

## ONCE IS ALMOST TOO MUCH

Mid-afternoon early May on the South Oval of the campus in Norman, Oklahoma, students bask in the warm sun. They throw Frisbees to dogs in red bandanas and strum guitars. Some kiss . . . or openly smoke dope . . . and kiss. This bliss is interrupted first by rumor, then radio, and the next day an item in the student newspaper:

KENT, Ohio (UPI) May 4, 1970--Four Kent State University students were shot to death Monday in a football field gun battle between National Guardsmen and 3,000 rioting students.

The killings come after four days of protests following President Richard Nixon's bombing campaign in Cambodia during the Vietnam War. Demonstrations erupt on campuses all across the country. Hundreds of universities shut down. Ohio governor Rhodes also sends in 1,200 State police and guardsmen to quell riots at Ohio State, which closes, as do Miami of Ohio and the University of Cincinnati, as well as Berkeley, Columbia, Michigan and Wisconsin . . . but not the University of Oklahoma.

In Norman, President J. Herbert Hollomon keeps classes open. He defends free speech and won't cancel engagements of anti-war radicals like black socialist Paul Boutelle, Jerry Rubin—a Walnut Hills High School graduate from Cincinnati—or guitarist Jimi Hendrix. Hollomon himself declines to take a stand on the War. Nor will he postpone Armed Forces Day with the traditional ROTC parade and awards ceremony. They're scheduled for May 12, next week, on Brooks Field, a practice field as wide-open as the prairie. This year the armory is target of bomb threats; and Lt. General William Peers who investigated, some say whitewashed, the shocking My Lai massacre in Vietnam is coming to inspect the cadets. Oklahoma Governor Dewey Bartlett alerts his National Guard to stand by.

How in the world do I find myself here in Norman, Oklahoma, assisting the university president and on the law faculty?

*Moving to Norman, Oklahoma*

Go back with me three years to another spring day in 1967. Dr. Hollomon and I are walking to have lunch at The Old Ebbitt Grill on Pennsylvania Avenue where the red-buds are out in full under an azure-blue sky. Nearing the White House, we hear: "Hey, Hey, LBJ! How many kids did you kill today?"

Hollomon is Under Secretary of Commerce and I'm his special assistant. He's just been named president of the University of Oklahoma. "It's a great opportunity," he says, "Why don't you join me?"

Hollomon came to Washington in 1962 from General Electric, where he brilliantly managed their research and development labs in Schenectady. He was then a forty-three-year-old Rockefeller Republican with a degree in physics and a doctorate in metallurgy from M.I.T. President John F. Kennedy had asked him to develop the country's first national civilian science policy from a new post in the Commerce Department. And I was recruited from the State Department to be his legal counsel, later special assistant.

Now, after five years of fulfilling work, he wants me to help him run a university. I've been teaching international law part time for George Washington University and interviewing law schools looking to leave government. Hollomon tells me that the law faculty at Oklahoma might like to interview me, too. The idea of campus life helping the president while teaching law is a fantasy just too good to pass by. So with my hubris stoked like a furnace, I accept both offers. We're going where the action is.

But, then wife Katherine and our four children weren't so eager to leave a comfortable home and friends in a Washington suburb in Virginia for an Abrahamic journey into an unknown place. Scott, nearly fifteen, and outgoing seven-year-old Ruth seem willing. But there's fright in the blue eyes of Lynne, our intelligent and sensitive eleven-year-old daughter; and Nanette at five feels abandoned when we leave them with grandparents in Salt Lake City the summer of 1967, while we move.

Hollomon's wife is no happier than mine. A Wellesley graduate related to the Pogues of Cincinnati, Margaret Hollomon wears Elizabethan braids and peasant outfits. She seems quite out of place in Norman. Herb and Margaret divorce several years after the move.<sup>1</sup>

To sweeten my family's adventure we build a fabulous new French provincial house on the banks of the South Canadian River aside magnificent twin oaks not far from the campus. Ash woodcraft by an old master-builder gives inner warmth. My three daughters have gerbils and rabbits. We get a bear-like puppy—a purebred Bouvier de Flanders. And we plant chrysanthemums along the western side of our house. Their unseasonably early blooms, in the spring, unsettle me. I put this unease to verse:

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<sup>1</sup> I tell of her in my trustee paper, *Margaret's Christmas Tree*, read December, 2006.

