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THE GREAT SOCIETY: THE MILITARY LIFE

WARRINGTON COLESCOTT

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FRONT COVER: Tom Coleman, whose work is featured this month (see p. 28) vividly makes the point that the capacity of man for violence is forever equal—and certainly the more pernicious—with his capacity to make individual lives richer, more meaningful. The great and oppressive paradox of man is that he finds such reward in brutalizing his neighbor, whom he may occasionally love.

motive

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Well done, Mr. Terrill ("Between Substance and Shadow," Nov. 1967). Having just returned from the Republic of the Philippines, I personally appreciate this accurate report concerning the islands.

While in the Philippines, I studied at the University of the Philippines under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church. During my stay at the university, I became personally involved in the nationalist movement through an organization known as The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, Philippine Chapter. The students mentioned in the Terrill article are all connected with this organization.

Through my relationship with these students, one fact became very clear: these students were neither pro-Chinese nor pro-American, they were pro-Filipino. But unfortunately, the American Embassy officials in Manila considered these students to be communists. The major attitude at the Embassy is that these Filipino students are anti-American, therefore they must be pro-communist. This either/or attitude permeates the U.S. Embassy there.

But nothing could be further from the truth. These students are pro-Filipino; that is all. As my good friend Machahiya expressed it in front of the U.S. Embassy during a recent demonstration, "If it is communism to want something better for the Filipino people, then I'm a communist. If it is communism to respect the nationalist aspirations of the Filipino people, then I am a communist."

PHILIP T. ROSEN
sterling college
sterling, kansas

□
□
"What men search for" is indeed "significant," as William Braden says in "The Private Sea" (Nov. 1967) and does reflect "needs." And it is clear that the "mundane" considerations of poverty-stricken people living in misery in this country and all over the world—and the help they need—do not concern these escapists any more than they concern the majority of the people in this country and in the world.

If it is not LSD that is used, it is alcohol or, in this country, simply spending money on themselves which enslaves them just as much as any other indulgence. The result is that they are unable to use their energies to make this world a better place to live in.

The pity of it is that they are acting like the people in Eastern cultures who could not break their bonds and therefore had to search for another way to find meaning in life. (And look at the state these countries are in!)

Here in this country we do not have to be enslaved, that is, if we are white, middle-class, and have the intelligence to withstand the brainwashing we get. But obviously we are not in-

telligent, our education is still inferior and does not teach the "virtues" as Aristotle termed it. After all, there have been many philosophers since Plato, including Aristotle, who have shown in no uncertain terms what men can do to be happy.

The LSD takers are just more of the same old ignorant, self-indulgent, self-centered, pill-taking citizenry which make up our sick society today. "Cop-outs," I believe is the present word for it. Christ's words on the cross are still as relevant now as they were almost 2,000 years ago: "... they know not what they do."

LOUISE SINNOTT
dundee, illinois

I read, mark, and inwardly digest your glory sheet. More! More! Yes, more of all your goodies—but if you have a box of suggestion sound and subtle, let me here insert my slip of protest against your dreary mumbling muttering against the beautifully streaming psychedelic flag of these United States—that is, your putting into swaddling wraps the godly symbol of America's ideal.

I know this crap of war and struggle is a tarnished game. There seems no worth in it. Yet all your slant suggests we just give up and drop out.

To hell with such senile wisdom! Why not instill some manly vigor through your organs of transmission. Awake to the fughish fact that you are driving many tender minded people into a swamp of luxuriate, wanton irresponsibility. Like the Church has sold itself to the demon of political power, so have you—it seems—adapted a soft and fuzzily ambivalent just-sitting-on-the-fence-until-the-communist-take-over-is-complete position so you can take comfortable seats among the new power structure in your smugly bureaucratic britches.

Keep on interfusing with all your hairy ambivalence my own confusion and continue to send me your illuminating ploys and propaganda. Beauty has no shame.

JOHN ROBERT WESTBROOK, JR.
birthingam, ala.

Your October issue is . . . well, I just can't think of the appropriate superlatives. Like the German religious community during the reign of Hitler, church groups in the U.S. today demonstrate their willingness to place the interests of government above the interests of human beings.

God is love, and love is alive and well in your offices. The message of Christ was love, and the ideal of Christians should be a world in which men live together as brothers. Instead we find in contemporary America—an officially Christian nation—the "kill a commie for Christ" mentality.

The result of your courage, as well as the writing and photographic imagination and skill of your contributors, is that I, an agnostic, find myself *enjoying* your magazine.

Would you please send ten additional copies? I have sold the current shipment of your issue in two days, and re-ordering through the distributor would take weeks.

Please continue the good work.

GEORGE D. MALONEY
vanguard bookstore
spokane, washington

Being an undergraduate, I have a first-class view of student demonstrations. I have made a short study of them and believe the findings to be of interest to readers of your magazine:

The original driving forces behind student demonstrations are, almost always, a very small handful of fault finding malcontents. A centralization of power is what these agitators in the student body want. They are small-time Napoleons, Hitlers and Castros who take advantage of times of general discontent. They exploit the other students' emotions and, through this, attempt to achieve power.

Secondly, these demonstrations are signs of immaturity. The demonstrators are largely made up of dying children, who, through a slow process, will be reborn as adults. They cannot accept the 'evil' adult world they are being thrust into. Their

life at the university is an indication of the termination of their childhood which, in turn, means a loss of certain privileges. Childhood is known to be a sign of innocence. Theoretically the child cannot be consigned to eternal damnation. The demonstrations are resistant to evil and responsibility and, even as the child looks for evil to change it, the very odd part is that he has a dim secret hunger for it. The students shouldn't be begrudged their futile attempts at holding onto this liberty from restrictions of culture and custom. This process of maturing is a "devirgination" into complete development. The child is an embodiment of everything wholesome and pure as opposed to the nasty dog-eat-dog world envisioned by these demonstrators and the exhibition they put on is a pitiful grasp at the almost extinguished flame of childhood. They are *infants perdis*.

The third reason behind these outbursts is that of youth. It is unnatural for an adolescent to accept life as it is. Most young people, especially freshmen, have just begun to realize how frightfully cold the world can be. The young people involved in these protests are in the fascinating stage of finding themselves. Misery loves company and these birds must flock together. By putting up a united front in displaying their emotions, they are able to fulfill this emotional need. Their unity is an important factor, and such personages as Napoleon I and Hitler were able to manipulate people and exploit them *because of this need*.

Another key factor is the yearning most humans have for attention. These manifestations of displeasure (the demonstrations) frequently become sensational news. Through displaying their emotions the students are usually able to find a release for these pent-up feelings. This is why such exhibitions are often and (apparently) oddly accompanied by laughter and smiles. In reality the laughter lessens the serious aspect of their complaints and while they (the students) are fulfilling the need for sympathetic unity, they are frustrating their yearning for attention just because they aren't taken seriously. The reason for the lack of attention in this case is obviously that any such exhibition of dissatisfaction which is accompanied by frivolity cannot be taken as a real manifestation of displeasure.

To conclude, I can now say that once drawn together, the discontent, the immature, and the youth are all characteristic of people of college age.

B. EVERETT MAYRE
montreal, canada

Someone, maybe the church, has been sending me *motive* for about a year. I have always had difficulty understanding and appreciating art and poetry, so *motive* has been relegated to our small "library" in the bathroom—how sad and possibly typical of our age. But your October issue never got to the john.

I began reading Michael Novak's article, "Flirtation Without Flesh," while in my office and then decided that *motive* belongs on my waiting room table along with such reputable magazines as *Look* and *Newsweek*.

I felt that Novak's article showed us a picture of ourselves that we try very hard not to face up to. Who wants to admit that his entire value system is shot and that he is headed into nothingness? For that matter, how many of us admit to holding values of any kind?

I have taken enough of your time. My check for subscription renewal is enclosed.

ERIC NYSTROM
skillman, n.j.

We thoroughly enjoy *motive* down here, except when the articles are too wordy or the art too bizarre. I recently displayed your beautiful photos-with-poems from the "Where is Vietnam?" section (May 1967) in an anti-Vietnam demonstration here in Hobart. We remember with interest that it was through *motive* that we first learned that God was dead, for some, and that coffee houses were the "in" kind of evangelism. So, thanks for the many interesting and thought-provoking things which come from your strange magazine.

ROBERT & ALICE GUNTHER
hobart, tasmania

Where Have All The

A fellow traveler on the circuit of ecclesiastical conferences recently observed that there are fewer Negroes at most church meetings now than there were in the '50's. Back then, no religious organization with semi-liberal leadership could meet, at least beyond the parish level, without guaranteeing that a respectable percentage of "representative" minorities, i.e. American Negroes and a few colorful foreigners, would attend—usually subsidized circumspectly, of course.

Such integration was instructive—at least to us middle-class whites—and that era was probably an inevitable phase in the sociology of religion. These interracial experiences and multi-national meetings initiated many of us into the world of "pluralism."

I remember vividly my own first attendance as a teen-ager at such a conference: a Methodist youth gathering in Cleveland in 1948. Upon returning to my rural Southern community, I reported with astonishment that I had slept in the same room with a Negro! And, to further offend my white Christian colleagues, I listed as the memorable event of the conference a concert by Roland Hayes.

This famous American Negro tenor, born in Curryville, Georgia of former slave parents, was the first Negro to appear in recital at Boston Symphony Hall. His talent and perseverance paved the way for Marian Anderson and others eventually to enter the mainstream of American music.

I recall that concert by Hayes in part for the beauty of the music and the magnitude of the singer, but in

large measure simply because he was a Negro. The singularity of that impression now appears tragic, of course, but while we shudder with guilt and embarrassment over such events (American race relations seem to be compounded of millions of similarly superficial encounters), we may be thankful that there was at least some penetration of our racist traditions through such exposures.

Subsequent years have seen the Roland Hayes-Negro roommate syndrome compounded. And though these events perhaps were the best that history could afford at the time, these caricatures of human relations are now understood to be the paternalism which they were all along.

A representative illustration is available in Methodism's Central Jurisdiction. This ecclesiastical version of the separate-but-equal fantasy has taken thirty years to exhaust itself. And now that segregation in Methodism is almost defunct officially, where are the Negroes?

