

“PUBLIC WORKS: PROFESSOR CAPPS GOES TO CONGRESS”

UCSB, CAPPS CENTER CONFERENCE, MAY 8, 2008

I CHERISH THE OPPORTUNITY TO THINK WITH ALL OF YOU ABOUT THE ENDURING LEGACIES OF WALTER CAPPS. WHAT WE SAY HERE NOW BECOMES PART OF ACTIVE MEMORY, FOR THERE ARE OTHER BENCHMARK ANNIVERSARIES TO COME. IT IS ALWAYS ONE GENERATION'S CONCEIT THAT THOSE WHO FOLLOW WILL PAY ATTENTION. I HOPE THEY WILL, ~~AND THAT OTHERS WILL~~ BUILD UPON, RECONCEIVE, ⁺ ARGUE ABOUT OUR “FIRST TAKE” ON WALTER'S EXTRAORDINARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THOSE AT WORK IN ~~THE~~ ^{SUBJECT -} FIELD OF ~~RELIGIOUS STUDIES~~ THAT HE HELPED SHAPE.

IN THE FALL OF 1979, MY WIFE ULLA AND I LEFT UCSB FOR OSHKOSH, WI, WHERE WE LIVED UNTIL MOVING ~~RECENTLY TO~~ ^{3 yrs ago to} BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA. ^{DURING THESE YEARS,} WALTER INVITED ME BACK A NUMBER OF TIMES, TO PARTICIPATE IN ONE OF HIS NEH SEMINARS ON DE TOCQUEVILLE, TO SPEAK TO STUDENTS IN THE VIETNAM COURSE ABOUT THE DIFFICULTY OF MEMORIALIZING OTHER SEARING EVENTS: THE HOLOCAUST, THE BOMB, THE TERRORIST ATTACK IN OKC, ALL, LIKE THE WAR IN VIETNAM, ^{WENT DOWN TO US ALIVE IN} ~~UNPRECEDENTED~~ IN SO MANY WAYS. ~~I WAS NOT SO~~ ~~SURPRISED WHEN WALTER TOLD ME WAS GOING TO RUN FOR CONGRESS.~~ ~~I HADN'T ANTICIPATED IT, BUT I WASN'T SURPRISED.~~ ^{AND DURING A} ~~ONE OF MY~~ VISITS, SOMETIME AFTER HIS UNSUCCESSFUL BID FOR OFFICE IN 1994, WE WERE IN HIS STUDY—THE HERMITAGE—~~AND~~ HE TOLD ME THAT HE WAS AT WORK ON A BOOK ABOUT RELIGION AND POLITICS SEEN THROUGH THE PRISM OF RUNNING FOR OFFICE. AFTER HIS SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN IN 1996, I RECALL THINKING “THIS BOOK COULD BE DELAYED A WHILE,” BUT I NEVER FORGOT ABOUT IT.

WHEN I RECEIVED THE INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS CONFERENCE, I ASKED CONGRESSWOMAN LOIS CAPPS, LAURA CAPPS, AND TODD CAPPS IF THEY WOULD HELP ME LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS

PERIOD OF WALTER'S LIFE THAT WE ONLY KNEW FROM AFAR. (STUDENTS AT OSHKOSH WERE SOMETIMES CONFUSED WHEN THEY SAW A "CAPPS FOR CONGRESS" BUMPER STICKER IN MY OFFICE. "IS THIS SOMEONE WE SHOULD VOTE FOR, I HAVEN'T HEARD OF HIM," SOME WOULD ASK. I ALWAYS ENCOURAGED THEM TO MOVE TO THE DISTRICT AND VOTE EARLY AND OFTEN.

SPECIFICALLY, I WANTED TO KNOW IF THERE WAS ^{THIS} ~~A~~ MANUSCRIPT. IF SO, COULD I READ IT? WERE THERE OTHER MATERIALS THAT COULD HELP ME GET SOME SENSE OF WHAT LED WALTER TO HIS DECISION TO RUN FOR PUBLIC OFFICE, AND HOW HE ENVISIONED ENGAGING WHAT SEEMED ON THE SURFACE, A QUITE DIFFERENT SET OF CHALLENGES. WOULD HIS THOUGHTFUL AND COMPELLING VOICE BE DISTINCT AMID THE CACOPHONY OF VOICES IN WASHINGTON? ~~WOULD HE BE PERCEIVED AS LITTLE MORE THAN AN EXOTIC ODDITY, THE PROFESSOR BECOME CONGRESSMAN, FRAMED AND CONTAINED FROM THE BEGINNING?~~ HOW DID HIS VOCATION AS SCHOLAR AND TEACHER PREPARE HIM—IF IT DID—FOR THIS CHALLENGE?