*The chrysanthemums bloomed in May  
They were small, hopeful blooms  
But once is almost too much  
Even for a chrysanthemum.<sup>2</sup>*

### ***Hurricane Herby***

Herb Hollomon is known on the East Coast as “Hurricane Herby” and he’s no shrinking violet in Norman, either. He quickly organizes a supercharged review of the university's mission from the ground up through 23 diverse committees. Our focus is on overhauling the university's mission of preparing the new generation to cope with upheavals already coming at us all like a freight train bearing down. The year's work comes out in a book, *The Future of the University*, published by the University of Oklahoma Press. *Time Magazine* gives the plan and the university's “unacademic new president” most favorable reviews. Members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences visit Norman to see how Hurricane Herby’s ideas are faring in Tornado Alley.

Hollomon wants to measure teaching and scholarship by performance standards, such as football coaches and theater directors use. He questions tenure in departments and redirects funds toward cross-disciplinary research and learning. He says that legal education should not be controlled exclusively by the lawyer priesthood, for law is connected to all knowledge. I’m probably to blame for that one. He upsets the medical school by questioning the ethics of paternalistic medicine. Yet, he publicly defends university hospital doctors against criminal charges brought for performing therapeutic abortions.

Though he's a man of science, Hollomon loves the humanities and raises an endowment for a generous biennial international prize for literature. In 1970, Herb presents the first award to Giuseppe Ungaretti, the great Italian poet. Today it flourishes as the Neustadt International Prize for Literature, still sponsored by the University and its international literary publication, *World Literature Today*. The prize is touted to be the most prestigious after the Nobel.

It doesn't take long for Hollomon to offend powerful State politicians, most noticeably Republican Governor Dewey Bartlett, with scarcely veiled contempt for their parochialism. He openly flirts with Bartlett's wife at a dinner party and, God forbid, takes her intellect seriously. Herb has too many martinis before after-dinner speeches and drinks beer with students while sitting shirtless on the grass. He dares question the relevance of what they’re learning and listens to what they say. Social elites think his behavior downright boorish. By the end of his first full year, the controversial Dr.

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<sup>2</sup> From *Songs of August* (1966-68). Copyright Gordon A. Christenson.

Hollomon has greater name recognition throughout the State than even Governor Bartlett, who marks him an easy political target.

So does David Boren, a third year law student. He's a Rhodes Scholar now back in Oklahoma with an Oxford-brushed twang to attend law school and enter politics. We know him best as Senator Boren, Democrat from Oklahoma, longstanding head of the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in the 1980's and 90's. But his earliest elective office was in the State legislature while in law school. And that's when I meet him. Boren invites me to the Statehouse and takes me onto the House floor. "It is my personal privilege," he says, "to introduce our newest law professor in the College of Law. He's also assisting the new president; and we're expecting great things from them." As they say in Oklahoma, Boren's "peeing on my leg."

I'm also told that a special bill of privilege for the law school has been introduced in the legislature, leverage in the biennial budget fight. The bill mandates a separate line-item budget for the law school. But the hidden message is that taxpayer money to fund the flagship law school should be kept out of the hands of all those liberals down there in Norman. Boren challenges Hollomon to debate the bill. Before an audience of law students and my colleagues all packed into Monet Hall's largest classroom, Hollomon shows up to teach a lesson in academic freedom. What a mistake!

At a law faculty party thrown soon afterwards, one half-drunk colleague grabs Katherine by her lapels in a rage that I've never experienced, not even in Washington before moving to academia, and snarls "We'll run your husband and Hollomon out of here"!

That's OK by her.