A few have risen through "representative" balance to powerful and important positions in education and religion. Some local congregations have achieved significant autonomy and strength. But the overwhelming majority of Negro Methodists have remained segregated and impoverished. They and their leaders have cooperated so long in this religious gerrymandering that they will now find it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to survive—statistically or spiritually—in a denomination now committed, at least legally, to total integration.

Negroes Gone?

These Negro Methodists are approximately where they were before the end of official segregation, but now there is no longer the institutional machinery for insuring Negro participation *per se* in the governing processes of the church. Thus, the problem of Black Power will be raised almost as critically within the churches as it is at city hall.

And so the church, much like society at large, is at the impasse of affirming the one man—one vote principle but living with the White Power-Black Power dichotomy.

Absence makes the past even more damning, and the erosion of Negroes from visible leadership and authority suggests two problems. One is that the churches are still retarded in recruiting and appointing qualified Negroes to key positions on the basis of qualifications other than that of race. But more importantly, there is a dearth of Negro leadership and an abundance of excellent opportunities for those who are qualified and experienced.

In the matter of recruitment and training, the churches and church-related colleges are being eclipsed by both industry and secular colleges. The radical experimentation currently undertaken by Wesleyan University in Connecticut (more than 10% of its current enrollment is from disadvantaged areas) illustrates the kind of vision which should characterize church-related institutions. But those who talk about "freedom in the Gospel" aren't always the ones who manifest that same freedom.

In the 19th century, denominational colleges dotted the frontier in America and became synonymous with obtaining an education. These same institutions could now take seriously the urban and racial frontiers and set the pace for radical innovation in higher education. The facilities and expertise currently accumulated by Protestant and Roman Catholic schools in or around America's major urban areas could be of major consequence in renovating some of the urban and human blight that festers in our cities.

If we answer the lead question, "Where have all the Negroes gone?" the answer is not likely to be, "To our white churches and our white colleges." Most of these institutions are still as suburban, as segregated, and as rigid as they were before 1954.

Instead, Negroes have risen in their own institutions—religious, educational, and political—and now that leadership is being consumed by the prestigious national governmental and industrial institutions. We can congratulate and wish well those individuals who are at long last being rewarded and accepted. And we can begin the urgent job of searching for ways to retain those now in second-level positions for first-rate responsibilities.

For decades churches have posed as specialists in group work skills, leadership training, and educational innovation. Now is the time to prove whether those claims were ever justified.

—B. J. STILES



COLLAGE

DENNIS AKIN

BROTHERHOOD AND THE MARSHMALLOW WALL

By E. GORDON DALBEY, JR.

Where it happened isn't important; any well-to-do community warrants the above headlines from the suburban section of the *Los Angeles Times*. "Talking about poverty and color to these rich white people is like speaking Hebrew to an Arab," declared one of the student volunteers on the American Friends Service Committee project last summer. Another said, "They don't seem to understand what you're saying and yet they get up tight at your first word."

The When and Why of the "failure" was perhaps suggested as early as 1838 when Alexis de Tocqueville, after his tour of the new America, wrote: "When . . . education and freedom (are) widely diffused, the desire of securing the comforts of the world haunts the imagination of the poor, and the dread of losing them the rich." Indeed, what in fact happened this summer slipped by the very mayor of the project town, who in the same *Times* article affirmed that his city "does not have a power structure or a human relations problem."

"At the beginning of the summer we were just ten college kids with a degree of social concern," opens the students' summary report on their AFSC project. "We spoke of brotherhood." Certainly the ten spoke appropriately to the official project goal—as stated in the preliminary AFSC flyer—"to work for more open housing and initiate dialog on the acceptance of minorities." What kind of dialog—with business, church and civic organizations plus neighborhood coffees—lead all ten to affirm that "integration is irrelevant in 1967"? This interracial group of students from Cairo, Georgia, to San Francisco thought they knew a lot about civil rights. But all later agreed, "We all had a lot of catching up to do."

If the answer once was blowing in the wind, today it lies trampled on the roads from urban black ghettos to their white suburbs, or hides rationalized in the shadows between individual morals and the ballot box. For the students, the answer lay in a summer which portended the end of a "Negro Civil Rights Movement" and the beginning of a "Black Revolution"—a summer which left each asking along with all Americans if brotherhood has any future in cities that explode and suburbs that tremble.

"I wanted to explore the Christian possibilities in civil rights work," said one student. Realizing he was "hopelessly inexperienced" in working with the underprivileged, he thought first of going to a black ghetto. "One likely AFSC project talked about helping Negroes 'develop a more positive self-image,'" he recalled. "But I realized that's not my bag. Maybe Willie Mays or Ralph Bunche can mold a better black image, but my white face has no business getting mixed up with black goals."

And so, like his nine counterparts and two advisors—University of Colorado Chaplain Roy Smith and wife—he turned to the project in a thoroughly white "bedroom community" of 20,000 commuters with an average salary of \$15,000 a year. The local Human Relations Council—another group with a degree of social concern and a vocabulary for brotherhood—agreed to sponsor the AFSC summer project. Surely, with so many persons enjoying so many of the country's material benefits, the suburb promised an ideal intellectual climate. A student pointed to a statement by Urban League Director Whitney Young: "We had the Jackie Robinsons for 50 years; what we didn't have was a Branch Rickey. . . . I'd hoped this town would be the place to look for some modern Branch Richeys in business," he said.

Hence the shock. Instead of an intellectual utopia, the collegians found a fantasyland where a junior executive can tell his church group, "After sweating out a day's work and the freeways, I pick up the newspaper, take one look at all those riot headlines and turn right to *Peanuts*." Instead of a house at peace they discovered a suburban sand castle where a bluejeaned 4th grader



PHOTOGRAPH

DOUGLAS GILBERT

can explain between innings at the local playground that he used to live in Philadelphia, "but my mommy says there's too many colored people there, so we came here." Even those with vision and courage reflected a hopelessness: "I'd speak out, but it's like crying in the wilderness," said one dismayed member of the local League of Women Voters.

But not all citizens were so discouraged to silence especially at the prospect of open housing. Long before project members had deemed such a goal irrelevant, local forces marshaled their concern: the Human Relations Council searched in vain for housing for the integrated group, and not until a local Quaker family offered to renovate their two empty chicken coops were plans finalized. A confused student summarized the group's first impression: "People here seem to be afraid of something."

Whatever frightens such people, they pay good money to hide. While nearby beach towns boast of integrated bathing, their own chamber of commerce points proudly to the city's "over 2,000 privately owned swimming pools." The fear was perhaps identified by the philosopher who stated that "the world will never be safe for the few who are rich until it is just for the many who are poor." Certainly it was personified in the realtor who told students, "I worked damn hard to get where I am—all those rioters out there are just looking for easy handouts."

While it is debatable just where so much work has gotten the realtor and his fellow citizens, there is no doubt the place is cordial. Introductory meetings during the project's first two weeks were punctuated continually with welcome smiles and applause. "Everyone kept telling us, 'What a wonderful thing you're doing,'" recalled a Syracuse University undergraduate.

Indeed, the students noted that anyone mentioning "brotherhood" or "better individual human relations" was immediately rewarded with smiles and another glass of ice-cream punch. Meanwhile each citizen was quick to point out that he himself had never called anyone "nigger" or had occasion to throw stones. In fact, his individual record in race

relations—especially in his white neighborhood—was quite clean, and he wanted no more than for each American, regardless of color, to lift himself up just as he had done—by hard work. “Nobody can accuse me of having anything to do with those riots,” a local doctor told the students. With the accusing ashes of Watts not 25 miles away, the students soon dubbed the sugary brigade of welcome smiles, “the marshmallow wall.”

A casual check of local voting gave the students their first bitter taste of what lay behind the wall: a nine-to-one landslide against California’s Rumford (open housing) Act and an acclaimed congressman who on successive days voted against the rat bill and for the anti-riot bill. The local mayor meanwhile officially greeted the group by encouraging the students to work where they were “needed”—pointing to such crimes as drugs among local youth and poverty in a nearby black neighborhood. Typifying the citizens’ determined lack of perspective beyond themselves, the mayor told a *Los Angeles Times* reporter, “We do not have a human relations problem. The city’s residents seem to coexist without malice toward one another.”

The lesson hit hard, like a parent’s slap. “Suddenly we realized that if these people were applauding us, we must be saying the wrong thing,” a student remarked. Above all hung the sober note that behind the marshmallow wall lay a fear so long nurtured that the students sincerely questioned whether they had the necessary compassion and vision to meet such people eye-to-eye, behind the wall. “In a very real sense, these are our parents speaking,” he added.

The project quickly reoriented according to the new revelations. “Each time we cheered brotherhood was nothing more than a pat on self-righteous backs,” advisor Smith declared. “They were clapping for themselves, not us.” And thus fell the marshmallow wall, revealing a glaring disparity between religious beliefs and political behavior and offering the students a first opportunity for commitment. “When the self-deceptions and their terrible effects became clear to me, for the first time I knew that as a concerned white person I belonged working among my own affluent white people,” a student stated. “Never again could I think of going to a black ghetto with a Thanksgiving basket and telling Negroes to ‘come up to our white level.’”



PHOTOGRAPH

AL CLAYTON

These new commitments called for a reevaluation of summer goals. With urban snipers in daily headlines, the question became, “What would the project in fact accomplish if we moved one or two or twelve black families into town?” “There’s a black man out there burning your cities,” answered one project visitor, a Negro, “and it’s not because no one will take his \$50,000 for a house in this neighborhood.”

The sponsoring Human Relations Council, however, had already built its entire action program around a “good-neighbor covenant” by which the signer would in effect tell his neighbor, “Sell to whomever you please; I welcome neighbors of any color.” A Council member explained that “we feel this is at least something positive that every citizen can actually do himself.” The students, however, feared that even a sincere signature might become merely another marshmallow wall from behind which persons could perpetuate their system of fears inside anonymous voting booths.

Clearly the issue of open housing and salving white consciences would have to yield to more basic plans than finding houses for well-to-do Negroes. “When the fire’s burning and you’ve got a bucket of water,” explained one student, “you either toss it on the fire or prime the pump.” The project’s prime concern therefore shifted, as noted in the report, to “a massive, organized attack on the differences in economic and political opportunity between blacks and whites.”

