

STANLEY ANDREWS

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March 14, 1966

Dr. John A. Hannah, President
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan

My dear Dr. Hannah:

For several weeks now I have been putting off dropping you a line to recall or report on some of the traces of Michigan State influence which I have encountered over the world in recent months. I am prompted today to write this letter by an article which appears in the current Christian Science Monitor dealing with your experiments this past year with young men and women with "fire in their eyes".

This instance of throwing away the rule book which now seems to be more and more followed, and may that is necessary by most educational institutions, has given at least twenty five young people an opportunity for a university education that probably would not have been possible had Michigan State not, once more, decided to pioneer a little in this broad field of state supported education. My hope is that this sort of thing will continue, as well as spread, because there is instance after instance which come up every day, more or less, making positive proof that this business of motivation and really reaching the fellow who feels that he hasn't a chance anyhow is one of the great gaps in this whole picture of state supported -- so called -- universal education opportunity.

I can sympathize, greatly, with these twenty two youngsters, since in my own case, I would not have been able to enter a university now under the conditions that I entered the University of Missouri more than forty years ago. The little high school which I attended was not even accredited and I had absolutely no basis for any entrance arrangement and I doubt that I could have passed the entrance exams if one had been put up at the time. However, I was accepted as a special student and was allowed to sink or swim in the university pool. It happened that I was able to keep up my grades and keep up my work, in addition to washing dishes and mowing lawn four hours a day to pay my way through. It all ended up, of course, by my receiving credit for my high school work after I had

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proven that I could carry the university courses. That sort of thing is not possible today, but maybe with the pioneering that you are doing in this field will offer an opportunity for a lot of very able people to at least get a taste of a university education.

However, this is not what I started out to tell you. I am still doing a great deal of running around the world for the Department of Agriculture and the State Department. Since I left Michigan State I think I have been in about forty countries, ranging all the way from Bolivia, Panama and South America to Nigeria and several of the African states and all over South-east Asia. My most recent trip was to South Vietnam as, more or less, a grass roots observer on the situation in the rural economy and the country-side of that unhappy country. This was, more or less, an advance party survey, as it were, to the Honolulu conference. On this South Vietnam trip, I spent less than two days in Saigon and almost a month in the country-side, at the village and hamlet level, and one night in what was called the poorest hamlet in all South Vietnam. I attended a hamlet meeting with a young man who was the deputy provincial chief of this province. We had the usual formalities and about the end of the evening this young man sat down on the end of a wooden bench, under a tree, with a coal oil lantern sitting on the other end of the bench; and he asked the local people to speak of their problems and he was happy to receive their requests. This young fellow was an absolute artist at communicating with the village people, something that is not very often observed in most centralized types of government and on the part of the government officials. After we had gone through about a thirty minute to one hour really exhilarating exercise in listening to the small things that are important to these little people, I was struck by this young fellow's approach to the village people that I asked him where he got this idea and where he developed this particular approach to village people and their problems. As you well know, the usual procedure is to drive into town and start giving orders and not listen; but this young fellow was listening. He replied that he was a graduate of the National Institute of Administration. As a matter of fact, he said he was the first graduate in the first class of that Institute which was set up by Michigan State University. This young fellow had gone out through the regular ropes of Assistant Village Chief, he then became Assistant District Chief and then District Chief until the military government took over and he is the civilian side of the provincial chief, which is a pretty important man in South Vietnam at this time. I then investigated something about the National Institute and I find

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though it is not operating with the vigor, strength and force which it did when Michigan State was there, it is still operating and is still turning out these young men, imbued with the philosophy that it is the purpose and objective of a government official to serve people and not order them around. This young fellow and several others that I encountered on my grass roots visit to South Vietnam in October, to me were some of the most encouraging signs that I could think of dealing with a possible future for that unhappy country.


Certainly, I see no possibility of some messiah ever being able, at this stage, to come up and, more or less, mobilize the people and tie it in to a more national unity under a central leadership. The hope, as I see it, is the gradual development of local responsibility, local government and good provincial people in the government who serve rather than pirate and impose.

Excuse this long letter, but I think of Michigan State often. I thought when I retired I would have a lot of time to fish and to look after my little citrus grove; but I find the days all too short for the many things I want to do. We were struck by a severe freeze the year we came down in 1961. Our grove has come back and we have a very fine crop of nice clean red grapefruit this year. We have also planted around 600 orange trees and quite a few tangerine trees, so I am quite in the business at this time.

If you are ever South, nothing would please us more than to have you drop in for a chat.

Kindest personal regards.

Sincerely,


Stanley Andrews

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