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"YES," THE CAPPS'S TOLD ME. THERE ARE A FEW CHAPTERS OF THE MANUSCRIPT, BUT THE DISK IS CORRUPTED AND WE CAN'T GET THEM ALL. THERE ARE A FEW OTHER THINGS ^{ON DISC} AS WELL, AND OF COURSE A TEN-MONTH RECORD OF WALTER'S STATEMENTS ON THE FLOOR, ~~NOT TO MENTION~~

~~AND THE~~ IMMENSE RECORD FROM THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL, ^{EXPOSURE} ~~WHERE~~ SO, SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, I READ ~~ALL THIS~~ ^{SOME}. I HAD MORE QUESTIONS. I ASKED LOIS IF I COULD COME TO SB A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE CONFERENCE AND DO AT LEAST SOME MODEST HUNTING AND GATHERING IN WALTER'S PAPERS. "YES," SAID LOIS, "BUT THEY ARE STILL HERE, IN BOXES AND FILE CABINETS." SO THIS PAST TUESDAY I ARRIVED AND WENT TO WORK. NORMALLY HUNTING AND GATHERING IS FOLLOWED BY A PERIOD OF SORTING, READING, MORE HUNTING AND GATHERING, AND SO ON. BUT NOT THIS WEEK! THERE IS, AS YOU CAN IMAGINE, A TREASURE TROVE OF MATERIALS: PROPOSALS FOR BOOKS—^{FOR EX.}

NOT TO MENTION
IS MOST
I'm sorry
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GOD AND THE OVAL OFFICE: POLITICAL RELIGION IN THE REAGAN ERA, SUBSEQUENTLY RETITLED *CHIEF PASTOR: RELIGION AND THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY*—THAT EXTENDS THE FOCUS BEYOND PRESIDENT REAGAN TO PRESIDENTS BUSH AND CLINTON, AND VICE-PRESIDENT GORE AND ONE-TIME PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE JESSE JACKSON. (1993) THERE ARE SEVERAL PAGES: 105-106 AND 353-355 OF A MANUSCRIPT ABOUT PRESIDENT REAGAN'S MOBILIZATION OF CONSERVATIVE RELIGIOUS RESOURCES. BUT ONLY THOSE PAGES. ~~ABOUT THE PROPOSED BOOK HE WROTE, "I SAT IN ON WESTERN WHITE HOUSE PRESS BRIEFINGS," AND GATHERED "IMPRESSIONS AND INSIGHTS FROM REPORTERS AND WRITERS" WHO COVERED REAGAN.~~

THERE ARE NUMEROUS VIDEOTAPES FROM CAMPAIGN EVENTS OF ALL KINDS. THERE ARE DRAWERS FILLED WITH CORRESPONDENCE WITH MANY, MANY PEOPLE. THERE ARE DRAFTS OF EDITORIAL PIECES FOR THE LA TIMES, AUTOPSIES OF THE 1994 CAMPAIGN, ^{FOR THE} I FOUND WALTER'S INTELLECTUAL JUSTIFICATION FOR SEVERAL NEH SEMINARS ON DE T. ^{98-13485,} "THE TEXT IS ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE'S *DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA*, AND THE SUBJECT IS THE STATUS AND FUNCTION OF RELIGION WITH A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY." REFLECTING ON A 1986 SEMINAR, WALTER WROTE THAT PARTICIPANTS "RE-CREATED AN ~~EXTENDED~~ ^{AND} ONGOING CONVERSATION VERY MUCH LIKE THE INQUIRY THAT IS REFLECTED IN DE T'S BOOK. IT WAS A CONVERSATION ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN AMERICAN, WHAT DEMOCRACY ASKS OF RELIGION AND RELIGION OF DEMOCRACY, HOW THE FREEDOMS AMERICANS ENJOY ARE BOTH SUSTAINED AND THWARTED, AND THE PLACE AND PROTECTIONS OF INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE WITHIN A DEMOCRATIC COLLECTIVE ORDER."

