

# Retired Educator Sees Hope in Today's Youth

By PAUL ZIMMERMAN

"I don't think we're sick as a nation, a cry that some like to voice," contends historian and educator Dr. Tracy E. Strevey.

"We simply pay too much attention to the shrill challenge of the minorities. The great majority of today's youth are fine people."

Dr. Strevey, now 67, retired three years ago after over a quarter of a century dedicated to university instruction and educational direction, and moved to Laguna Hills.

The last seven years of his illustrious career were spent as vice president for academic affairs at the University of Southern California. This followed a dozen years as dean, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences at USC.

Appointed by President Eisenhower as a member of the National Historical Publications Commissions in 1956, he served two terms, just one of the many assignments earned during his career as an educator.

"There's been an understandable change in attitude among college students," says Dr. Strevey as he reflects on his illustrious career, in discussing college campus problems.

## More Go to College

"You must remember that where there used to be 25 per cent of high school graduates going to college, the total has risen to over 50 per cent and on top of a rapidly growing population.

"This has made for larger classes. Where they used to be small enough for the instructor to know each member individually, we now have an impersonal condition on the campus today.

"I think there is something else that affects the youth of today. We've progressed so rapidly in technical and scientific areas, we are trying to educate people for something ahead we can't foresee.

"By the same token, the young can't quite see where they are going to be 10 years from now. I think it is understandable for our youth to be restless."

Dr. Strevey is proud of the fact that the University of Southern California has had less campus unrest than many schools.

"Oh, we had our problems, but under President (Norman) Topping, we opened up channels of communication. We started back in the mid-'50s to open lines of communication with the students.

"First, we invited the student body and class officers to dinner several times a year where they had the opportunity to ask questions of school executives and the board of trustees and to discuss mutual problems.

"We did something early that most universities are doing now in an effort to better communicate."

## Not Really Retired

It would be a mistake to think that Dr. Strevey really has retired.

Under contract with the Ford Foundation he served 18 months as Academic Vice President of Haile Sellassie University No. 1, in Ethiopia. After that he served as a consultant to the United States Agency for International Development and Overseas Liaison Committee on a mission to Nigeria, making evaluation surveys at the University of Senegal, Dakar; and the university system, Ghana.

He is on call for a similar assignment by the State Department in the near future.

"The trouble in the once colonized countries of Africa and Asia," he says, "is that their educational programs have been based on systems in the countries at home. The problem now is one of trying to develop a practical training program useful to both the students and the country in which they live."

## Good Use of Leisure

Tall, handsome and energetic, Dr. Strevey makes good use of what leisure time is left to him.

With his slender, beautiful wife Margaret (nee Margaret Virginia Rees of one of Virginia's first families), they make frequent trailer trips. Their most recent one was to Oregon, where he started his educational program that led to his bachelor of arts degree at Willamette University. He obtained his master's degree at the University of Washington; his doctorate at the University of Chicago, and has numerous honorary degrees.

"Margaret and I love to fish," he says, "so we go whenever we can."

Since moving to Leisure World he has taken up lapidary, and his wife has some of his beautiful specimens tastefully displayed in the living room.

Dr. Strevey also has entered into the responsibilities of his community. He currently is vice president of the Golden Rain Foundation that governs Leisure World.

"Leisure World is a remarkable place. No place I have ever known has a reservoir of residents with such outstanding backgrounds and training," is his appraisal.



(News-Post Photo—Van Rensselaar)  
DR. TRACY E. STREVEY