

April 4, 1966

The Students
Raymond College

Dear friends:

When a large and spirited delegation of Raymond students met Lizabeth and me at the Stockton Airport and gave us a "Honda escort" across the city one night last fall, the thought struck my mind that life would be downhill from that moment on. Subsequent events have borne out the truth of that premonition.

In the early winter, feeling fatigued and ineffective, I decided to follow the course of certain others who couldn't "make it" at Raymond and slip away to Berkeley for a spell. On the announcement of this decision, the students came forward with a gift of apparel appropriate to the situation into which I was going and the faculty put up a sum of money intended to "sweeten the stay with entertainment". Thus though I was slow to see it, the students and faculty sought by making provision for body and soul to encourage the longevity of the new arrangement. How fickle is fate! In October it had been palm branches and hosannas on the way into the city. In January, it was a seamless robe and thirty pieces of silver on the way out. (Do not draw a "Messiah Complex" from my allusions to the Easter events. The reference is appropriate to the season, and furthermore, remember that two thieves also went over the Hill. Let the metaphor, like poetry, lead the mind beyond the obvious.)

Well, enough of the past and enough of the nonsense. You know that I write so foolishly because it would not do to expose the feelings in my heart. There are the deep roots of shared experiences that reach into swollen memories and it would be too painful, as well as unnecessary to handle them now. It was for the same reason that I chose not to talk with you students last week. So inadequate and old fashion medium though it be, I am writing this letter to hint at how much I care about you and now, to

say a couple of things that I hope you will take under advisement: first, I think Raymond should stand firm as an experimental college—it should try to push back ignorance and advance learning with new and different techniques. The students more than any other interest group there will determine whether the College will be successfully innovative. You must prove by your actions that you can do good work without the sticks and carrots of conventional motivation. Tutorials, independent study, student-led seminars put the singularity of your wit to a rigorous test and if you don't take the challenge, the faculty will tire (faith is fragile) and soon resort to teaching methods that are familiar, safe, and deadly.

Secondly, Raymond ought to be not only a place where new and different educational methods are employed, it should also be a place where faculty and students are always in search of new goals and values in a world where traditional goals no longer satisfy and values are flattening out. What should be American goals after full employment? After educational opportunities are general? After universal suffrage? What shall be our values beyond technology? I don't know the answers and I don't know anybody who does, but Raymond College ought to be a place where the quest is on to find these answers. Such a commitment entails risk. It will mean showing audacity when others are playing it safe. It will mean thinking radically, and, if necessary going it alone. America's future leadership will have to work with the issues embodied in my questions and Raymond ought to be the vanguard of that future.

And now, best wishes. You will be frequently in my thoughts because you are imperishable in my heart.

Sincerely,

Signed

Warren Bryan Martin