THERE ARE ^{SO MANY} ~~WONDERFULLY~~ ¹⁹⁸⁶ ~~REVEALING~~ DOCUMENTS. "WALTER CAPPS' MANIFESTO," FOR EXAMPLE, WRITTEN FOR "STAFF MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES" AS THE CAMPAIGN WAS BEING ORGANIZED IN FALL 1995. I ONLY HAVE TIME TO MENTION THE CATEGORIES: "THE LARGER GLOBAL SETTING"; "NATIONAL AND DOMESTIC ISSUES"; "THE MORAL

AND SPIRITUAL TEMPER OF OUR TIMES”; “RESTORING A BOND OF POLITICAL TRUST”; “THE ENVIRONMENT AND INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE WELL-BEING”; “AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, GENDER ISSUES, AND THE STATUS OF ‘OTHER PEOPLE’”; “THE PRIMACY OF EDUCATION”; “ATTITUDES TOWARD REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT”; AND “WALTER CAPPS’ PERSONAL AMBITION.” ~~IT IS A FASCINATING DOCUMENT.~~

THROUGHOUT, WE HEAR CLEAR, CONCISE STATEMENTS OF CONVICTION: “WALTER CAPPS URGES MINDFULNESS OF THE LARGER [GLOBAL] FRAMEWORK AND CAUTIONS THAT THE UNITED STATES IS CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING A DANGEROUS ISOLATIONIST TENDENCY ... REFLECTED IN INTENSE CRITICISM OF THE UNITED NATIONS. WALTER CAPPS BELIEVES THAT THE UNITED STATES MUST EXERCISE ITS GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN A COOPERATIVE, MUTUALLY-SUPPORTIVE MANNER THAT IS JUDICIOUS, EFFECTIVE AND REALISTIC ... WALTER CAPPS ATTESTS THAT LIFE DOES NOT FLOW FROM IDEOLOGY, AND THAT AMERICAN IMPERIALISM IS NOT THE ANSWER TO THE WORLDS NEEDS ... WALTER CAPPS INSISTS THAT THE UNITED STATES DEVELOP A MORE EFFECTIVE EXCHANGE WITH THE ISLAMIC PEOPLES OF THE WORLD ... WALTER CAPPS SIDES WITH THOSE ... WALTER CAPPS APPLAUDS THE EFFORT ... WALTER CAPPS STANDS IN SHARP OPPOSITION TO ... 2

ADD SPEECH

CLEARLY, WALTER OFTEN THOUGHT THINGS THROUGH BY TYPING THEM OUT. THERE ARE NOTES ANALYZING, FOR EXAMPLE, A SPEECH AT A CONGRESSIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST BY NEWT GINGRICH, DIFFERENT FORMULATIONS OF HIS STRUGGLE WHETHER EVEN TO CONSIDER RUNNING FOR OFFICE, A QUICK—AND FRANK--TAKE ON PRESIDENT CLINTON’S FIRST HUNDRED DAYS IN OFFICE, A TYPED PRAYER FOR A NEW DAY.

AND OF COURSE THERE IS SO MUCH ABOUT THE UNIQUE EXPRESSION OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT WALTER CREATED THROUGH THE VIETNAM AND VOICES OF THE STRANGER COURSES. LEST WE THINK, HOWEVER, THAT FROM THE BEGINNING WALTER COULD BASK IN THE

GOLDEN GLOW OF THESE COURSES, I RECALL ^{FOR YOU} ~~VIVIDLY~~ ONE OF THE FEW TIMES I EVER SAW WALTER DISCOURAGED AND UPSET. HE SHOWED ME A LETTER FROM TWO SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE RELIGIOUS STUDIES DEPARTMENT STRONGLY OBJECTING TO THE VIETNAM COURSE. IT WAS NOT SCHOLARLY, IT WAS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR EMOTION AND STORYTELLING TO BE PART OF A COURSE IN A UNIVERSITY. ~~IT~~ WAS ^{THE ISSUE} DEEPLY HURTFUL.

