honorary Trustee until his death. In addition, he served as Chairman of that Board from 1949-1953. He was Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Carleton College, the third generation of his family to hold that position, during the period 1943–1955. And, from 1948 until 1954, overlapping the period of both Chairmanships, he was a member of the Harvard Board of Overseers. The gratitude of each of these institutions was expressed in the award of the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa. It is a typical example of Mr. Bell's dedication and standing that, immediately upon his retirement from active service on the academic boards mentioned above, he agreed to become Chairman of the Board of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

A quiet and persuasive force for excellence within the academic institutions he served, Mr. Bell was also an eloquent and outspoken defender of academic freedom, particularly in those eras in which that position was most difficult and least popular.

It is possible only now to describe Laird Bell as a true