

# POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

## Hesburgh on education

I'm not Catholic, but I consider the Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, the former president of the University of Notre Dame, who died last week at 97, to be one of the most influential people in my life.

I first came across Hesburgh's name about 30 years ago in a newspaper interview I read. Hesburgh was asked for the hallmarks of an educated person, and his answer was so good I always carry it with me.

### An educated person

"An educated person would think well for himself. He would be able to express himself well in speech and writing. He would never be lazy about self-expression.

"He would have a fairly discriminating judgment regarding what's right and wrong, good and bad, beautiful and ugly on the great issues.

"He would have a sense of values and know what priorities govern his life.

"He would know when he was wrong. We are all unfaithful in many things, but that doesn't worry me as much as people who have nothing to be faithful to and just drift through life. A really educated person would commit to things which need doing.

"The world won't be saved by education and intelligence alone. It's going to be saved by character and heart. By people who not only know what is right and wrong, but will help make a better world."

### Search for truth

Hesburgh practiced what he preached. He roiled conservative Catholics by advocating the pursuit of truth, rather than religious indoctrination, as the ultimate goal of Catholic academia.

When he retired in 1987 after 35 years at Notre Dame, a survey of 485 university presidents named him the most effective college president in the country.

### Eloquent essay

An essay he wrote for a book called "Living Philosophies" is particularly eloquent. Here are a few passages:

"For me, one of the greatest results of the space program is the picture of our earth from the moon.

"There we are, on a perfect jewel of

a globe, blue, brown and flecked with white clouds. No artificial boundaries, no political or ideological differences, no hatreds, no power struggles, no military strategies visible.

"Just one earth, the human habitat, home." ...

"We do not have clean air and water so that we can pollute them with every manner of life-destroying substance. We do not have the equilibrium of climate so that we can disturb it by burning fossil fuels that create a carbon dioxide cover that will overheat the planet...."

### Dual citizenship

"It is time, I think, for all of us to think of dual citizenship.

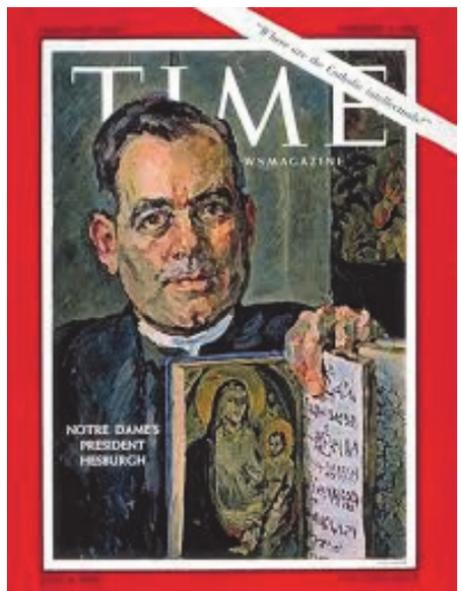
We are all proud citizens of the nation in which we were born. But, I think, we must increasingly consider ourselves as being citizens of the world. I do.

"This would require that we commit ourselves, our lives, whatever talents or time we possess, to do something about the monumental injustices that exist, in our own country and elsewhere. Until we do this the world has little hope for peace."

Here in Pottstown, we all have a role to play — to show respect for the environment, and for each other, in our own small Schuylkill River habitat.



Commentary by  
Tom Hylton



Father Hesburgh was featured on the cover of Time Magazine in 1962 as an advocate of the scientific spirit of skeptical, free inquiry.