IN A SHORT ESSAY WRITTEN IN 1984, "THE VIETNAM WAR AND CULTURAL MEMORY," WALTER INFORMED READERS, "I BECAME INTERESTED IN STUDYING THE IMPACT OF THE VIETNAM WAR IN 1977... WHEN I WAS GIVEN SOME RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROGRAMMING WITHIN THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS." HE ORGANIZED A CONFERENCE, "THE IMPACT OF THE VIETNAM WAR UPON LIBERAL IDEOLOGY," ^{DURISB} ~~AT~~ WHICH WALTER WAS MOVED BY THE POWER OF VETERAN'S STORIES. I PARTICIPATED IN A 1978 CENTER CONFERENCE "THE VIETNAM WAR AND AMERICAN VALUES," AT WHICH WALTER OFFERED A PAPER FOR DISCUSSION, "THE WAR'S TRANSFORMATION." (YOU CAN READ THIS AND THE CONVERSATION THAT FOLLOWED IN *THE CENTER MAGAZINE* JULY/AUGUST 1978.) IT SEEMS TO ME THAT FROM THIS POINT ON, WALTER'S ATTENTION TURNED TO NOT ONLY THE COMPLEX LEGACIES OF THE WAR, BUT WHAT HE—AND OF COURSE MANY OTHERS—SAW AS ENDURING DEFORMATIONS IN AMERICAN PUBLIC AND CIVIC CULTURE. WELL BEFORE THE BOOM IN MEMORY STUDIES IN MANY FIELDS, CAME WALTER'S BOOK *THE UNFINISHED WAR*. IN BOTH OF THESE COURSES, WALTER WAS WILLING TO LIVE WITH, AND ASK HIS STUDENTS TO LIVE WITH, THE INTELLECTUALLY AND EMOTIONALLY DRAINING REALIZATION THAT THERE ARE CHRONIC AFFLICTIONS THAT DO NOT END. AND YET HE WAS STEADFAST IN HIS BELIEF THAT, IN HIS WORDS, "VETERANS WHO ARE LEADING THE WAY ARE POINTING TO SOME DEEPLY ABIDING HUMAN TRUTHS THAT ARE ENCOUNTERED IN REGIONS LYING FAR BEYOND ~~THE~~ WORLDS MADE ACCESSIBLE VIA POLITICAL DIALECTICS." HE

UNDERSTOOD THE POWER OF THE WITNESS—AT THAT POINT AN EMERGING SACRED FIGURE IN THE CULTURE—WHO RETURNED FROM EXTREME SITUATIONS OR CONDITIONS—TO OFFER TESTIMONY, CONTEMPORARY SACRED NARRATIVES. I AM SORELY TEMPTED TO DIVERT FROM MY CHOSEN PATH HERE, BECAUSE THERE IS MUCH TO SAY ABOUT HOW WE ENGAGE ^{or avoid} THE CHRONIC AFFLICTION, ^{for ex.} INSIDIOUSLY TRANSFORMING THOSE IMPACTED BY VIOLENCE INTO PATIENTS RATHER THAN WITNESSES, ~~AND~~ ^{we} INSIST THAT THEIR ~~RE~~ STORIES BE FRAMED AS ILLNESS NARRATIVES RATHER THAN IMPASSIONED TESTIMONY, THE LANGUAGE OF MORAL WITNESS. THERE ARE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ABOUT THE OWNERSHIP AND DEPLOYMENT OF TESTIMONY, AND ~~ABOUT A~~ ^{is} USUALLY UNSTATED ASSUMPTION—THAT SUFFERING IS BY DEFINITION ENOBLING. BUT THAT FOR ANOTHER TIME.

~~WAS~~ ^{was} WALTER'S IMMERSION IN THE IMPACT OF VIETNAM THE KEY, OR ONE OF SEVERAL KEYS IN WHAT SEEMS ^{his} ~~AN~~ INEXORABLE MOVE INTO PUBLIC WORLDS BEYOND THE CLASSROOM? ~~I AM INTERESTED IN WHAT PEOPLE HERE HAVE TO SAY.~~ ^{more} THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES ~~BEYOND~~ ^{is} THE ACADEMY WAS CERTAINLY AN ISSUE OF CONCERN FOR SEVERAL OF US, FACULTY AND GRADUATE STUDENTS ALIKE. ONE OF THE FIRST CHALLENGES I RECALL WAS OFFERED BY RICHARD HECHT IN AN ESSAY, "RELIGIOUS STUDIES AFTER THE HOLOCAUST." "NO ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE WITHIN THE MODERN UNIVERSITY," HE WROTE, "CAN SHIELD ITSELF ~~FOR~~ FROM THE IMPACT OF HISTORY AND HISTORICAL EVENTS. ATTEMPTS TO CLEARLY SEPARATE WHAT IS DONE WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY CONTEXT AND WHAT OCCURS IN HISTORY ^{it} AROUND ARE SHORT-LIVED; ALL DISCIPLINES WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY ARE CONDITIONED BY HISTORY. THIS SIMPLE FACT IS EVEN MORE POWERFUL WITHIN THOSE DISCIPLINES WHICH SELF-CONSCIOUSLY DEFINE THEMSELVES AS HAVING SOMETHING TO SAY TO THE HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING OF MAN AND TO THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT AT THE END OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY." "WE HAVE NOT YET REALIZED," HE