The Problem,” then, was revealed not in the ghettos themselves, but rather, between the suburbanite’s narrow concern for his own individual morals and his resolute unwillingness to recognize the steak-or-hunger power wielded through the very political and economic system which he nurtures. The fault lay not with impotent beggars. Instead, the project focussed on those powerful citizens whose dollars to charity were less than their gifts to the very politicians dedicated to maintaining a status quo. “The mayor told us to go where we are needed,” one student remarked at a poolside meeting. “Here we are.”

Persons who now came to project gatherings armed with anti-integration arguments in anticipation of a stalemate—a victory for this status quo—were caught by surprise. Overworked issues such as property values and daughters were rejected as irrelevant, and people began listening instead of asserting. “When you do something wrong in your past, you’ll naturally try hard to cover it up,” a student commented. “But when—like these people—you’re not even sure just how you could’ve done it right, even running away to the suburbs won’t quiet your conscience.” The specifics of “doing it right” could hardly have been presented more palatably to such an audience: No one was going to have to see, smell,

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INTAGLIO

THE GREAT SOCIETY: TOP MANAGEMENT

WARRINGTON COLESCOTT

or touch anyone else he didn't want to; there would be no integration demonstrations on their main street, no bussed-in black faces in desks next to their children.

In fact, citizens were told, the same energy previously devoted to such fears could be freed to act in a genuine expression of brotherhood to allow Negroes the chance to lift themselves up—by none other than hard work. Job training centers would be needed. Schools in black communities would have to be upgraded as outlined by the McCone Commission—which after investigating the Watts riots reported that an additional \$25 per pupil per year would be needed, not even to make up for lost time,

but merely to bring Watts schools up to the present national standard. "What black people need more than houses in white neighborhoods," asserted one Negro student, "is a school they can point to and say, 'that school is black and it is good.'"

Realizing that such schemes were beyond the scope of isolated personal civilities, the students pointed to the responsibility of the affluent American to use his very real economic and political power to open these new doors to ghetto residents. "We're not talking about burning anything down," a student emphasized, "but only rededicating the same system wisely set up by our forefathers to its original purpose of 'liberty and justice for all.'"

The marshmallow wall was thereby skirted like a Maginot line. The group's task now was to rescue the wealthy, white mentality from its fearful vigil at an unreal wall to positive action toward a just, unwallied society. But the enormity of the job was clear. Outflanked, townspeople groped frantically for make-shift shields. The man who "would've helped before the riots" but "won't condone such lawlessness" had to be reminded that "woulds" and "won'ts" mean the same humiliation to an unemployed father. And, sadly enough, although the Manpower Training Act was passed in 1962, the first job training center serving Watts appeared only after the riots, in 1965.

Others who tried to shield with "but Rap Brown says" were told to redirect their concerns. "What's all this fuss about civil rights, anyway?!" an elderly lady wanted to know. "There's no fuss at all if you've got them," a Negro student replied. "If you really want to see Rap Brown put away, don't waste your time and money taking him to court," he advised. "Use your own power to clean up the real mess he attacks: make him a liar the next time he tells black people 'rats are biting your babies while white congressmen laugh' or that 'white men act like Christians only when you light a fire under them.'"

Citizens had further to be assured that the affirmation "Black is beautiful" was designed for black pride rather than any threat to whites and therefore not—as one sympathetic professor yet feared—"a black KKK." The message was laid on the line by advisor Roy Smith: "Some irresponsible shouts from black militants can't abdicate us white people from our own responsibility to insure economic and political justice when and where we can."

Persons sincerely concerned with brotherhood had to be reminded that personal contact is not the sole prerequisite, that, for example, plantation owners often had quite intimate personal contact with their slaves. Students warned their white audiences to resist the temptation to advise Negroes which black leader to follow—and thereby to allow blacks the same respect and trust as they would give any brother to choose what is best for himself and the country as a whole.

"Integration can be the same, newer form of white dictation that segregation once was," declared one student. "It's like for hundreds of years all we whites have said is 'Black is bad'; now when Negroes finally have the chance to look at themselves and stand up to say 'Black is beautiful,' in run we whites to pull their rug out with 'Oh, no, please—we're all color blind brothers.' Who are we whites suddenly to say 'color doesn't matter'? Sincere Christians or burned-out store owners? Let's give our black brothers some time to themselves while we go about cleaning up our own back yard. Then years from now—when

AL CLAYTON

PHOTOGRAPH



our responsible use of white power has opened all doors of opportunity to blacks and they have decided who they are and can take pride in it—then we can begin talking about face-to-face brotherhood. But not now."

While arguing with conservatives was a continual frustration, the greatest discouragement was the thorough demoralization of local liberals. At an evening church gathering, a businessman told how he had once felt so sorry for the poor Negroes in a neighboring town that he and his wife had taken a large box of used clothes to one family. "But when we actually got down there and saw so many terribly poor folks we could only cry and give up," he sighed. "Now I figure the best I can do for those poor people is to bring them the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Equally pathetic were those who found release in hot afternoon protest marches—yet they had never given a cent or minute to campaigning politicians from whose air-conditioned offices the ultimate power is wielded. Others who lived but a manicured lawn away from powerful bankers, personnel managers and realtors could only offer the students a left-handed pat on the head: "The only real hope is in you young people." Meanwhile, sensitive persons who saw clearly the gathering racial storm spent their concern balancing precarious "friendships" with neighboring Birchers and adamant racists. Liberal contributors to such newly militant black groups as SNCC busied themselves being deeply offended when the organizations suddenly spurned their white dollars—advising them to redirect their energies to their own white communities.

Such disillusionment and misdirection of even the enlightened citizenry led the students to espouse an entirely "new brotherhood." As advisor Smith put it, "To be a-political in these times is to be irresponsible."

An African Son Talks With His Father

The feast?

Ah, yes, father! All this dancing, the drones!
And look, that boy smiling there by the palms—
Banti brute devil comes by

And he runs, laughing, like the pepperbird
Leaves the branch

The slight breeze shakes! He sees
Much behind that mask I knew once;
From being far away I've danced myself to sleep.

They dance,
To colors and drums too, father,
Although no feast is celebrated.
Not even of themselves do they feel

The joys of bright victories
Over victories we show today.

They dress each other in different
Clothes, robes of different tribes just
To separate the hunted from the hunted. The men

I met

Could not be blamed, just the ones
I passed as when you went that time
To meet the President at Voinjama
And mingled among countrymen
Who were not your people and
Offered no greeting. They had no way
To ask of your strange lands. Remember
You told me: *a man can't hear the drum
When the bush is thick.* The bush, their trees

Are thick

With buzzing knowledge and process.
There are many books. The teachers
Tell each other, the students too,

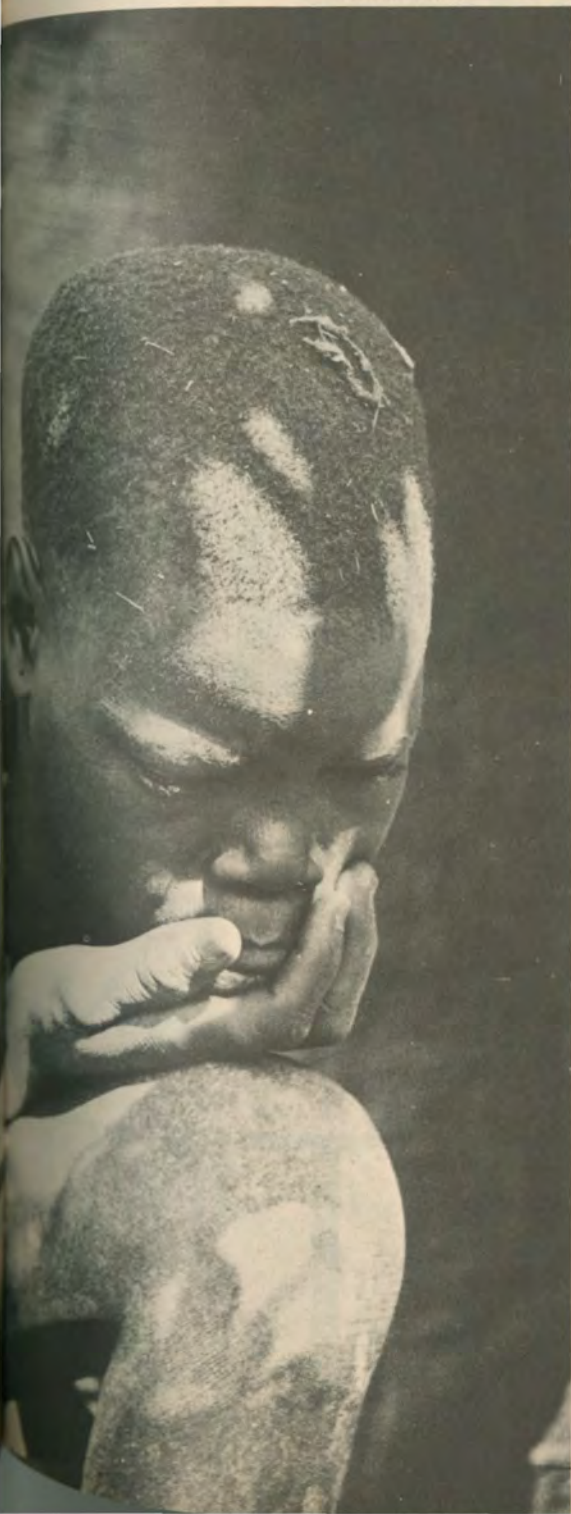
Nice book, teacher. Books that show
A man how to fix

The roads the rains destroy. They see
Many books, father, but rake over wisdom
For muddy answers, the answers



PHOTOGRAPH

ROHN ENGH



The teachers
Need to fill their rollbooks. It is not
As one man would come to you
In time of famine or rain or grief
And say, wise old man,
Counsel me, though I think I know
The answers. *Knife can't cut its own handle,*
You say. They say: the land is large. What to do?
Their answers are high walls, tightly mortared.

We too
Cast walls, and cast paper to the ground.
But their land is like the government road,
Father, cement until the earth beneath
Turns and shrivels like skin gasping
miles of cement and floating paper
To where the night lies. And then the same.
The books and crumpled paper on the earth
like your crops in the field, which are good this year.