Then we get rid of the football team mascot "Little Red" and all hell really breaks loose. "Little Red" is a small Indian in war paint and bonnet who whoops a victory dance after each touchdown by "Big Red" the football team. It's a demeaning symbol of subordination for Native Americans who have lost the territories of the four civilized Indian nations to the Sooner land rush. Nor would Hollomon let the townies of Norman forget the sundown rule only recently repealed where blacks have to be out of town before dusk. In 1967, sociologist George Henderson is the only tenured black professor on the entire Norman campus of about ten thousand with some 400 black students.

### *Peaceful Protest Turns Ugly*

Another thing we soon learn is that male students keep guns in dorms. "We're hunters," they explain. And the annual mass "panty raid" on women's dorms in the fall feels more like attempted abduction than a hunt for trophies. Prairie populism oddly finds company among student activists: Tom Hayden's Students for Democratic Society,

the more radical People's Liberation Front, a few Black Panthers, and some anarchists in groups like Renaissance Fair. These groups all love to stick it to the "Establishment".

There's a weekly underground student newspaper, *The Jones Family Grandchildren*, named for descendants of a violent draft resistance movement in Oklahoma during the First World War. It mocks establishment personalities including Hollomon and the governor with scurrilous even pornographic cartoons. This kind of local student frivolity irks Frank Kirk. He's a law student in my international law class, back from clandestine service with the CIA in Vietnam. Kirk was part of a counter-insurgency assassination team.

The day after Kent State, the People's Liberation Front sets up a table in the Student Union to stir up protest. For provocation it displays a mail order flag thought to be the enemy Viet Cong's. Frank Kirk happens to walk by. This, he recognizes, is no enemy flag. It's from the Republic of South Vietnam. Kirk finds an old statute that prohibits public display of enemy flags. He knows full well that the Supreme Court struck down California's enemy flag statute years ago. And in a wonderfully ironic deception, he waves a copy of the questionable Oklahoma law in the face of campus cops. Down comes the friendly flag.

On that same day, undergraduates have just elected as their president a black twenty-year-old engineering student, William Moffitt, Jr. He's a highly articulate New Yorker from Brooklyn. The few Black Panthers on campus have little influence on Moffitt. But they've hauled in from Memphis a stash of automatic weapons. Sunday mornings, from our house on Smoking Oak Drive, we hear pah-pah-pah-pah . . . pah-pah-pah-pah from beyond the woods near the South Canadian River. It turns out that black students home from Vietnam are target practicing.

After the 1968 Chicago riots, Governor Bartlett, Ronald Reagan and other governors secretly aided by J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI develop plans to thwart perceived threats from communist subversives on campuses. Bartlett's emergency plan is to nip these in the bud. With guns in the hands of blacks so soon after the assassination of Martin Luther King and now an elected black student-body president, the governor prepares for an emergency.

*May 5, 1970:* the day after Kent State. An ROTC practice drill is scheduled that afternoon on campus at Brooks Field. Anti-war activists want it stopped. "No!" says Dr. Hollomon. "It's a regular class and we're not canceling classes." Clever activists now put out word to gather near the armory for a little fun. At about 2:45 pm some 500 students show up. "Kids come on bikes, motorcycles, even wheelchairs. Most come on foot." Some bring water pistols to squirt at cadets.

A fun-lover in an Uncle Sam top hat steps up smartly to lead a gaggle of merry-marchers. Out comes the fake Viet Cong flag, the one taken down yesterday in the

Student Union. Comrades tie it to a pole and hand it off to a near-blind, disabled student. They shove him to the front of the amblers moving alongside the cadets on their way to the parade ground. He grins and waves it as if American. Cadets keep a lid on. But to campus security chief William Jones, Jr., this mockery violates the flag statute which Frank Kirk waved in his face the day before. Jones orders the flag-bearer arrested.