ARGUED, "THAT HISTORICAL EVENTS OF OUR CENTURY HAVE EITHER DOOMED OUR ENTERPRISE TO ANTIQUARIAN STUDIES OR HAVE MADE WHAT WE ARE DOING EVEN MORE VITAL." ~~AND~~ NOT LONG AFTER ~~WALTER'S~~ ^{WALTER'S} ESSAY APPEARED, WALTER ~~EMBRACED~~ ^{EMBRACED} WROTE AN ESSAY "CONTEMPORARY SOCIO-POLITICAL CHANGE AND THE WORK OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES." "WHY," HE ASKS, "HAVE WE NOT DEVELOPED A MODE OF CRITICAL CULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS WHICH... UTILIZES RELIGION AS ITS PRIMARY MEANS OF ACCESS? AND WHY WE HAVE LEARNED TO DO THIS, WHY DO WE RESTRICT OUR FOCUS OF INQUIRY TO THE WORLD OF THE PAST TENSE? WHY ARE WE NOT ABLE TO SAY MORE ~~AB~~ ^{AB} OUT THE DYNAMICS OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL CHANGE?" IN THAT SAME PIECE, WALTER ~~BRANDED INTO MY MIND~~ ^{WAS} ~~BRANDED INTO MY MIND~~ ^{BRANDED INTO MY MIND} WHAT FELT TO ME LIKE A DECLARATION OF INTELLECTUAL INDEPENDENCE FOR THE KIND OF WORK I WANTED TO DO. "MY FEELING IS—AND I'M BEING SELF-CRITICAL—THAT WE ARE STILL WRITING TERM PAPERS TO EACH OTHER RATHER THAN THINKING THROUGH THE STRATEGY BY WHICH RELIGIOUS STUDIES MIGHT MORE REGULARLY AND SUBSTANTIALLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE WELFARE OF OUR LARGER COLLECTIVE LIFE." (IS IT ANY WONDER THAT SOME OF US WHO LEARNED FROM WALTER EMBRACED A CULTURAL ANALYSIS ROOTED IN THE SENSIBILITIES OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES, BUT TAKING AS SUBJECT ISSUES OF CURRENT CONCERN. I THINK ONE OF THE EARLIEST AND TO MY MIND ~~THE~~ ^{THE} BEST MODELS OF THIS ~~IS~~ ^{IS} DAVID CHIDESTER'S BOOK ON JONESTOWN, AS IMPORTANT A BOOK TODAY AS IT WAS SEVERAL DECADES AGO.)

WE NOW RETURN TO OUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED PROGRAM, FEATURING ED SLITHERING AROUND BIKES, BED POSTS, LARGE FRAMED PHOTOGRAPHS, AND VARIOUS OTHER IMPEDIMENTS, ^{IN THE LOSTS' CORNERS,} IN THE QUEST FOR MORE MATERIALS. I WANT TO SPEND MY REMAINING TIME LETTING WALTER'S VOICE SPEAK FROM THE PAGES OF HIS UNFINISHED ^{UNFINISHED} MANUSCRIPT. BEFORE WE DO, HOWEVER, THERE IS EXCITING NEWS. I FOUND THE TEXT OF THE TWO CHAPTERS LOST FOREVER ON DISC! THEY

ARE NOW SCANNED ONTO SEVERAL CD'S, I HAVE PHYSICAL COPIES AS DOES LOIS. I SUSPECT ~~THESE WERE THE ONLY EXTANT COPIES OF THESE~~ CHAPTERS. ~~I WILL AT LEAST CHOOSE TO BELIEVE THIS, SINCE IT ALLOWS ME TO CONSTRUCT A PREFERRED NARRATIVE OF DISCOVERY.~~

IT IS NOT FAIR TO CHARACTERIZE THIS AS A FIRST DRAFT. IT FEELS TO ME THAT WALTER WAS WRITING THIS FOR HIMSELF BEFORE TURNING IT INTO A FIRST DRAFT TO BE READ BY OTHERS. I HOPE HE WOULD NOT MIND MY SHARING SOME OF IT. THE INTRODUCTION, "ON RUNNING FOR CONGRESS," IS AN EXTENDED COMMENTARY ON THE "MEANING AND MESSAGE" OF THE 1994 ELECTION. "IT DOES NOT STAND," HE ~~WRITES~~, "AS THE EVENT WHICH MARKS A DECISION BY THE CITIZENRY TO CHART A NEW PATH. RATHER, IT SYMBOLIZES AN EXPLOSION OF COLLECTIVE EMOTION AGAINST PREVAILING GOVERNMENT NO LONGER TRUSTED OR RESPECTED, AND, AT TIMES, HARDLY EVEN RECOGNIZED."

