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These are my reflections on Jon Daniels.

I don't know whether I was a friend of Jon's. I don't know at all. That's largely because he was that kind of a person. Before this whole Selma business came up we didn't talk very much. Whenever he passed me or greeted me it was always with a smile that I came to know very well--a rather frightened smile because you never really quite knew whether it was sincere, or whether it was a rather awkward, shy greeting that he had to offer because he was a polite, well-bred person.

Looking back, I suppose there was something about that smile that was very hostile, and there were just one or two occasions either when I was discussing with him or when he was discussing with other people when I became aware that he was prone to a great deal of hostility and dogmatism. I didn't really think he had any close friends. I suppose I found out really afterwards who were the people who had been close to him, though at the time I would never have thought of him as a person with many close friends--rather, as a person who was generally reasonably well liked in the Seminary though disliked for the dogmatism and what I would now call hostility though I don't think I realized this at the time, and I don't expect many people did.

I think I was rather surprised when he went to Selma. He wasn't one of the people that I had come to associate with radical feelings, and, when he went, I suppose it poorly made me think as much as anybody else going, but that I think is just a confession of how little I knew him. And I really became aware of how little I knew him when he came back from staying in Selma after Bloody Sunday rather longer than anyone else. He came back with Judy and was talking about his intention to go down again, and we didn't talk at any length about it--I wasn't one of his confidants at that time, though I knew pretty much the kind of lobbying that was going on. I was on his side, I remember; I wanted the faculty to do what he'd asked for them to do. At any rate, he went down, and he went down with a request from me to provide an article. I remember that he was late with that, and there were a lot of problems getting it from him. We had a number of telephone calls--telephone calls that, as I recall, were quite awkward. They were usually collect calls made to my room in the Commander Hotel. The final one, I remember, was when I was down in the bar and he called, and a friend of mine (my roommate) had to take the call and try somehow to give him a message. I remember Jon was very annoyed about it that I hadn't been in. And I was a little bit annoyed by the end that he had taken so long to get the article in.

But I really became aware how little I'd known him when the article arrived. I found it stunning, and the fact that it's been so widely reproduced has really only confirmed that impression. It confirms the impression of an extremely sensitive person--as a matter of fact, an oversensitive person, over-reacting in a lot of ways, but deeply hopeful to us back here for that very reason because he could impart something of his experience to a degree that probably nobody else in the whole Seminary could have done.

So, I had that article and I printed it and those telephone conversations--and, really, very little else; and, if it had just been that, I don't think I would be sitting here making this tape at all. But then a very strange thing happened.

I was invited to the Episcopal Chaplaincy staff party at the end of May--in fact, I think it was the Wednesday of the last week of the semester--and Jon was back from his exams, and I arrived rather late, I remember, at Bill Schneider's house. And we were sitting drinking...We told funny stories and listened to amusing records...and all had a good time. I don't think I arrived until about 9:30. And I think I was a little surprised that Jon was there. I didn't have any idea that he had any kind of relationship, let alone as close a one as I found out, with Bill. And I couldn't quite see what he would have to do

with the Episcopal Chaplaincy staff. I remember wondering afterwards, after that evening, when I had realized how close he and Bill were--I remember distinctly wondering--why it was, or whether it was, the case that Jon had a lot of close friends in the Seminary that just nobody knew about. Whether it is that he concealed a lot of close relationships or whether he didn't have any. And this is something I don't think we'll ever know, and maybe it's not very important, because I'm beginning to think that in his case not having close relationships and having them but not telling anybody about them came to very much the same thing...If I can explain that, what I mean is that he was a person that cared a great deal about people, but not to the point that he would identify with them permanently or publicly. And, in a sense, that limits the closeness of his relationship with anybody. And it may account for the fact that an awful lot of people in the Seminary now are saying that he was their close friend; because, if he decided to do so, apparently, he ~~could~~ have a very intense conversation with anybody. On the other hand, he didn't do that very much with any one person; probably he didn't do that very much at all. And so, there just isn't very much of a record of a close relationship with Jon.

But I ought to return to the evening at Bill Schneider's...

It was a strange evening for me in a number of ways. I didn't

really know Bill very well at that point either. It was only the second time we'd ever got together, and the first time we'd ever got together privately.

