

Ch-ch-ch-changes

*Ch-ch-ch-changes
Turn and face the strain
Ch-ch-ch-changes
Oh, look out you rock 'n rollers
...Pretty soon now you're
gonna get older
Time may change me,
But I can't trace time
-David Bowie from Changes*

David Bowie's lyrics seem very appropriate for graduation time. Graduation is, after all, one of the major changes that occurs during one's life. Any student who enters the University fully recognizes that graduation, with its accompanying diploma, is the most tangible goal of college education. But even with the realization that college is only a temporary stopping point on the road of life, impending graduation causes anxiety. What will the future bring? Even those graduates to be who have secured jobs in graduate or professional schools know only vaguely what their future holds.

Leaving roommates, friends and teachers after four years is even more troubling. How do you say goodbye to these people, many of whom you may never see again?

I doubt that I have any profound insight that can help answer these questions, but I doubt that many other writers have any either. These questions are real human questions which can only be solved by living through them. Unfortunately, the "solution" that all too many people reach after graduating from college is avoiding future changes. This is really no solution at all. It has been said so often that life is constant growth and change that the phrase is now trite. Trite, but true. Changes are a part of life, an essential part of it. To avoid change is the same as limiting one's life.

The danger of falling into the supposed solution of avoiding change seems to me to be much greater at a place like Notre Dame. Most things are done for or given to the students here. Despite constant cries against the University policy of in loco parentis, most students prefer being coddled. They want things handed to them. Look at most of the arguments forwarded by students when the possibility of a lottery for

on-campus housing spaces was being discussed. The argument was that the University had to provide student housing for all who desired it. There are few, if any, other schools which provide housing for all of their undergraduates who want it.

Living in this setting, many students come to believe that once they graduate, when they move out into the "real" world, they will have little trouble finding a good job and a suitable partner. In other words, once they graduate they can settle down. My impression of life is that it is not quite that simple. Most people I know have not settled down immediately upon graduation. Even if they do settle down in the sense of beginning a career and a family, their situation changes as they get older. Things have changed, are changing, and will continue to change. The true value of a college education is that it can be used to cope with and understand these changes, many of which come unexpectedly.

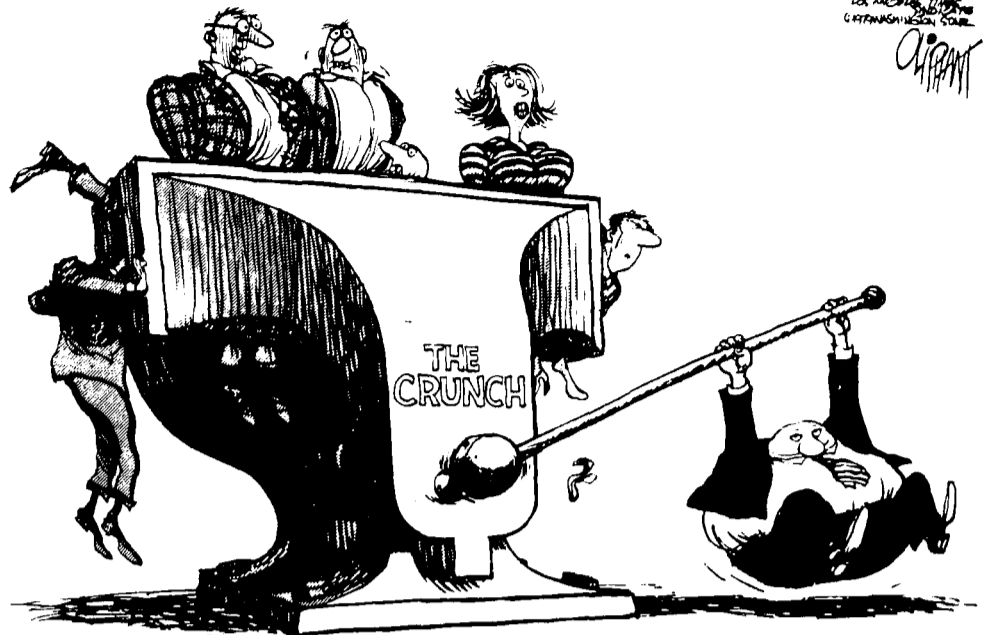
Most people are, by nature, conservative. That is to say they prefer that things remain the same. When they find a situation which they like, they want to stay in it for as long as possible. There is nothing wrong with this approach unless it precludes the development of something better.