1. CHAPTER ONE: "A CANDIDATE'S PERSPECTIVE;" ~~WALTER WRITES~~ ABOUT ~~THE~~ ~~MANY~~ ACTIVITIES THAT TOOK HIM TO WASHINGTON OVER MANY YEARS. "I SPENT SO MUCH TIME ON CAPITOL HILL THAT I WAS ABLE TO SCHEDULE MY HAIRCUTS IN THE SENATE BARBERSHOP. NONE OF THIS LED TO THE ACQUISITION OF 'POTOMAC FEVER,' BUT I DID COME TO RECOGNIZE THAT MUCH OF OUR ASPIRATION AS A PEOPLE CANNOT APPROXIMATE FULL FRUITION UNLESS IT IS VALIDATED BY THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS." HE FIRST GAVE "SERIOUS CONSIDERATION" TO RUNNING AFTER WORKING WITH SENATOR BOB KERRY'S CAMPAIGN FOR PRESIDENT IN 1992. THEN CAME DEEP STRUGGLE. "I WAS FOREWARNED THAT RUNNING FOR OFFICE IS AN IDENTITY-DEFINING EXPERIENCE. 'PERHAPS NOTHING YOU HAVE EVER ENCOUNTERED [HE WAS TOLD] WILL DEFINE YOU AS DEEPLY AND AS SURELY?'" WALTER VISITED THE OFFICES OF THE DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE (DCCC) AND EMERGED QUITE DISCOURAGED. "AFTER ALL, WHAT DID I KNOW ABOUT CRIME, THE ECONOMY, IMMIGRATION, AND GOVERNOR WILSON?"

WHAT I DID KNOW, AND KNEW RATHER WELL, WAS HOW TO CREATE AND TEACH COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CLASSES, STIMULATE INTELLECTUAL INTEREST IN A TOPIC, CONDUCT RESEARCH, AND, OF COURSE, THINK ABOUT BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES, INDIVIDUAL ASPIRATION, THE SPIRIT OF OUR TIMES, THE DESIRES OF PEOPLE ALL OVER THE EARTH TO LIVE TOGETHER IN PEACE, THE LONGINGS AMONG THE LESS FORTUNATE FOR A LIFE OF REALISTIC PROMISE, AND THE DESIRE OF YOUNG PEOPLE ... FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE THEIR IDEALS IN A WORLD THAT IS GIVEN FORMATION BY HOPE RATHER THAN FEAR, AND GENEROSITY RATHER THAN ANGER.” (WE MUST HAVE A WALTER STORY OR TWO ... IN HIS MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO WALTER, CONGRESSMAN FAZIO, CHAIRMAN OF THE DCCC WHEN WALTER WAS RUNNING, TOLD HIS HOUSE COLLEAGUES THAT THE FIRST COMMUNICATION HE HAD WITH WALTER WAS BY COMPUTER. “HE SENT ME A MESSAGE FROM SANTA BARBARA,” FAZIO ~~RECALLED~~ ^{RECALLED} ~~SAID~~. “IT SAID, ‘YOU CANNOT IMAGINE HOW ENTIRELY IRRELEVANT THE MATERIAL YOU ARE SENDING ME IS.’”

WHY, THEN, DID HE RUN? ³ “THE REASON HAS MORE TO DO,” HE ~~WRITES,~~ ^{WRITES, ABOUT,} ~~WITH~~ SEEING IT AS AN ASSIGNMENT, AN EXPANSION OF VOCATION, BELIEVING THAT I HAD SOMETHING TO CONTRIBUTE, RATHER THAN THE FULFILLMENT OF A LIFE’S AMBITION ... IT IS NO SMALL THING TO SEEK ELECTED OFFICE. TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE IS TO SEEK ENTRY INTO IMPORTANT PROTECTED PLACES OF THEIR LIVES, TO ASK THEM TO ATTACH THEIR DREAMS AND ASPIRATIONS—AND YES, THEIR INDIGNATIONS—TO THE CANDIDATE’S INSTRUMENTAL ABILITIES.” (SECOND WALTER STORY ... HE RECALLS THE BURDEN OF THE ^{DURING THE} ~~COMP~~ ^{CAMPAIGN} OFT-ASKED QUESTION, “HOW DO WE KNOW YOU ARE NOT ANOTHER BILL CLINTON? “WE TRIED FOR A BIT OF HUMOR SOME OF THE TIME: ‘I’M NOT BILL CLINTON; I PLAY THE TUBA ... BUT THE HUMOROUS RESPONSE DID NOT SUFFICE.”