Campus police jump the poor fellow and drag him with flag into a police car. At the snap of a finger, the carnival atmosphere vaporizes. Festive hecklers and conservative students alike turn on the cops faster than the feuding gangs in *West Side Story* turn on Officer Krupke. They surround the police car. Two more students are arrested for interfering. Enraged observers flatten tires, some lie down in front of the police cars; others rock the cars, climb onto them, pound windows. Police in riot gear are called. They move into the crowd swinging three-foot billy clubs to clear a way out.

Off to one side Frank Kirk smirks: the governor soon will have to send in the National Guard to crush those blind, treasonous commie bastards!

In his office Hollomon is in routine radio contact with campus security. As soon as this protest turns ugly he grabs me and we rush toward the disruption. We arrive in time to see a fierce-looking Bill Moffitt in his full Afro climb on top of a car. This first black student-body president to be elected has been clubbed to the body and head. He raises a fist, symbol of black power, and shouts, "Let's cool it!" Finally, the police get their cars out of there. Still burning with fury, students begin leaving Brooks Field. But they blame Hollomon for this crude, illegal arrest—such reckless display of force by his pigs.

That evening, representing Hollomon who is attending a faculty awards dinner, I go with Moffitt before a student assembly for his swearing in ceremony. He enters with raised fist to cheers. I take hostile questions and ask for restraint, while elsewhere Hollomon honors the year's outstanding teacher (and his future wife), Nancy Gade from the theater department.

### ***The Governor Threatens***

*May 6:* The next morning a massive crowd gathers in front of the Administration building to protest the forcible arrests and Kent State and hear what President Hollomon and others have to say. The crowd boos Hollomon. Shouts him down. He takes responsibility for the arrests and says he'll meet with students in his office in small groups, defends their freedom of speech and dissent, and promises to keep the campus open and the National Guard out. Members of the faculty step up, one at a time, to speak against the War, against the killings at Kent State, or for a strike. Local socialist Mike Wright, a grad student steeped in non-violent resistance, seizes the microphone. He calls for a roving occupation of offices instead of boycotting classes. Long into the

evening and all the next day Hollomon meets with student groups, while a bunch of protesters occupies the purchasing office upstairs.

That afternoon, Bill Moffitt and his team are scheduling a student strike vote, when a phone call comes in from the governor's office. "Can you meet with Governor Bartlett at the executive mansion this evening?" A wary Moffitt mutters OK, then tracks me down convinced he'll be arrested. I don't think so. Still, he takes along with him two older students, both seasoned Vietnam combat vets: Jim Todd a twenty-nine-year-old black man and Mike Kelly a white twenty-six-year-old. All three return late, in utter disbelief, quite alarmed. To break the ice, they tell me, the governor comments on how much he has done for blacks. Huh? Then Mrs. Bartlett brings in cookies and milk. Whoa! For these guys? After that the governor comes to the point: the National Guard, he tells them slapping his cowboy boot, is ready to move on campus as soon as he gives the order. He'll not tolerate any disruption of the university. Even peaceful picketing will be considered disruptive under the circumstances.

The paranoid trio need better reassurance than I, a Korean War vet, can give. So I call the president's house and send them over. Moffitt later recalls: "Hollomon comes to the door in his blue pajamas scratching his nuts and invites us in. He listens, then tells us the governor is bluffing."

*May 7:* All day Thursday the students vote on whether to boycott classes. More than seven thousand votes are cast. By a narrow margin, they vote "no".

*May 8:* The vote upsets extremists who now fixate on disrupting next week's ROTC awards ceremony at Brooks Field. More bomb threats start coming in. Unbeknown to us, some radicals who scorn tactics of non-violence deeply distrust Hollomon. They're planning to post sentries with cans of gasoline on the tops of buildings while the campus is distracted by protests at Brooks Field. At the first sign of the National Guard, they'll torch the buildings.

Even without knowing about these secret plans, we realize that Brooks Field is far too open and porous for crowd control, risking another Kent State-type incident or worse, for students have guns. So we decide to move the ROTC awards ceremony into the football stadium and reserve the south end zone bleachers for protesters. Stadiums are icons of violence where spectators have watched Christian martyrs killed by lions, gladiators fighting to the death, Blues versus Greens, and Roman circuses. Today it's football: the Sooners against the hated Texas Longhorns.