This land is blessed.
But as it took you ten days to walk from
Bomi Hills to Monrovia, father, as a young man,
Then count the people of this village.
One farm, this country would be there,
And the days as many as your people.
Savannah, mountains that break the clouds,
Stone lands that see the colors of your black skin
You would see. And all on cement, not foot trails.

Do not take
My irony to be pride, father. They have
a fool's tale: men took the roads to be of gold.
Cement is not soft. Even you could not rule such a land:
The sweetness of cassava is not like rice.
Now only a few prophets walk the road,
And mad young men in rubber shoes
To say the road is gold. It is very hard
To make the road soft and sure, like trails.

I think
You ask more of me than answers we both know.
I have lived at ease with other people. I have their tools.
You asked me if I liked the feast, but really,
Father, you saw me smile at that boy
Who ran away from the Banti devilman's mask.
My joy has no trace of smugness.
I too have run away from masks, held fear
In a grin. I am your feast, that boy, his smile.

—WILLIAM HOLLAND



DRAWING

B. M. JACKSON

JUSTICE— SOUTHERN T TIME

Some are black. And those who are white have long hair and casual clothes, and obviously are out of place.

For the first week they get away with it. That they take notes doesn't fool anyone—not any more than their claim to be reporters for *The Southern Courier*, the paper the movement publishes in Montgomery. But there are empty seats in the three rows reserved for the press, and the real reporters ignore them and let them sit there.

On the second week of the trial, however, a new flock of journalists pours into Meridian, to be there for the Mississippi jury's decision about the guilt or innocence of 18 white men accused of killing three civil rights workers in 1964.

No one really doubts that the Klansmen murdered Mickey Schwerner and Andy Goodman and Jim Chaney, or that the deputy sheriff helped them, or that the sheriff at least looked the other way. But there was no guilty verdict when Emmett Till was murdered in 1955, or when Mack Charles Parker was lynched in 1959, or when a sniper shot Medger Evers in 1963. So this jury's decision will be news either way: if the verdict is not guilty, all three networks, all three *Times* (New York, Los Angeles, London), and a score of other media will flash the world the word that Mississippi is still medieval. And if the jury brings in a guilty verdict, history will have been made.

So the press seats fill up, and the long-haired kids get in the way. Some of the "real" reporters complain, and a marshal moves the offenders. After that they find seats in the back of the courtroom where they can, and the press, comfortable with the extra elbow room, forgets them.

There is an irony in this, for sloppily dressed kids are what this trial is all about. It is not just that these kids are the spiritual (and in some cases the literal)

successors to Schwerner, Goodman and Chaney; one also has the feeling that if the three victims themselves could somehow be resurrected and walk into the courtroom, they too would be relegated to the back row, and ignored by everyone but the Klansmen.

For isn't this really what has happened?

First, of course, there were the days of destiny, during that first summer after the murders, when everyone was in Mississippi, sharing in the danger ("We might get shot, too") and the glory of the three young men who had become martyrs for the movement.

Then the television lights added to the heat of a long, hot season, and the reporters listened to Roscoe Jones, a young Meridian Negro who almost went with the three heroes the day they drove away to die. ("I didn't though, because I remembered I was supposed to speak at a church.")

Then, instead of being a nuisance whom the reporters want out of their seats, the long-haired Radcliffe girl who has come back for the trial was news. ("There were speeches every night, and lots of people singing freedom songs and saying how we were going to carry on the work.")

Then, Joe Morris—a white seminarian who arrived a week after the murders—was getting thrown in jail and beaten by the police. ("Is he still here?" Meridian's police chief asked during the trial. "I haven't seen him for a year.")

But the excitement dwindled, and most of the college students went back to school, and those who stayed, like Joe Morris, Roscoe Jones and the Radcliffe girl, found their task tougher than it had seemed.

They went with the Freedom Democratic Party to the Democratic National Convention, and the Civil Rights Act was passed, and they picketed even the FBI, and "tested" Meridian's restaurants.

But now there are no Negroes in those restaurants, and Meridian's Negroes can tell you why: "They might tell you to get out. They might send you into that little room back in the back. They might leave you just sitting there, looking like a fool. Or they might serve you—you just don't know."

Then the community center Schwerner had founded in Meridian was busy. Now it is almost empty, except for the two Negro women who serve as its staff.

When you ask about the movement, these women tell you they are glad the college students came: "They taught many people to fill out voter registration forms. Yes sir, they helped a heap."

But if you stay and talk for a while, you learn that voting failed to bring any immediate millennium:

"All we got is a little sweetwater. Down at the bottom it's bitter."

"I ain't had a job since I went in the movement."

By ROB ELDER

"You can't even get a Negro around here to sit on the front of the bus. They don't have nothing to do with you. They're afraid. . . ."

There are signs in the front windows of the community center:

"In Memory of James Chaney."

"In Memory of Andrew Goodman."

"In Memory of Michael Schwerner."

But somehow memories failed to keep the movement going. "No one else had the way that Mickey had," remembers Morris, who stayed with the CORE staff until last February, then went to work for a poverty program.

"Everyone was working against everyone else," recalls Roscoe Jones.

"The movement was the crest of a wave," explains the Radcliffe girl.

Now the wave has washed out. Across the street from the courtroom, Confederate flags still flap in front of Bill Gordon's barber shop.

The Justice Department's prosecution of their friends and neighbors is a federal invasion of Mississippi, defense lawyers tell the jury:

"Robert Kennedy marshaled some of the greatest talent on God's green earth and dispatched them to Neshoba County . . . distributors of snakes, and pimps, and scapegoat witnesses. . . ."

"This is a case where the federal government reached down and said to its chief civil rights attorney, 'Go down into Mississippi and make an example of Neshoba County—bring us back the liberty and the blood of the defendants, so that we can nail upon the barn door their hides. . . .'"

"If Sheriff Lawrence A. Rainey is convicted, Neshoba County is convicted, and if Neshoba County is convicted, the state of Mississippi is convicted. . . ."

Yet, although they have heard the defendants described as "pure as the driven snow," and vouched for by character witnesses who include much of the local power structure, the jury members listen as John Doar, chief of the Justice Department's civil rights division and prosecutor in this case, tells them:

"This is not a federal invasion of Mississippi. I came here only to ask for justice. . . . The sole responsibility for determining guilt or innocence remains in the hands of 12 men and women from the state of Mississippi."

When on the second day of its deliberations, the jury reports that it is "hopelessly deadlocked," U.S. Dist. Judge Harold Cox demands that they keep trying:

"This is an important case," he tells them. "This trial has been expensive for both the prosecution and the defense. . . ."

"If you should fail to reach a verdict, there is no reason to believe another trial would not be equally expensive, nor is there any reason to believe that the case can be tried again better."



PHOTOGRAPH

JACK THORNELL

On the third day, the jury comes in with a verdict that makes history: eight of the defendants are acquitted, on three there is no decision, but seven—including the deputy sheriff and the imperial wizard of the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan—are found guilty.

Judge Cox, a Mississippi-born segregationist who has clashed often with the Justice Department, reveals that there have been threats against him and a member of the jury, and orders two of the defendants jailed without bond, while the others remain free pending sentencing.

When a defense lawyer asks for a directed verdict of acquittal, Cox angrily overrules the motion.

"It is unthinkable to have any other verdict against this man," Cox says of one of the defendants. "Nobody else need be concerned with his bluster or bluff, or with anybody like him, for a long time."

The stars and bars still wave in front of the barber shop on the square in Meridian, and the jurors have gone back to their jobs—as housewives, as electricians and pipefitters and office workers and as a school cafeteria cook.

But though the flags are still there, one has the feeling that something has changed—that this Mississippi jury and this Mississippi judge have made it clear that the Klan does not speak for them.

It is as though Mississippi has rejected both the movement's insistent "NOW" and the Klan's violent "NEVER," and has rejoined the rest of the United States, where segregation is maintained not with bullets, but in the subtlety of restaurant service, and where the question is not whether anything will be done about man's inhumanity to man, but whether it will be too little and too late.

THE STONING

The stones have appeared in our land.
Pieces from bodies of mountains,
all those pieces from bodies of ice,
have been lifted in thaws, frosts,
to the earth-binding clay.

There was pleasure in fingering stones,
silk in the sandpaper skin,
till we made ourselves work in our sleep
planting the stones.

I had eaten my plum to the stone, and I knew
that inside there was seed
for the fingers of clay.
You looked at your melons, you saw
how they grew their stone rinds
and rotted the rinds for the seed
and the work of the clay.

But where was the seed in our stones?
Why did we try to make them alive?
They were helping us die, helping us
dig, making us brothers at last.

Brother,
we will die soon.
It is hard to believe,
even now that we know.

Then come,
play, we will plant
and take stones to the heart of the clay.
We will learn their rough bodies
and the lifting back.

—M. W. LALLY

a
casual
letter
from
a
foreigner

By DAVID LLOYD-JONES



PHOTOGRAPH

AL CLAYTON

The Collapse of the American South

To visit and talk to the people of a small Southern town is to suspend normal logic, normal thought processes. To spend a week in Arkansas and three days in the village of Strong near the Louisiana border is not to be able to tell what these places are like or how their people think.

For a Canadian who has been working in the U.S. only a few days, Strong, Arkansas is bizarre—an exercise in the surrealistic, a step into a different world.

The logic of Strong makes it normal for people to carry handguns and occasionally wave them in one's face. Guns were pointed at me twice in two days in the South, but I did not notice until I got back to the comparative normality of Little Rock that there was something even odd about the fact. At the time it seemed in keeping, not odd or shocking and certainly far from frightening. It is only on reflection that it occurs that "equalizers" kill people.

The logic of Arkansas is such that one has two separate conversations with every black person one talks to. The first is ordinary introductory conversation: "We is making good progress. . . . The white folks never done me no harm. 'Sep the Klan, there ain't no bad white folks, and there's good and bad in both races."

After a while one gets to the second conversation, one that for all I know is as arbitrary and contrived as the first. Bitterness, resignation and discouragement replace deference and optimism as the themes, the affectations varying with the speaker's assessment of the listener.