We sat and talked for quite a long time in a group telling jokes, and telling funny stories. It was a standard, very enjoyable party. And, then, most of the people left. And, I was a little surprised to be more or less invited to stay on with just Bill and Jon. And, to be frank, I don't really remember what it was that we talked about. I don't think that it was terribly personal, but, as I say, I don't remember that part of the conversation. We were drinking fairly heavily--not very but fairly--and the only thing that I remember is that at some point in the conversation Jon turned to me and said, "When this is over, I'm going to want to talk to somebody, and you've been elected." (I think that is pretty nearly a quotation.) He said it with one of his standard smiles, but I didn't know what to make of it. I didn't know what it was that he wanted to talk about.

I do remember that the conversation with Bill--that during that conversation--it was clear that he was not entirely at ease. I remember being struck by the ease with which he made very affectionate remarks to Bill...As I talk things come back... I remember his making very affectionate remarks to Bill, but as I recollect, they weren't particularly agreeing, and that was one of the things that Jon would make playful comments about.

I don't think they had a great deal in common theologically, but obviously there was a great deal of emotional warmth which came across. But, at any rate, that went on--I suppose until about half past 2:00 or 3:00--and then Jon and I set out to walk back to the Seminary, and we sat and talked in his room. All the way back he sort of asked me if I minded the same kind of awkward shyness that I have referred to earlier about his way of greeting me--and, I think, other people too.

But, anyway, we went back to his room in Lawrence Hall and just sat. We didn't drink anything as I recollect. We just sat there and we talked. And the whole substance of the conversation was the big Church sellout. All down the line Jon was worrying about the Church's big sellout. Theologically he was saying some very conservative things. Morally he was saying that the Church was selling out. And his whole position, which I had learned so little about, came across as that of a very confused, conservative person. And I wasn't really very surprised when, at one point in the conversation, he was talking about obedience--obedience to God's call--and he talked about that a great deal...And saying that nothing else mattered--I think I was defending a more pragmatic approach on the part of churchmen--and Jon just kept--kept--reiterating over and over again that that wasn't what counted. What counted

was God's call. And, as I say, I wasn't really terribly surprised when he said that that call in his case would probably lead him to Rome, which was the first I knew about it though I understand that he'd said it to a lot of people. But this whole very confused, conservative position--a very worried man--came across. He didn't talk about his conversion, but his theology was very much the theology of someone who had been converted, and so it was his attitude to life.

And we talked a bit about VMI...And it's at this point that I got the impression of Jon that I suppose will most abide with me--the impression of a person who really hated himself an awful lot. And I mean by that, particularly hated his past, hated what he saw as his character, hated his confusedness. In fact, there wasn't really very much about Jon Daniels that he liked.

We talked about his dying, and I have to say that he didn't sound to me to be terribly afraid about it. He didn't sound to me to be terribly upset by the prospect that it might happen in the South, or that it might happen to the Church anywhere. As far as Jon was concerned, being killed both literally and metaphorically was in some sense a privilege.

We talked a bit about Jon's relationship with Judy. (You will have to judge how much of this can be printed) And Jon said

that he was pretty sure that Judy had fallen in love with him, but he hadn't fallen in love with her. But he said that in a way that was really, frankly, rather callous. I didn't have the impression of a great deal of warmth in his relationship with Judy, just a relationship which had a lot of intensity at certain moments. But it sounded to me like she was essentially a partner in the cause and not a very warmly liked partner, particularly, at that.

That sounded like the way he talked about all of his relationships. We talked a lot about girls that he'd known because of his conversation--well, we talked about sex and the Church's attitude to sex, which was one of the areas it was selling out in. And when he started talking about his formerly life, he smiled and said he used to sin bravely. He used to use a whole lot of rationalizations about that. But when we talked about that, the way he told about the girls involved was a game, not as though there were any lasting overlap of warmth or affection from those relationships. And this is what I take away about Jon with me as an impression. It is that he was a person who wasn't really capable of enduring relationships. And I think he realized that. I think this was something that upset him very much. Because he wasn't capable of these enduring relationships, as far as I can see, he needed very badly to have intense relationships frequently and of a variety of different

kinds, without any long-lasting relationships and without any great affection for himself. This was really the only way that he could carry on.

And that's why I remember Jon, and I suppose I always will. Because, in the short conversation that we had, he contrived to make me identify with him very closely. I have a feeling that that was the secret of his charm and the secret of his success in his work. And maybe it was also the secret of his being shot. He was so easy to identify with. He was so open, so confused.

And I remember at the end of the conversation feeling that when I got back at the end of the summer this was a person I would really have to get to know. I suppose that when he got shot I got to know him, but that's not in the way that I wanted...

That's all.