"We're moving the ROTC awards ceremony into the football stadium," I tell a suspicious Mike Wright, the grad student leader. "We'll reserve end-zone bleachers for students to express dissent with signs if they wish, so long as they don't go onto the field to disrupt the ceremony." Wright doesn't like or trust Hollomon. Still, by now he knows of the governor's threat. And the end zone ensures wide TV coverage. It's a

familiar scene, too, for that's where Texas students go to raise hell when their team comes to play. Wright reluctantly agrees to help recruit faculty to join student marshals in keeping the end zone protests peaceful.

That evening, anti-war guitarist Jimi Hendrix plays two field house concerts, with strobe lights penetrating a thick marihuana haze. In two weeks he'll be dead from a heroin overdose.

*May 9:* Saturday. Everyone sleeps in.

*May 10:* Sunday at noon there's a big counter-rally at the Duck Pond, with speeches from the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion supporting the troops in Vietnam.

*May 11:* Hollomon gives final instructions for the next day: only campus police chief Bill Jones will have authority to call for police help if peaceful protests get out of hand in the stadium. The press box, cathedral-high above the field, so central to football games, will be our control center. In it will be Hollomon, two student leaders, president of the faculty senate and myself. I'm to speak over the public address system if necessary, freeing Hollomon to deal with the field and the governor. The box has a birds' eye view of the entire field. The coach's direct telephone line from the field will be used. Another line between the governor in Oklahoma City and Hollomon will be kept open.

*May 12:* The ROTC awards ceremony is to begin at 4 pm. Protesters with crude signs begin gathering on the South Oval an hour early. Chief Jones shows up. "I'm the chief pig," he says through a bullhorn, "here to explain how you can move your protest into the end zone bleachers and what's lawful and unlawful. Only five campus police will be in the stadium. They'll wear blazers not uniforms and have no guns. Back-up will be nearby in case of trouble. I will try to retain my composure if you will do the same."

At about 3:30 pm, protesters start moving toward the stadium. Someone notices a gate left ajar mid-field, and they veer away from the end zone gate to rush through it. Some begin scaling a low wall. They swarm to the middle of the field and sit down. Jones and the marshals can't get them to move into the bleachers.

Jones calls up for help. Hollomon gives me a nod. I pick up the mike and turn on the stadium's public address system. It's startling to hear my own teaching voice boom out: "Will the protestors now on the field please move to the bleachers in the end zone, as we've all agreed?" It's met with groans and shouts. Not on your life will they be sitting ducks in the bleachers. Jones decides they don't have to go into the bleachers after all and calls that up. Over the PA system again, I announce: "Will the demonstrators please move behind the goal line, off the field, so the parade can begin?"

Slowly, coaxed by marshals, they begin to flow, in front of television cameras of course, clapping their hands in unison and chanting loudly, "One, two, three, four, we don't want your fucking war," and "what the hell are we fighting for," and "peace now!" At least a thousand student protesters are now inside the stadium. Over three thousand spectators are in the stands. Some wave American flags, disgusted with the noisy chants, livid with the disrespect shown the troops. Once more I ask the protesters to move behind the goal line. According to the governor's log, at 3:46 pm the highway patrol outside the stadium advises Governor Bartlett that three or four hundred demonstrators are still on the field.

*Four o'clock.* Time to begin. The governor's men on the sidelines are beside themselves. They want to bring in police or the Guard to clear the field. We know that a hundred and fifty highway patrolmen are nearby, but the demonstrators don't know that. And none of us know that there are sentries posted with gasoline on the tops of buildings ready to tinder the campus at the first sign of the National Guard. Again I pick up the mike. This time in my lawyers' voice I warn those choosing to remain on the field that they will be charged with unlawful assembly.