I WAS SURPRISED TO READ THAT HIS “FIRST TAKE ON THE REPUBLICANS’ “CONTRACT” WAS THAT, IN DIAGNOSTIC TERMS, PARTS OF

IT ~~WERE~~ RATHER GOOD, AND SOME OF IT WAS VERY MUCH ON TARGET. SOME OF THE TIME I WISHED THAT THOSE SPONSORING ME HAD WORKED OUT THE TENETS OF THEIR (OUR) POLITICAL FAITH WITH COMPARABLE PHILOSOPHICAL PRECISION. THROUGHOUT THE CAMPAIGN, I WAS STRAINING FOR THE SAME OBJECTIVE MYSELF." IN THE INTERESTS OF TIME, I MOVE PAST CHAPTER TWO, "CONSTRUCTING POLITICAL REFORM," AND CHAPTER THREE, "GINGRICH AND THE CHRISTIAN COALITION," TO THE LAST CHAPTER WE HAVE—AND I HAVE NO IDEA IF WALTER SAW THIS AS THE FINAL CHAPTER—"POLITICS AND SPIRITUALITY." THE FIRST SECTION IS ENTITLED "POLITICS AS PILGRIMAGE." "I AM SUGGESTING, ^{HE WOULD} THAT THE RUN FOR POLITICAL OFFICE IS LIKE PILGRIMAGE IN A NUMBER OF WAYS. IT IS DIRECTED MOVEMENT. IT REQUIRES TOTAL INVOLVEMENT. THE MOVEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT CREATE A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY, IN THAT ONE IS ACCOMPANIED ON THE JOURNEY ~~BY~~ PERSONS WHO ARE DEDICATED TO THE SAME CAUSE AND/OR TO SUSTAIN THE PILGRIM... AND THE BONDING IS AS STRONG AS ANYTHING THE PARTICIPANTS HAD PREVIOUSLY EXPERIENCED. THIS IS WHY CAMPAIGN ACTIVISTS, WHEN TALKING ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES, TEND TO HIGHLIGHT ONE CAMPAIGN THAT WAS EXTRAORDINARY FOR THEM. WHEREVER IT HAPPENED, WHATEVER THE POLITICAL SEASON, THIS WAS THE NORMATIVE PILGRIMAGE, THE ONE IN WHICH VALUES AND STAMINA WERE TESTED. AND THE RECOLLECTION OF WHO ACTUALLY GOT THE MOST VOTES SOMETIMES OCCURS AS AN AFTERTHOUGHT... TO REALIZE THAT THE RACE IS OVER IS TO SENSE THAT LIFE CAN BEGIN TO RETURN TO SOME SENSE OF NORMALCY. IT'S WHY THOSE WHO DEVISED THE LITURGICAL YEAR MADE PROVISION FOR THE EXCITING, UPLIFTING, EXHILARATING HIGH HOLY DAYS, TO BE FOLLOWED BY DAYS WHEN THE HUMAN SPIRIT COULD SIMPLY TAKE REFUGE IN WHAT IS MOST APPROPRIATELY CALLED "ORDINARY TIME!... THE DEGREE OF SOUL-SEARCHING THAT BELONGS TO POLITICS, PARTICULARLY IN THE HEAT OF THE CAMPAIGN, IS NOT UNLIKE THAT THAT IS FOSTERED IN RELIGION.

THE DIFFERENCE IS THAT RELIGION PROVIDES A STANDARD, OR SOME AUTHORIZED VECTORS, IN RELATIONSHIP TO WHICH THE SEARCH IS CONDUCTED, WHILE THE VECTORS THAT ARE MOST PROMINENT IN POLITICS ARE THE NUMBERS THAT TELL ONE HOW IT APPEARS THAT ONE IS DOING RELATIVE TO HOW ONE'S OPPONENT IS DOING."

WALTER'S WELL-KNOWN DISLIKE FOR FUND-RAISING IS EVIDENT IN THE NEXT SECTION, "POLITICS AS MENDICANT EXPERIENCE. "IN TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS TERMS, A MENDICANT IS A PERSON WHO RENOUNCES THE OWNERSHIP OF PERSONAL PROPERTY, AND, SOMETIMES IN VERY AUSTERE FASHION, RELIES ON THE GOOD WILL AND CHARITY OF OTHERS ... THE POLITICIAN, BY COMPARISON AND CONTRAST, ASKS FOR MONEY FROM VIRTUALLY EVERYONE WITH WHOM HE/SHE COMES IN CONTACT ... THE SUPPORT A MONK SEEKS, HOWEVER, IS AFFIRMATION OF THE WAY HE/SHE TRUSTS THE UNIVERSE IS ORDERED. THAT IS, HE/SHE LIVES BY GRACE, THE SUPPORT OF OTHERS, AND THE BOUNTY OF WHOEVER RULES THIS EARTH. IN POLITICS THE SAME TRANSACTIONS HAVE BECOME SO COMPLETELY TARNISHED THAT THEY BECOME BANE RATHER THAN BLESSING, IMPEDIMENT RATHER THAN FACILITATOR."