"In 1966 they said that by 1967 we'd be all done with this mess. Now it's 1968 and we're still just chewing at the cud. The Negro have been patient, and the Negro have been willing to forget the past, but it sure is mighty hard sometimes. It sure is mighty hard."

The speaker is the Rev. G. L. Evans. He works in the Georgia-Pacific plywood plant a few miles down the road, "truck patches" a few acres of peanuts, corn and greens for food and a little cash, and preaches at the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. As minister of the church, he gets \$38 a month for preaching Christ, salvation, and civil rights. The first two get rather more emphasis than the third, for Evans has a tight grip on reality.

His home is a four-room unpainted shack a little larger than the average two-car garage. It is a Southern custom that Negro houses are left unpainted on the outside, but kept clean, comfortable and functional on the inside. His home, like that of other blacks I visited, had a crucifix on the wall, a television set blaring for the kids, and a kitchen—shelves and fixtures built by the man of the house.

Anyone who drives a rented car is "in the government bizzness" and gets checked-out promptly by the local cop. "Ah went up to the top of the hill and radioed a two-eight and a two-nine on that car

as soon as you got into town. If it was a stolen, I would'a had you in jail before you would'a known what a happened."

J. U. Nash, the policeman, is what is known to the "culud folks" as "one sure sorry white man." That each race has a full catalogue of typecastings for the other is one of the symbols of the accommodations made to the Southern Way of Life, which is to say racism, church-going, and suspicion of outsiders. That there is less suspicion among blacks than among whites is indicative either that the present way of life has less hold on them or that they are resigned to anything that comes their way without any interest in being suspicious.

The first is more likely: the ubiquitous television set brings the outside world to both black and white, but to the black it brings news that the world is changing. All the whites find out is that the outside world is as threatening as he suspected or as he was told in church.

I first saw Nash within seconds of arriving in Strong, as I drove down the main street looking for a phone book to check out the names I knew from HEW dockets in Washington. He was sitting in his car in front of the Corner Cafe, a cigar in the corner of his mouth—his expression that of passive suspicion, uptight but sedentary.

Not the least among the reasons for his generalized unhappiness with the world, I later learned, was the fact that the town council had bought him only a 379 cubic inch Ford. Anybody he would have any reason to chase in Strong packs over 400 cubes. Two or three hundred dollars a month and a .38 to wave at strangers are the other trappings of his status.

Merchants in these small towns incorporate in the hope of attracting business to broaden the tax base. Policemen are one of the encumbrances they tolerate. In a pinch they call the state troopers or use their own guns.



PHOTOGRAPH

ROHN ENGH

For the next few days Nash earned his salary as a communicator: within a couple of hours he knew every place and person I visited and put the news on the grapevine. By the time I got around to meeting the town liberal he was able to ask me why I took so long to get to him.

When I finally spoke to Nash, it was with the courage of liquor in me. Old Forester with Orange Crush chaser, proffered first in the back of the hardware store, later with black friends sitting on the front stoop of a gas station. Nash drew up in his car—across the road—and I sauntered over.

We shook hands and he smiled a welcome. The social gavotte is such that smiles cover everything. I joined him in the car and we chat about speeders, bootleggers and the like. Protocol dictates that neither of us mentions schools, which is a subject the whole town knows I've been asking too damn many questions about.

As I walked away from his car after a few minutes of socializing, he made a gruff Pooh-bear-like sound. I turned and he was standing, leaning on the car door. "That's a big rented car you've got there. I'd advise you to get it back to Little Rock right quick tonight." He pulled out his gun and swayed it vaguely in my direction. "And if I catch you doing anything, I'll fetch you in right quick." He was smiling, and I grinned back. "I'm sure you will, sir," I replied, in the phony Southern accent I was picking up despite myself.

We shook hands with an exaggerated friendliness, and another necessary gavotte had been danced.

The schools of Strong are about a mile and half apart, the white one on a paved road at the east of the village, the black one on a clay-dust road just outside the western limit. As with everything else in this incredible little world, the differences are so obvious they astound, yet so taken for granted that they seem natural.



AL CLAYTON

PHOTOGRAPH

To the vice principal of the black Gardner school nothing could be further from mind than the idea of school desegregation. His main moment-to-moment worry is keeping kids from fighting in study hall and shouting in the corridors. As a counselor he is called up to read "free-choice forms" to semi-literate parents. These forms ask parents to indicate in which school they wish to enroll their child, and they form the basis of the school superintendent's claim that "we've opened up the door to the 'culud' folk. Now all they've got to do is walk through it."

"I just tell them what the form says," says the official. "I say where to put the mark for the Gardner school and where to put the mark for the Strong school. They got a free choice."

He makes no recommendations, but tradition dictates the choice. Nothing more overt than tradition prevents immediate desegregation, although beneath the surface there may be considerably more.

One man had two of his children in the white school last year but sent them back to the rambling brick shack called Gardner, because a car once trailed the school bus home. His wife walked three miles every day to meet the kids at the pick-up point. But the one incident was enough to remind him that a dead child is dead forever.

James Hicks, an intelligent 16-year-old, fills in his own free-choice form, as do all children over 15. A custom—a step in growing-up whose significance nobody can quite pin down. Last year he filled in the blank for the white school, but went back to Gardner after a semester. Unprepared for algebra, at sea with the physics taught at the white school, he knew that he must graduate with some kind of diploma before he reaches draft age.

Even the diploma he gets from the black school will keep him from being labelled a dropout if he gets it before he is drafted. But "they got different books up at Strong. The classes 'bout a year ahead."

A 13-year-old white kid at one point came up to me on the street, presumably sent to reconnoiter by his father, a furniture dealer. "Excuse me, sir, but are you in the government bizzness or somethin'?" I told him I wasn't and he pressed me with all the usual questions.

Was it pride or shame in his voice when he told me the joke the kids in his school used to chant whenever there was a black kid in hearing range? "I smell a gar." "A Ceegar?" "No, a neegar." He became apologetic when I looked disapproving. Both white and Negro school children in the South are well drilled in the exercise of giving an adult the responses—words, attitudes, facial expressions, and actions—that are wanted. "Course I don't feel that way myself. Me and my buddy run a bicycle shop, most of our customers are niggers. We don't mind them as long as they don't cause no trouble with us." A 13-year-old Rotarian! His father has won trips to Hawaii and Florida for selling more General Electric appliances than anyone else in his zone.

The 120 miles to Little Rock was a trip to some odd kind of sanity. For there are ways, despite profound local differences, in which America is remarkably homogeneous. People turn on in Little Rock. (I felt like Ginsberg in Czechoslovakia when someone offered me a joint.) Even in Little Rock, you can fall into conversations about Ravi Shankar and the Mothers of Invention.

The Dobbs House Restaurants in Little Rock are models of a world-wide genre: antiseptic chrome and Arborite, waitresses whose surliness has been tamed by the drilling of a determined chain owner, and the vinyl seats and walls the designer orders by number from the register.

It was astonishing to be sitting there drinking coffee with friends at 1 a.m. and see thirty other diners never raise an eyebrow while a sixteen-year-old ranted: "I seen lotsa niggers and they all smell. Right?" Half a dozen high schoolers with him nod in admiration and he rambles on. "Stamp out all the psychedelic drugs. Right? Bomb all those little yellow bastards. Right? Send all the hippies to Vietnam. Right?"

The spell breaks a little as a rather mousy waitress whispers to the university professor with me. "Yes, start throwing a few flowers around and the war would soon be over." But she's not really serious, just trying to talk up our tip a little. Eventually the kids leave, to be replaced at the counter by three boozy Babbitts—men in blue suits, their wives in cocktail dresses—spreading another oppressive cloud of noise, elbowing, bad breath and racism. In the same way that a single off-color joke can amuse a class of six-year-olds on and off for a whole school year, reducing itself eventually to a ritual formula that gets a laugh from key words or gestures, so for some Southerners racist references are the height of suavity, relevance and wit at any occasion.

French Canadians and Latins have a theory of cultural and economic imperialism which in part explains this kind of behavior. They believe it natural for colonials—both the exploited and those who have risen from the mass to be assistant exploiters—to be demoralised, rude, and inconsiderate. In part this is because anyone from the South with the requisite ability, manners and ostensible liberalism will be drafted into northern structures.

People with enough authoritarianism to get things done will be left behind to run things at the local level, but those with the grace, style and congeniality to get along in a large administrative center will leave for the larger—which is to say richer—society. And while the best are drained off to the Empire's center, in this case Manhattan, those left behind share the demoralizing knowledge that they do not hold the main functions of the society, that their culture is not the mainstream. Tone is set by second-raters;

culture dictated by the wives of hard-eyed business men, either on the way up or sent from the colonial center—the north—to look after the big thing.

This analysis says much, and explains the destruction of culture and manners in French Canada, or the reason Ron Karenga teaches black culture so that Negroes will stop being the tail end of the white. It is obvious, for instance, that in any centralized economic structure—such as the Delian League or the United States—many of the most capable people will move to the center.

What it fails to explain is that there are people who stay willingly, who reject the larger culture, for reasons of sentiment. There are many people caught up with the Faulknerian ideal, a painful love-hate relationship with the South. One feels, even as an outsider, an attraction for the conservatism—the ossification—which survives on the surface despite the industry which has been moving into the South since the war. One feels the urge to come here and settle, fit into a culture which will not move, which has no dynamic, which does not confront one with the necessity for continually finding new answers to new problems. Of course, change is stalking the South, and will come in many ways at many speeds; but it is possible to forget this, and most people do.

The most passionate denunciations of racism come from Southerners. Northerners run the tired bureaucracies which can do so little to implement their anti-racist ideals.

PHOTOGRAPH

AL CLAYTON



The most thoroughgoing invective against the cult of the gun, the willingness to show one's manhood through violence, comes from those who were raised in the *Zeitgeist* they criticize.

There are people in the South who deeply love the indigenous myths and lore, who could do quite well on the make in the northern liberal culture, but who don't want to, who are kept there by ties of sentiment and tradition.

Much of the tradition is under siege, though. The myth holds that whites and "nigras" love one another, that business is done on a handshake, that the Southern way has a style and grace of its own. But the love is contradicted by the shootings of the Klan and Muhamad Ali preaching "we'll give the white man any love we've got left when we're through looking after ourselves."