Someone calls in a rumor: the National Guard is on the move. It's false, but on the coach's direct line to Hollomon, Jones says he's losing control. "I'm under tremendous pressure down here," he says "and can't see the complete picture, so any decision to call for police assistance has to be in your hands." Those of us perched in the box survey the entire scene. The faculty-student marshals seem to be doing their job; noisy students shouting epithets are still moving into the end zone. At the moment no one sees any need to call for police help. But an adamant governor does. He's now on the open line demanding a green light to send in troops and restore order. Hollomon refuses, repeatedly.

At length the vexed governor stiffens. He is ordering in the Guard and State police anyway. Over Hollomon's objection. He's going to restore order and end the chaos caused by such disgraceful administrative ineptitude, he says.

I still remember Hollomon's response, which I write down. "Governor," he says as firmly as I'd ever heard him, "you may have the power and you may have the authority, but if you send in the National Guard or State police without my consent, I'll go on television and tell everyone in this State that the blood is on your hands!"

With that, the governor balks, says he'll hold Hollomon accountable, then folds for a better hand.

### ***"A Beautiful Thing to Behold"***

After twenty minutes of waiting, General Peers of My Lai fame now begins the inspecting general's customary "drive around" by jeep. He's furious, too, with the

obscenities and disrespect he hears as he drives past the end zone. Four students remain in the middle of the field. They won't budge. They want to be arrested on principle. Jones accommodates and escorts them off the field without resistance. The band strikes up. The parade begins followed by the awards ceremony. Field amplifiers are loud enough for the speakers to be heard above the chants and shouts. The thin line of faculty-student marshals at the goal line holds.

After the speeches, awards and closing remarks, the cadets pass in review, then march north, off the field. The band breaks with gusto into *Oklahoma* as it brings up the rear. From the south end zone comes a loud cheer then a roar as students burst onto the playing field running hard after the band. An odd catharsis envelops the whole stadium, as if we were in an ancient Greek theater with a Dionysian cult-dance instead of a Roman triumphal march. Dewey Bartlett's white-knuckled wrath has backfired. Restoring order on campus was to have marked a first victory in his political campaign for reelection.

That evening, in an effusive TV interview, Hollomon can't help crowing, "It was a beautiful thing to behold," he says. "The campus community came together to keep the peace and remain open to free speech. Some of it was insulting and offensive, but no bricks were thrown, no fires were set, no guns came out, no one was hurt; and it was certainly no Kent State." To Governor Bartlett, however, this event was anything but beautiful.

The next day, Bartlett calls us to the mansion for an awkward display of unity before pressing the regents not to renew Hollomon's contract at their upcoming board meeting June 25. Reuben Sparks, board chairman, leads the charge. He lines up a majority of four.

Word goes out: "Come see the president who kept the peace get fired!" Walter Cronkite comments on it. Reporter Jack Anderson, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and the UPI all show up for the meeting. The board room is packed expecting a public execution. Six of the seven regents come in late. In the middle of the night, two regents change their minds. Chairman Sparks goes home in disgust. The regents now vote four to one with one abstention to retain Hollomon for another year. The room explodes in victory cheers. The board wraps-up by demanding punishment for students who broke university rules in their protests—to be reported at the next month's regular board meeting July 23.

Governor Bartlett reacts quickly: "The regents have made a grave mistake," he says. "The citizens of Oklahoma have lost patience with a divisive and less than professional performance by the university administration."

Hollomon flies to Aruba for a rest. He returns a few days before the July board meeting and calls me in for help in writing a statement.

At the meeting, to the regents' chagrin, Hollomon puts off disciplining any students. Reading his statement, he now shifts abruptly to attack the governor by name. He warns the public that free speech and the right to peaceful dissent have been threatened with coercive suppression likely to continue. That rhetoric sets the media scrambling. Hollomon pauses. Lowering his voice, he says, "And now, you have my resignation." The shock is classic Western, palpable and final. He gives Governor Bartlett the finger, kicks over the poker table, throws down his badge and will soon leave town with his new wife-to-be. TV cameras catch the full effect. Stations interrupt with breaking news.