THE FINAL SECTIONS OF THIS CHAPTER ARE: "PROGRESSIVE POLITICS AND PROGRESSIVE SPIRITUALITY"; "CONTRASTING THE WORLD OF POLITICS AND ACADEMICS"; AND "THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS." ~~IT IS~~ ^{THE LAST IS A} TOPIC," WALTER ~~WRITES~~ ^{NOTES}, "WHOSE FORCE HAS BEEN GROWING IN MY REFLECTIONS, AND WHICH, I SUSPECT, IS MORE CENTRAL TO THE SUBJECT OF THIS CHAPTER THAN I CAN FULLY APPRECIATE." IT WAS ON A TRIP TO JERUSALEM, A ^{LDS} "LIFE AFFECTING TRIP," WHEN "A COMPLETELY UNEXPECTED FUSION" TOOK PLACE REGARDING "THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN POLITICS AND THE RELIGIOUS LIFE. IN A WORD, IT WAS WHILE WE WERE THERE THAT I BECAME AWARE OF THE POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF JESUS ... IT IS ABOUT HOW JESUS OF NAZARETH LIVED HIS LIFE AND SPENT HIS TIME ... [TRAVELING] FRQ MTOWN TO TOWN TO TALK WITH ASSEMBLED GROUPS ABOUT WHAT WAS HAPPING

IN THEIR LIVES, IN BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE SENSES, AND TO OFFER WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT.” THERE ARE SIMILARITIES, HE ~~THINKS~~, ~~BELIEVES~~, BETWEEN THIS “FORM OF MINISTRY” AND RUNNING FOR OFFICE. “HOW DID ANYONE KNOW HE WOULD BE COMING?...ON WHAT BASIS DID HE CHOOSE HIS TOPICS? DID HE GIVE THE SAME TALK SEVERAL TIMES?...WERE HIS AUDIENCES MOSTLY PLIANT, OR DID SOME GIVE HIM A DIFFICULT TIME? HOW DID HE MAKE HIS VOICE HEARD? DID HE EVER TIRE OF THE DAILY GRIND? HOW DEPENDENT WAS HE UPON HIS ADVISORS?” THE ONLY SIN HE ALWAYS CONDEMNED, WALTER ~~WRITES~~ ^{DESCRIBED}, WAS THAT OF SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS ... HE WAS A MAN OF COMPASSION WHO RECOGNIZED CHILDREN, GAVE VALIDATION TO PEOPLE OF OTHER RACES AND CULTURES, AND WHEN THE CHOICE HAD TO BE MADE PUT HUMAN FACTORS ABOVE PRESCRIBED CULTIC PRACTICE OR ESTABLISHED LEGAL OBLIGATION.”

THE “ULTIMATE VISION,” SHARED BY OTHER PERSONS OF GREAT COMPASSION, IS THAT “THE WORLD IS UNITARY, AND THAT OUR POLITICS AND OUR SPIRITUALITY CANNOT FOREVER BE BIFURCATED BUT ARE RATHER INGREDIENT IN THE SAME WHOLE ... MY OWN VIEW IS THAT RECIPROCITY NEEDS TO RULE, NAMELY, THAT SPIRITUAL VITALITY ENJOINS POLITICAL CULTURE AND POLITICAL CULTURE IS COMPLEMENTED BY RECOGNITION OF THE PLACE AND POWER OF THE TRANSCENDENT.”

THESE MATERIALS WILL PROVE CHALLENGING TO ~~SOMEONE~~ WHO ~~NEEDS~~ EMBARKS ON A BIOGRAPHY OF WALTER CAPPS. ~~BUT~~ ^{HOWEVER,} AS MICHAEL BERENBAUM CAUTIONED ME ~~SHORTLY~~ AFTER I BEGAN SEVERAL YEARS OF HUNTING AND GATHERING AT THE OFFICES OF THE USHMM, MUCH OF THE STORY IS NOT IN ~~THESE~~ ^{THESE} MATERIALS, BUT RATHER IN CONVERSATION WITH MANY PEOPLE WHOSE LIVES WALTER TOUCHED,

TAKES