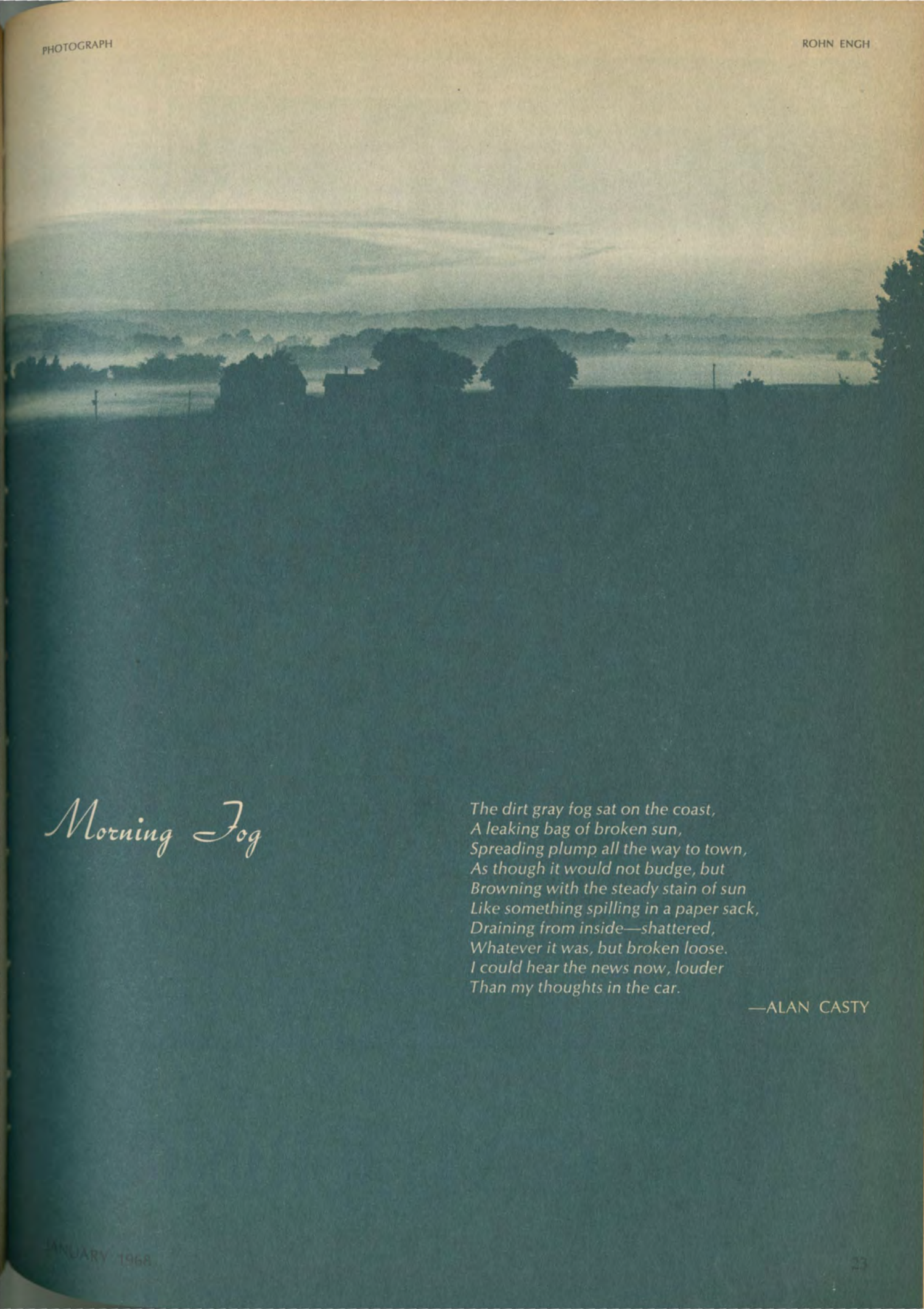
Trust gives way before the incursions of the finance company and the corporate lawyer; nowadays one has reams of legalistic prose, all enforceable by the courts, before business is done. The baronial style of the plantation gives way to TV dinners by the swimming pool. The sureness of relationships, the trust, the style, all are threatened, yet the only alternative in sight is northern liberal culture which is obviously patently unworkable and evil. The mental set of the old South, then, is paranoia.

It is customary in Arkansas, as in Harlem where so many southern blacks live, for the "culud folks" to carve each other up on Friday and Saturday nights. Friday and Saturdays are economically dictated dates. One has money for booze without the necessity of working the next day. Custom and social psychosis become one. It is customary for the police not to intervene. As in the British colonies, anything that does not affect the white man is looked on as a native rite.

That killings can be thought normal is symptomatic of the demoralization of a collapsing culture. Yet it is obvious to conservative Southerners that "our" culture is not working. We have all these beatniks and hippies and divorcees and alcoholics and queers and communists and—the idea shocks—people who do not go to church. "We" are causing a war, while their boys are the ones with the guts to go fight it.

Historically, tory cultures give way to liberal ones, but the collapse of the tory South is happening at precisely the time when corporate liberalism cannot even win youth by osmosis or Vietnamese by force. How much less chance it has in the South, which has at least memories of a viable culture before hospitality was a shared slug of bourbon and religion became the ranting of fools.

There is much distress when a culture falls apart, but there is no going back. The appropriate quote, perhaps, is one from *No Exit*: "Well, let's get on with it."



Morning Fog

The dirt gray fog sat on the coast,
A leaking bag of broken sun,
Spreading plump all the way to town,
As though it would not budge, but
Browning with the steady stain of sun
Like something spilling in a paper sack,
Draining from inside—shattered,
Whatever it was, but broken loose.
I could hear the news now, louder
Than my thoughts in the car.

—ALAN CASTY



ETCHING: THE FORTUNE TELLERS

BERK CHAPPELL

A GATHERING OF

The views of the writers of editorials for American newspapers are available to any who are willing to read. But the feelings of these men about what they write are seldom known by any other than their families or journalistic colleagues.

When the National Conference of Editorial Writers met in Nashville in October, both the views and feel-

ings of these editors about riots in the cities were on display.

Sig Gissler, editorial writer for the Milwaukee Journal, wrote the attached for the Masthead, quarterly publication of the National Conference of Editorial Writers. We reprint this from their winter issue by permission.

By SIG GISSLER

Outwardly, America's editorial writers arrived at the Nashville conference bearing no scars of the urban riots of 1967. Some had plunged as valorous observers into convulsed ghettos, heard the ricochet of sniper bullets, saw the flash of fire-bombs and perhaps ripped the knee out of a good pair of trousers. But casualties—the dead, maimed and homeless—were drawn chiefly from the less exalted.

Still, except for several southern brethren possibly more amused than horrified by racial tumult among "northern hypocrites," the editorialists carried wounds of a sort—inwardly, psychologically. For many, bewilderment and pessimism had jarringly dislodged pontification and confidence in the inevitability of progress. For many, stately assertions about the "great American dream" would never again roll so easily through their typewriters.

It was, in short, a gathering of the shellshocked.

I observed the mental bruises not only during cocktail party conversation but also as a member of a special critique group examining riot-related editorials and, later, as part of the audience listening to a panel discussion by editors from violence-racked cities. Again and again, two levels of thought emerged.

On one level, there were the things that editorial writers were saying in print—comments that have become almost the clichés of civic catastrophe. Law

THE SHELLSHOCKED



and order, they insisted, must prevail, by threat of superior force if possible, by use of club, bayonet and machine gun if necessary. Concurrently, the dehumanizing conditions that can both spark and fuel rioting must be attacked with utmost urgency and imagination. Some differed as to how much the riots were related to civil rights and how much they were simply an expression of hoodlumism. But few denied that the black ghetto is America's leading manufacturer of wrath.

On the other level, there were the questions editorial writers were asking one another: Are we deluding ourselves about being able to liquidate with adequate haste the dreadful consequences of 300 years of slavery and 100 years of subsequent neglect? Are we indeed faced with a "lost generation," a large mass of Negroes so beyond salvation that we can only hope to "keep the lid on" while we concentrate on Negro children and build desperately for the future? Has perpetual rage become such a fact of city life that it is now nearly impossible to accelerate social programs without giving the distinct impression that "violence will be rewarded"?

The panel discussion eloquently exemplified the soul-searching of shaken men. The participants—James Bassett, editorial pages director, *Los Angeles Times*; James Clendinen, editor, *Tampa (Fla.) Tribune*; Paul Ringler, associate editor, *Milwaukee Journal*; Wilbur Elston, associate editor, *Detroit News*; Robert Smith, executive editor, *Minneapolis Star*; and Calvin Mayne, associate editor, *Rochester (N.Y.) Times-Union*—groped mightily. In sum, they offered a contrary mixture of cautious hope and growing fear, a few guidelines for editorial conduct and no simple solutions:

BEWARE OF GENERALIZATIONS. Even ghetto Negroes are not homogeneous; they compose a variety of subcultures that white readers—and white editors—must come to understand. Further, despite surface similarities, the elements of a riot in one city do not match neatly those in another. Housing may be the central issue in Milwaukee while "police brutality" may top the list in Detroit. And even the complaints can mislead. Bassett explained that "brutality" can be on the tip of a tongue as well as the end of a nightstick, as when a policeman patronizingly calls a Negro woman by her first name.

HOPE CAN BE BOTH FRIEND AND FOE. A growing sense of hope among Negroes is necessary to blunt the spread of urban fury, yet as expectations rise, so does the Negro anger at broken promises. Mayne observed that oppressed people do not revolt until they taste freedom, hunger for a fuller share and are denied. "Cities which have made considerable progress, relatively, on solving problems of the Negro poor may actually be more susceptible to rioting," he said. Bassett seemed to agree, noting that disappointment can "flare into destructive anger" when a Negro finds he is no better off than he was "at the outset of an oversold program." Smith warned that remedial programs could backfire badly if "we simply build a nice new shiny ghetto to replace the old one."

