

Dear Ann-Janine Morrey,

I read your letter to the Editor of the Liberty News, published May 14, 1970, at Liberty, Missouri. I first thought not to reply because there is a lack of time due to my being extremely busy raising a family, doing something for the community, voting, and doing a decent job at work so I can continue to buy food and pay taxes, taxes which help build roads, help the needy and help build fine institutions of learning similar to the one you now attend. I do not have the time, but because I have known you for a good many years and because I care for you and others your age, I will make the time to reply.

Ann-Janine, let me quote from your "Declaration of Conscience". "As members of an institution committed to reason and morality and to the relationship between private and public responsibilities, we, the majority of faculty and students at Grinnell College, joined by citizens of the city of Grinnell, Iowa, vigorously condemn the recent intensified aggressive actions of the United States in Cambodia and Vietnam and the acts of official repression so obvious in recent days at Kent State and other universities. These immoral and irrational acts and others similar to them threaten the life of this institution and other institutions of higher education; they disrupt the process of learning, increase the polarization of society and society's potential for violence. These acts must be condemned and we condemn them."

I agree with you, in part. You are a member of an institution committed to reason. You do have responsibilities. I could join you in condemning the causes of war. As far as I am concerned, however, condemning the United States for taking intensified aggressive action in Cambodia and Vietnam borders treason. Question: Are we not fighting the Viet-Cong and have we not been fighting for five years to help a people remain free? Is it not true that when you are in battle you must make strategic blows to even maintain your ground? If you do not, you lose position. Did we not have Cambodia's consent to enter Cambodia and rid it of foreign troops, the Viet Cong, our enemy? We had a chance to strike a good blow. This is an aggressive act? To take measures to save free men and American soldiers' lives is not reasonable and is immoral?

All Hitler did was rape and slaughter Europe. Was going to war against Hitler immoral? Hitler killed millions and wanted to end men's freedom throughout the world. Would you have condemned the United States for going to war against Hitler, for taking aggressive acts to win that war? Is there a difference between Hitler and the Viet Cong? Is there a difference between the North Koreans and the Viet Cong? Is there really any difference between any power who wants to suppress mankind's freedom. Hitler did kill millions before he was stopped and people said it was immoral for the free world not to have stopped him sooner. The Viet Cong have killed and would kill millions but this time the free world is attempting to stop them before they do and you cry, "Immoral". The United States could commit an immoral act. All we have to do is withdraw from Vietnam and let 18 million people be plundered and enslaved.

You speak of official repression of students at Kent University and other institutions and the "irrational acts and disruption of learning". The United States greives the tragedy of Kent State. I greive the mislead students who were killed--and for the young guardsmen who had to kill their own countrymen in order to restore peace and order for the majority. They will remember that day all their lives. In most of our learning institutions the acts of minority groups are interrupting the learning process of the majority. A few students and some professors are keeping hundreds of students from obtaining the education they paid for, and are entitled to. At Kent State and other colleges real property valued at thousands of dollars has been and is being destroyed. Ann-Janine, I know you know better than to destroy property, anybody's property. You know better than to disturb the peace and you know that we have policemen and guardsmen to protect property and to protect peace. You know that if you disobey one of these officers when he is performing his duty there will surely be dire consequences.

Ann-Janine, if I interpret you correctly, I have the right to carry a sign and shout obscenities and march in front of your father's church on Sunday morning during services because I disagree with the building program finances. I could get several others to join me, no doubt. I do not have that right--nor do I want it. I do have the right to vote, to speak and to present arguments, to work vigorously, to try and win for my side. If the will of the majority in vote is against me, I will abide by that vote of the majority even though I think it is wrong. If time proves the majority wrong and me right, I have the right to say, "Damn it, I told you so".

Demonstrations and protests and destroying property and disturbing the peace are tantrums for 18 years old children. It is a tragedy when the spanking must be administered with club and rifle but you are too old to bend across the knee. You are old enough to be responsible for your acts. Ah, responsibilities--you are 18, 19, 20 years old. "We can't vote, but we can fight in the army", you say. "We can't get credit or insurance", you say. "If I am not old enough to vote or get credit I shouldn't be held responsible for my other actions", you say. Use some of that reasoning. Two wrongs do not make a right. This situation is incorrect and most of your countrymen realize it and are working at getting it changed.

Forgive us for being slow, but we are older; we are working on it. The fact is you are responsible for most of your action and statements now. We elders might be hurried along in recognizing your other "responsible" possibilities if your actions warrant it. As it is, you should feel some sort of responsibility for "Tradition", to your Forefathers and what they endured that you could have a free country and attend a fine school. Will your children live in a free country and attend a fine school?

For the present, why don't you lower your voice and earn your right to speak up. Why not study real hard, observe our mistakes and let us "old people" run things just a bit longer. You will have your chance to run the whole show and to make all the changes and all the responsibility will be yours in less than ten years. If you study and pray and work real hard, just half as hard as you are yelling now, I think you will make a better world to live in than we have now, and I am 100% for that.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gordon L. Dille". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "D" at the end.

Gordon L. Dille
140 Lightburne
Liberty, Missouri

P.S. Since you sent copies of your letter all over, I am sending a copy of this to President Nixon, The Governor of Missouri, The Governor of Iowa, the National Guard of Ohio, the President of Kent State, the President of Grinnell, the Editor of The Liberty News and to my sons.

AFTER FIVE DAYS RETURN TO

G. Dille

140 Lightburne

Liberty, Mo

ZIP CODE

64068



Miss ANN-JANINE MORREY
439 E. FRANKLIN
Liberty, Mo.

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