

Letters

With a balanced diet, anyone can be healthy

Brent Boettcher's letter (Letters, Nov. 23) is obviously a biased opinion based on his studies. He has not looked at other viable viewpoints and opinions.

I have been a vegetarian all of my life. I am just as healthy within my group as anyone else is. Through a proper balancing of your diet, anyone can be healthy. Beans and eggs contain the "missing nutrients." Milk helps provide these, too. Another alternative is meat substitutes or mock meats. With these things, you do not run the risk of cholesterol buildup, parasitical disease or cancerous substances from the flesh of animals and birds. Some people may say that the slaughterhouses are under strict government control to prevent this, but do they check each and every piece of meat? Also, cholesterol can cause heart attacks. People who don't eat meat run a much lower risk (between 60 and 80 percent) of having heart attacks. It's something to think about.

Boettcher makes the point that "animals respond by instinct to stimuli in their environment." If one is to use his argument, then, humans are animals and we can eat them and not feel sorry for them. It's the logical conclusion, considering that humans respond to stimuli just as much as animals do. Heat, cold, touches, changes in the light, sound — they all affect us. We respond to stimuli. But we have one more step over animals — we can think. I don't agree. Webster tells us thought can be a clearly defined intention. For an example, I've had cows come up to me and make me pet them. Some people may say, "The cows associate you with affection, and that stimulates them to go over and ask for affection." There are two problems with that. To associate something with something else, you must remember it, and to do something on our own, you must intend to do it. The logical conclusion is that cows must think, because two thought processes occur. If Boettcher has never seen this take place, he must have never worked with the animals I have. My conclusion is that animals are intelligent, just not as much as we are.

Boettcher also seems to think the farm crisis has been caused by the underproduction of plant products. Untrue. Much of the problem has been caused by overproduction. Because of the surpluses, the farmers can't sell their products for anything more than rock bottom. This causes the farmers to take a loss on their production cost vs. sale price, and then they need to take out loans for the next year plus the price of their machinery. Add this to the uncertainty of the weather, and you see why so many farmers go out of business. The point is the world could live on a vegetable diet with today's advanced skills and technology in farming.

There are other arguments such as the cost of farming vs. ranching and so on, but the fact is that in this day and age you don't have to have meat to survive.

Lynn Baxter
freshman
broadcasting

Novel tells of church-state conflict

Born-again Watergate convict questions society's dismissal of religious values

We are asked, what book would you recommend for Christmas? I answer, not with struggle or equivocation, but with the sensation that I am all three kings at once, bequeathing gold, frankincense and myrrh: "Kingdoms in Conflict." Publisher: William Morrow. Author: Charles Colson.

William F. Buckley Jr.



Remember? Perhaps. Charles Colson was the White House intimate of Richard Nixon who indisputably presided over much of what was ugly in Operation Watergate and all that Watergate symbolized. He was tried, convicted and went to prison. And, yes, he was reborn, a word that for reasons that testify to the perversity of modern thought patterns tends to estrange, rather than gladden, cosmopolitan American gentry.

Many Americans would be more attracted to read about a con who discovered in prison the Marquis de Sade than one who discovered Christ. Charles Colson did the latter, went on to

found an organization (Prison Fellowship) designed to reform prison practices (Does it make sense to send to prison a white-collar criminal instead, say, of putting him to work as a janitor, under strict probation?); and he has become an eloquent critic of the creeping notion that the American dream is one that can be fulfilled without any sense of a bond to higher laws than those that emerge from yesterday's parliamentary exercise.

This is hardly a fresh idea. John Adams wrote: "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other." At the other end, we hear Lord Melbourne say during a great debate in Great Britain, "Things have come to a pretty pass when religion is allowed to invade public life." Lord Melbourne was arguing against the case being made, by William Wilberforce, that slavery should for moral reasons be declared illegal.

The arguments — church-state, the correct admixture between the two — are familiar grist for controversial mills, but Colson does wonderful theatrical instruction in his book.

It begins with a fictional account of an American president, elected in the 1990s, who is a fundamentalist and

believes that God had instructed him not to interfere under any circumstances with any Israeli strategic maneuver. What happens then? I swear, James Clavell could not have written that chapter more dramatically.

The point of which? That the relevant difference is institutional: No government should be tied institutionally to the institutional arm of any religion. But the institutional incest has nothing to do with quite other relationships. Because a mother should not sleep with her son, it does not follow that she should have no role in his upbringing.