POLICE ACTION CAN BE TRICKY. When violence explodes, force must be applied with great care—and a little prayer. Elston and others indicated that under-reaction of authorities, as in Detroit, can be as dangerous as over-reaction, as in Newark. Rochester, Minneapolis and Milwaukee were able to contain violence through a combination of good luck and

the quick, well organized application of superior force. Tampa employed a "white hat patrol," young Negroes sent out by the sheriff to calm potential troublemakers, Clendinen reported. But he cautioned against making too much of the experiment because eventually the "white hats" would be looked upon as "Uncle Toms and police informers." He described the patrol as a successful "emergency measure" with little worth as a "permanent institution."

EDITORIALS LIMITED, BUT USEFUL WEAPONS. They are not likely to be read by ghetto dwellers and, as Clendinen commented, "You can't snuff out a firebomb with a blast of editorial indignation." But panelists agreed that calm, reasonable editorials must continue to spotlight problems. "Our mission," Bassett declared, "is keeping the Establishment's feet to the fire, heating up that sense of urgency without which we will slip back into the same dangerous apathy that preceded Watts—and which will threaten us all during the next cold winter lull." Panelists also stressed the vital importance of comprehensive news coverage. "As for the *Milwaukee Journal*," Ringler said, "we will continue to tell the story as

accurately and completely and responsibly as we can. We have spent 85 years establishing the paper as the one place where readers can find out what is going on in the community, and we aren't about to destroy this reader confidence for anyone."

The panelists left few comforting thoughts for the future. Often heard was the plea for better communication between the races, between, as Bassett phrased it, "the oblivious Haves and the bitter Have-Nots." Yet, a show of hands in the audience revealed that while many papers have Negro reporters, none had a Negro editorial writer.

Looking back on the scorched earth of Detroit, Elston said: "The question now is whether Detroit and other U.S. cities can digest their Negro minorities fast enough to prevent more outbreaks of violence or whether they will get so bogged down in plans to preserve law and order that civil rights progress will cease. My own concern is that the new white backlash will require public officials to pay so much attention to riot control plans that progress will be too slow to satisfy even moderate Negro leaders. I'm not optimistic."

He was not alone.

PHOTOGRAPH

AL CLAYTON



TOM COLEMAN IN

ETCHING: AK SAR BEN

23½x17½



NEBRASKA

TOM COLEMAN



By DENNIS AKIN

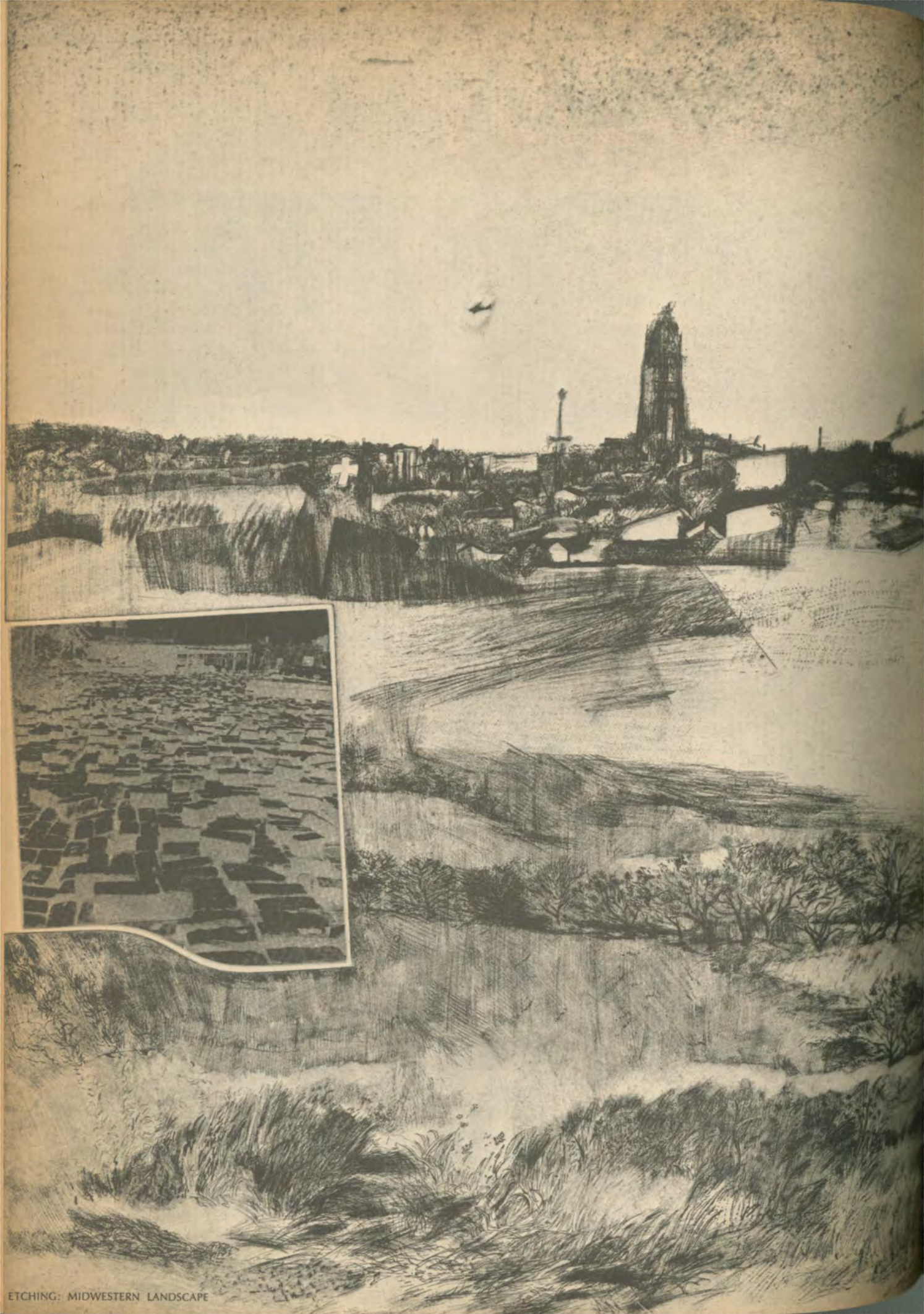
The "golden age" of the modern renaissance in the graphic arts is surely under way now, for some of the most remarkable work in the whole of visual expression is being achieved by contemporary printmakers.

The number of young artists who have chosen to develop their images in the graphic processes is growing, and some who are responsible for printmaking's vitality are James Burke (in the south), Don Cortese and Peter Milton (in the east), Berk Chappell (in the west), and Warrington Colescott, David Driesbach, R. H. Hayes, Sharon Kay Behrends, and Tom Coleman (in the midwest).

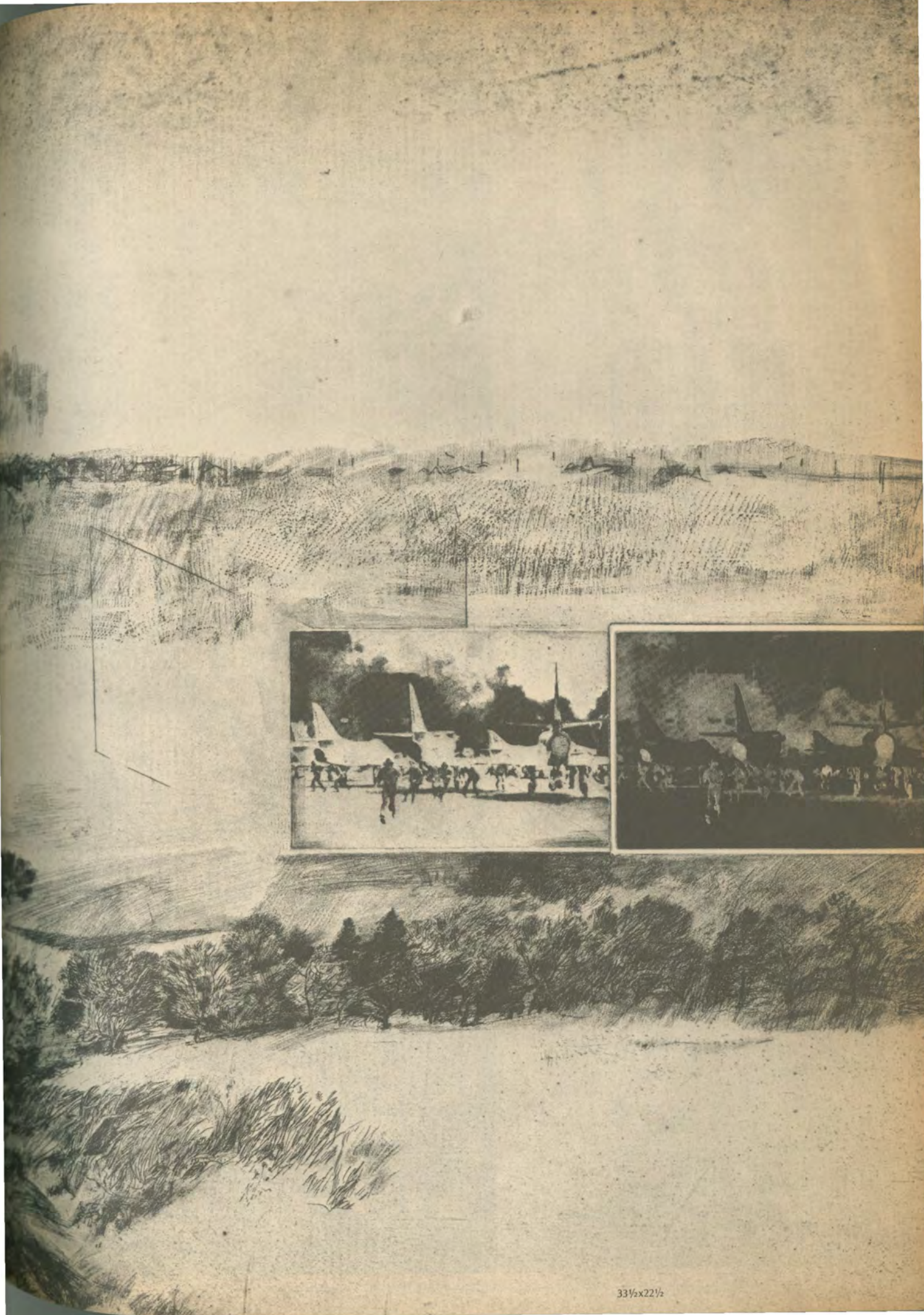
Coleman, particularly, can be considered a premier artist in any listing of important printmakers on the basis of his esthetic maturity. His artistic development describes in classical manner how the modern tradition, both institutionally and conceptually, is continued.

