

Our Chairman has asked me to bid farewell to Edward Banfield. I suppose he asked me to do this because he knows that Mr. Banfield and I are particularly close to one another. This is true and thus justifies this request that I should speak tonight in the name of the Department. But it also creates a difficulty: shall I speak as a close friend of Banfield's, or for the Department? I must find the proper mean between the indelicacy of imputing to the Department my feelings toward Banfield and the vagueness which would follow if I were to identify myself with the opinion moyenne of the Department—to say nothing of the difficulty to find out what that average opinion is. Under no circumstances will I make an advance obituary although for some people it is a great pleasure to hear their obituaries while they can still hear them: a complete list of all their virtues and a complete silence about their vices. Parting is sad—but it is not parting forever. So I shall keep one eye dry. I know I speak in the name of every member of the Department when I say that we are very sad to lose you because you are a very good scholar and teacher and colleague. I shall not say more on this subject because our fields are so different. I prefer to speak of your qualities as a human being—of qualities which incidentally contribute much to scholarship. I will do so in a way which, I hope, agrees with your taste, if not with everyone's taste. I shall not speak of your integrity—or complete freedom from pretense. Nor shall I speak of your charity—you yourself prefer to conceal your charity under a shell of bluntness and gruffness. You succeed quite well in this: not everyone in this room, I imagine, will agree with me when I say that you are a man of unusual charity. I shall speak instead of your sense of humor which suffuses your integrity and your charity and enhances these moral qualities and makes them to me, at any rate, particularly attractive—that sense of humor of yours which appears to the uninitiated sometimes as impishness, not to say as sheer perverseness. Sense of humor is not easy to define. It is surely a form of the sense for the ridiculous. The ridiculous, we have learned, is primarily the strange, the deviation which is innocuous (e.g., to grow a beard on one side of the face). Sense of humor, I think, consists in being open to the ridiculous strangeness of the customary or the normal—of what we ordinarily take very seriously. We cannot live without a bit of make-believe and we are not always sufficiently aware of this fact. You are unusually aware of it. Take the case of Department

meetings and especially of meetings dealing with questions of appointments. Wholly inconclusive arguments are advanced on both sides of the question—for the question inevitably arises as to the judgment of the speakers as well as of the outsiders who recommended a given candidate—. If a man is to be appointed the question whether he has judgment or not can be freely discussed; but once he is appointed this question can no longer be raised with propriety: we must act on the dubious assumption that he is a man of judgment. It is a kind of circle, not a vicious circle, but a merry circle. This state of things on which much more could be said is not altogether depressing. To quote Mr. Banfield's favorite limerick:

There was a young man from out East
Who tried to grasp the big beast
His trap did not work, his models were not right
But then he heard a voice in his night:
"Look at the small group which thou seest."

Unfortunately that young man did not understand the voice: he built telescopes through which he could not see any small group, and microscopes through which he could see only tiny segments of a small group—he never got a good macroscopic look at a small group. Mr. Banfield, on the other hand, goes thoughtfully through Department meetings and he thus got hold of a clue to political life in general. Naturally he never forgets the difference between such groups ^{as a} ~~and the~~ Department of Political Science and a nation: the fact that an American father and an American mother ordinarily generate an American baby, whereas an offspring of a marriage between a political scientist father and a political scientist mother is not ordinarily a baby political scientist.

On the basis of this and similar insights we had a substantial agreement from the moment we met for the first time—an agreement which extended, I am happy to say, although on a different basis, to our ladies. We never had the slightest friction. We did have a running fight through these many years. The fight concerns natural law. I vainly tried to convince Mr. Banfield that being an honest man he was a principled man, he acted on principles, and natural law is nothing

but an attempt to spell out the principles on which honest men act and have acted and will act as long as there are men. But my friend cannot hear the sound of natural law. His innate impishness does not permit him to conceive of his actions as dictated by any law, natural or non-natural—he is not pleased if he cannot trace the best in him to whim and to mood—to his mere liking and even to his liking it at the moment. In a word, his relativism is a very individual relativism—it is so because he is a character, a rugged individual—not a mere rugged individualist, for in order to be an individualist one does not have to be an individual. Being an individual he is not a calculating man: not a time server and not a men server and, whether he likes it or not, he is a good citizen in the City of God: i.e., a man who knows that he would rebel against Providence if he were even to wish for the disappearance of calculating men and of time servers.

From all this I draw the conclusion—and I come to the conclusion—that I shall miss you very much. And I hope, I speak for all my colleagues if I add: we all shall miss you very much. But we are not so sorry for losing you as not to wish you a very happy life and a very great career at another University which, it must be confessed, is inferior to ours in everything except endowment and old age.