Colson's superb sense of historical theater tells us poignantly, desolately, just what happened to the institutional Lutheran Church when threatened by Hitler. It gave in, excepting the minority, which held out — pleading higher laws than Hitler's. (Wonderful quote from survivor Martin Niemoller: "In Germany they came first . . . for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up.")

He gives us then an only slightly fictionalized account of the grave days in Great Britain when Neville Cham-

berlain, refusing to believe that Hitler was evil, talked his way into complacency, one step of many that led to 50 million deaths.

The Brits went on to face the war, which they won, thanks to us. But look what happened in the weeks after the war was won. We faced the question whether to return to Stalin the million people who had fled from him. The British government asked for a legal opinion. (Wonderful quote, Sir Patrick Dean, legal adviser for the British Foreign Office: "This is purely a question for the Soviet authorities and does not concern His Majesty's government. In due course, all those with whom the Soviet authorities desire to deal must be handed over to them, and we are not concerned with the fact that they may be shot or otherwise more harshly dealt with than they might be under English law.")

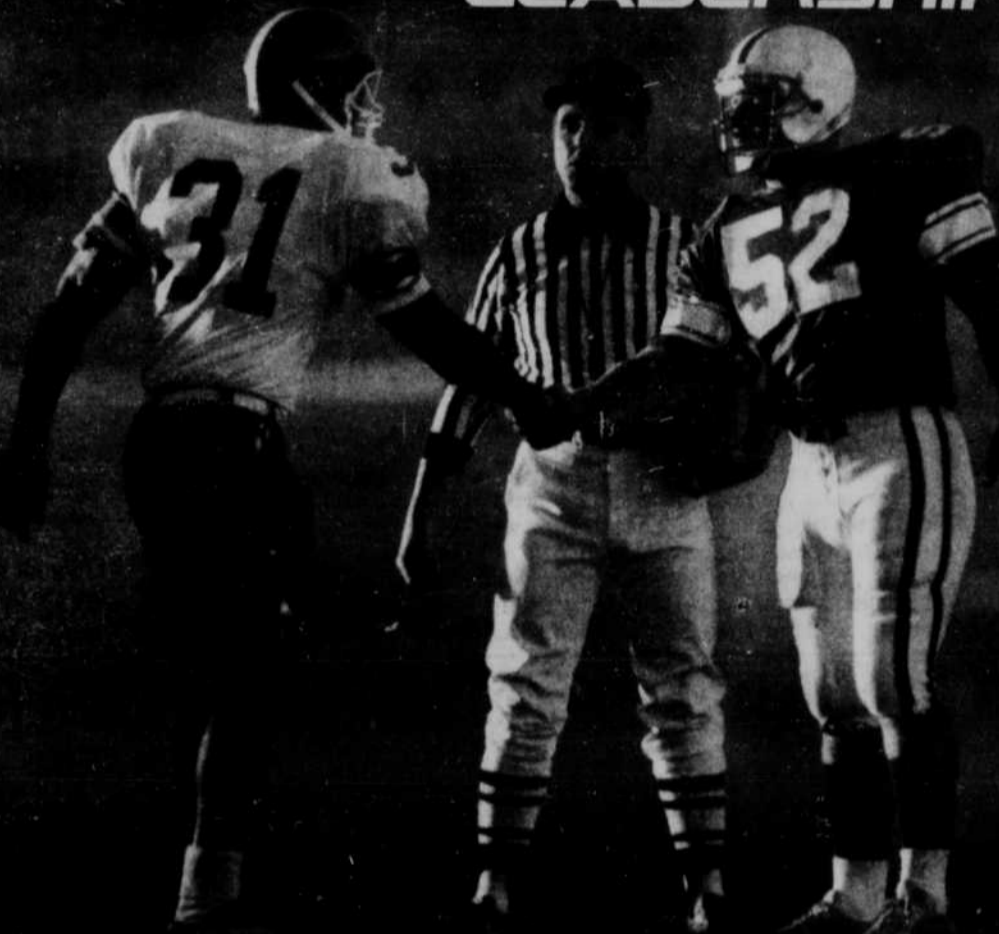
Half a world away, Gen. Douglas MacArthur was receiving the Japanese emperor's surrender. MacArthur said: "The problem (of enduring peace) is basically theological and involves spiritual recrudescences and improvement of human character. It must be of the spirit, if we are to save the flesh."

Colson asks in his electrifying book: Whom are we to learn from? Patrick Dean, Nietzsche, Freud, Marx? Or — Cicero, Plato, Adams, Churchill, Roosevelt and, yes, Christ?

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