Settling down is similar to being conservative in the sense that the individual has found a situation which he or she is satisfied with and wishes to remain in. But settling down does not, or at least should not, mean that the rest of one's life is set. If a better situation arises, one should be willing to change. If the situation deteriorates, one should want to change.

Graduation should not be looked upon as settling down, but moving into a situation with more changes. The challenge of graduating, and indeed living, is in Bowie's words, to "turn and face" the ch-ch-ch-changes.

Congratulations to the Class of 1979, take those changes in stride.

Tony Pace
Editor Emeritus



"YES, I STILL THINK THIS IS ALL A BIG OIL COMPANY HOAX... QUITE A CONVINCING HOAX, MIND YOU, BUT A HOAX, NEVERTHELESS..."

The Crunch of '79

by art buchwald

Washington--Someday it will be known as the "Gas Crunch of '79." It all started when the Ayatollah Khomeini said, "I'm sick and tired of French food. I want to go home to Qum."

Word was passed in Iran and much to the surprise of the CIA, there were millions of Iranians in the streets shouting "Down with the Shah." The oil fields were shut down and one of the major sources of fuel in the Western world was shut off.

This called for a meeting of the other oil-producing states who said, "Thanks be to God, the Iranians are not pumping any oil. We owe it to ourselves to raise our prices at this time because you never know when another shah will fall again."

When the news reached the oil company executives at Petroleum Club, they all said, "OPEC has done a terrible thing by raising its oil prices, therefore we owe it to ourselves and our stockholders to raise our prices as well. We may not see a windfall like this again for a long time."

President Carter then went on the air and said that, because of the expected gasoline shortages brought about by a lack of conservation, he was decontrolling the price of oil in

order to discourage Americans from wasting it. He promised that any excessive profits the oil companies made from decontrol would go to poor people.

The oil companies reacted strongly to this proposal, saying they would rather take the windfall profits and look for more oil which they were certain they could find if the price was right.

Sen. Kennedy said President Carter had bowed to pressure from the oil companies for decontrols. President Carter replied, "Baloney."

Strangely enough, this did not resolve the situation.

By this time, the media played its usual helpful role in contributing to the crisis. TV stations all over the country sent out mobile crews to film gas stations that were closed on Sundays.

The public was suddenly thrown into a panic and everybody got in their cars and drove to the nearest pump to fill up their tanks. People who used to be happy with a quarter or half a tank of gas weren't satisfied until they had a full one. So there was twice as much gas in everyone's tank than before the panic.

The price of fuel did not deter people from buying it. The higher it got, the more desperate car owners became to find it.

Husbands came home at night and berated their wives if they didn't find a full tank in their cars. Unleaded gas sold at a premium because Detroit had forgotten to tell Houston how many new cars with catalytic converters would be on the road.

Gas station owners discovered that their previous allotments would not last for more than three weeks. Long lines formed at stations and while people waited anxiously to get to the pumps, they burned up more gasoline than the entire Iranian shutdown had cut off.

The Department of Energy was not asleep. It set up a hotline that consumers could call when they thought they were being gouged. Twenty-two gas stations were caught and severely punished.

In the meantime, the DOE announced that the major oil companies had overcharged their customers and estimated \$1.7 billion. The DOE said that there was nothing criminal about this, but it would be nice if the oil companies gave back the money to their consumers.

This made many Americans mad, and they decided that the oil companies had created the crisis to make more money. They all drove onto the highways, rolled down their windows and shouted, "We're damn mad and we're not going to take it any more."

The Ayatollah Khomeini is now back in Qum, oblivious to the fact that he originated the "Gas Crunch of '79." One of the main reasons is that he doesn't own a car.

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Doonesbury

by Garry Trudeau



The Observer

Box Q Notre Dame, IN 46556

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