### *Pippa Passes*

Hurricane Herby is over, his three-year "errand into the wilderness" is finished. The governor has lost his best campaign issue and will lose the fall election to Democrat David Hall.

By August, Hollomon and fiancée Nancy Gade are in Boston. My family and I leave Norman in October, first to the State University of New York then back to Washington when I'm offered the deanship at American University's Washington College of Law. One day I pick up the phone and call Bill Moffitt who's back in New York. He has his engineering degree and is thinking about joining the Black Panthers. "Bill," I say, "don't join the Panthers! Come to law school. I'll arrange full scholarship if you promise you'll stay in the community and help those who need it most. Bill agrees, and with a high LSAT score is admitted, gets his scholarship, and keeps his word.

Also, back in Washington, my marriage ends. New life—a second law deanship and second marriage—begins in Cincinnati in 1979 with Fabienne, love of the second half of my life. My children come for the wedding and often afterwards. Moffitt visits, too. We talk over his upcoming trials or arguments before the Sixth Circuit. He's nationally recognized now, elected president of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers by his peers. We're honored guests at his installation. He expresses gratitude. Some years later, after 9/11, Moffitt collapses on the way to a trial involving the Patriot Act—his warrior's heart gives out.

In Boston, Hollomon—now at M.I.T.—creates the Center for Policy Alternatives and after a successful decade has a massive stroke. "This stroke is no damn fun," he tells me after coming out of a long coma, "but it's the most interesting thing I've ever done." For another five years from his wheelchair, in Nancy's care, my mentor's still protean brain asks big questions like "What is a hole?"

"Chief pig" Bill Jones sizes up Hollomon this way: "The University was on its ass. It needed revitalization. . . . He uprooted some of the sacred cows, and you don't do that and make many friends. He was the right man at the right time." Dewey Bartlett runs

into Bill Jones at a social event after we're gone and admits: "Hollomon was right all along. The University handled itself well in those days in May."

Bartlett rebounds and is elected to the United States Senate. He dies of cancer after his first term. His replacement is none other than the young new governor David Boren, who serves in the Senate with distinction for many years. In 1994, nearly a quarter century after law student Boren challenges President Hollomon, now Senator Boren resigns to become the thirteenth president of the University of Oklahoma. Twenty years later he's still there, leading this flourishing university in a booming state and wearing the smile of the Buddha.

My loving daughter Lynne often said that our Oklahoma sojourn was a disaster, convinced the upheaval leads to a depression that only deepens after her marriage to a research scientist. Trapped much too long, she escapes both - by suicide - late February 2012 with one of the loaded handguns her husband keeps around their Washington house.

I'm engulfed in Lear-like grief and murderous rage. With time they turn into great sorrow then a "what if" moment. What if she was right? What if I had not so eagerly followed my raw ambition into an unknown land in the first place? But the "what if" moment passes like sweet Pippa passes in Browning's poem, along with all those brave chrysanthemums—you remember the ones. We planted them in Norman when time was out of joint and they bloomed early, in May—once, a long time ago.

## Sources

Rollo May, *Power and Innocence: A Search for the Sources of Violence* (1972). See 243 ff. for his study of the creative, non-suppressive, handling of power and responsibility, citing the University of Oklahoma after the Kent State shootings:

*The University of Oklahoma was able to avoid riots—and in a creative rather than suppressive way—when most other universities were torn by violence. . . . When riots swept over the colleges and universities at the time of the Kent State shooting, Oklahoma had its uproar but no violence.*

William McKeen, *Field Day: Student Dissent at the University of Oklahoma, May 5 - 12, 1970* (Doctoral Dissertation, Univ. of Okla., 1986).

Seth Rosenfeld, *Subversives: The FBI's War on Student Radicals, and Ronald Reagan's Rise to Power* (2013).

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Gordon A. Christenson --

- *In Celebration: Dr. J. Herbert Hollomon*, (unpublished eulogy, May 18, 1985, Methodist Church of the Covenant, Boston, Massachusetts).

-*Hollomon at Oklahoma University*, (unpublished memoir, August, 1970).