This manner is accomplished through the professor-student relationship, which is the modern equivalent for the master-apprentice system of earlier times; it is easily discerned in many art departments on campuses across the country. Indeed, the graphic arts, or printmaking, which is fundamentally the processes of etching, engraving, woodcuts, linoleum cuts, serigraphy (silk-screen), and lithography, has been nurtured at the university and college.

There are two essential reasons for this: the university has become the lodging for the artist who teaches in order to support himself and his family; and universities, responding to the competition that exists for students in all academic areas—even art—have



ETCHING: MIDWESTERN LANDSCAPE



raised budget allotments so that expensive equipment, such as etching presses, can be purchased. The artist ordinarily could not afford to get this equipment for himself, and in off-hours the artist can use it for his own work.

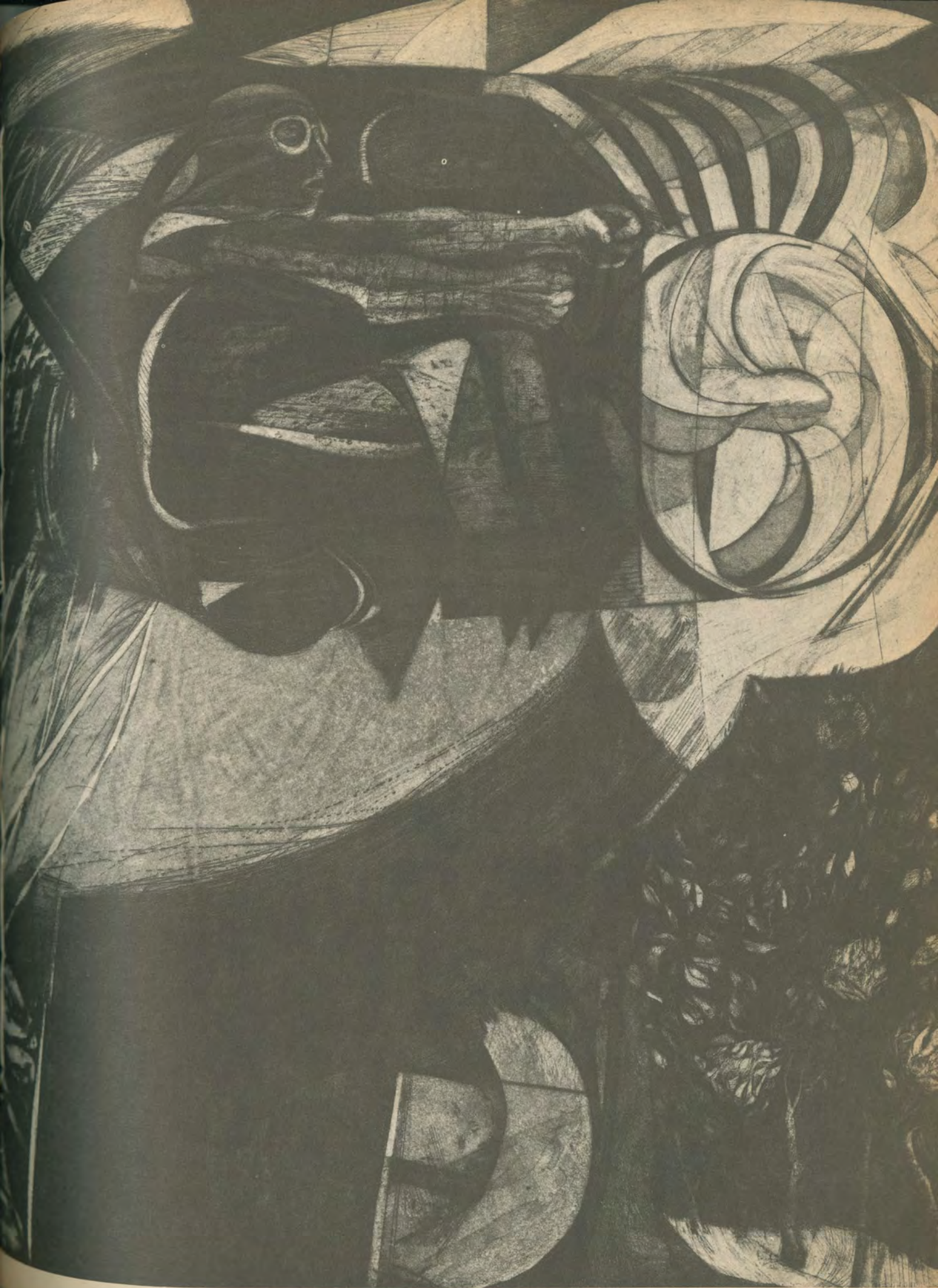
A notable and important impact on the graphic arts has occurred at the University of Iowa, particularly through the influence of a dynamic printmaker, Mauricio Lasansky. The excellence of Lasansky's work, plus the charismatic quality of the man, attracted many young artists of the 40's and 50's to his graduate program at Iowa, and out of it came printmakers destined for other universities and colleges where they would begin the development of their own departments.

Two artists who personify that recurring process are Wendell Black at the University of Colorado, and John Talleur at the University of Kansas. Both are graduates of Iowa, and each went to other universities to develop printmaking programs. Black's accomplishments are extraordinary, and Talleur's no less. In 1956 Talleur found one small etching press in an inadequate room at the end of a hall, and from that meager beginning has developed his printmaking program to a level which attracts outstanding graphic students from the midwest. It was Talleur's program in printmaking at Kansas out of which came Tom Coleman, and he in turn is continuing this process at the University of Nebraska.

Though Lasansky, Talleur, and Coleman are faced with the problems of the professor-program developer, there is a more crucial relationship seen in their *oeuvre*: a constant concern with the rather specific image of man in situations where he is affected by and is affecting other men. But, as artists must, Coleman has chosen a variation which suits his own temperament: he has a constant delight in the curious manner of man moving through a world that is transformed by his presence.



ETCHING: CROPDUSTER



OR Hardy



ETCHING: POST CARD

showing up and in some
down a pain in working
dear

Ms Sophie

St McGuire

CORRESPONDENCE

Moore's bit

Morgan from

POST CARD

ADDRESS & A Z O

HERE

STAMP

PLACE

A Z O

24/5/78



STILL LIFE

PHOTOGRAPH BY ENGRAVING AND INTAGLIO: LITO

Though the delight is tempered by Coleman's understanding that the gonfalon of man's spirit is tattered, with compassion stitched on one side and violence on the other: the banner of the bittersweet substance of man.

Coleman, then, is caught up in the poignant and forever modern dilemma of man living in a world whose meaning is largely perceived through the insights derived from paradox. He exposes these dilemmas, objectifying them, so that we might reflect upon what the constant consequences of men are.

Thus, in the etching "Cropduster," we see man hurtling through space, hoping to find there a special freedom, yet discovering that he is victim rather than master. Another variation upon this theme is seen in his recent "Midwestern Landscape": what had been created by man as a haven is found to be a kind of hell. This landscape, as serene as Rembrandt's "Goldweigher's Field," is interrupted by the jarring intrusion of a SAC scramble. And in "UFO" are seen the nightmare conjurings of men and women when confronted with the unknown of outer space. The fantastic shapes, always human and therefore inviting another sort of hell, whirl and vibrate into a black and endless habitat.

Coleman is typical of the second generation printmakers who are sustaining the "golden age" in that he is capable of an immensely rich handling of media, and we are missing a large portion of the impact of his work unless we examine closely the way he achieves his images. In most instances he chooses to exert what might be called a loose control over the processes and tools that he uses. This is to say that he has disciplined himself to a point where he understands the potential of them enough to take advantage of accidents that may occur in the biting of a plate, for example, or the correcting of a

line. So that the tools and processes which are used most effectively by Coleman will blend their usual qualities with the fortuitous. A brief description of the basic instruments and procedures used by printmakers will let us respond to Coleman's work on this second level of content.

The burin is an engraving tool used to plow directly into the metal plate upon which goes the artist's images. (The metal is most often copper or zinc, though Coleman sometimes uses magnesium, as in "Midwestern Landscape.") The engraved line is usually seen as a crisp, while fairly broad line, when it is printed on paper. The etching "Ak Sar Ben" uses the engraved line in the plant forms.



ENGRAVING

The *etching needle* is used to draw through an acid resistant substance called "ground," made largely of asphaltum, exposing the metal. The plate is then submerged in a bath of diluted acid, either hydrochloric or nitric acid depending on the metal of the plate, which causes the line to be eaten into the metal. It is usually seen as a very flexible and delicate line. The etched line is beautifully used in the trees of "Midwestern Landscape."



ETCHED LINE

The material *softground* results when asphaltum is mixed with grease to keep it from hardening and is spread on the plate. Varieties of textures can be pressed into it, and the pressure forces the texture to the metal, exposing it. The plate is then submerged into an acid bath which eats the textural pattern into the plate. An effective use of *softground* is seen in "Postcard." *Aquatint* is the ef-



SOFTGROUND

motive

fect caused by acid eating into the plate around particles of resin dust, and when printed on paper is seen to be an even, gray area, granular in appearance. It can be controlled by a scraper, which can remove it or lighten it, or by blocking out portions of it with varnish before it gets to the acid bath. The subtle use of aquatint is seen in "Cropduster."



AQUATINT

Coleman, however, uses some processes which were unavailable or simply underdeveloped by earlier printmakers: photo-electric engraving is used to sensitize a drawing or collage to the metal. (This process was also used effectively by Rouault.) The result is then modified by directly working on the plate with burin, needle, or scraper. Thus, in this process, there is a combination of the photographic with the autographic, as in "UFO."



PHOTOELECTRIC ENGRAVING

Too, though there are growing numbers of artists doing this, Coleman cuts the plate into a variety of shapes which are refitted to compose the etching. This results in the use of the printing paper as a space-factor, enriching the two-dimensional arrangement, and bringing a modest sculptured quality to the etching as the paper projects in bas-relief fashion, as in "Midwestern Landscape."



BAS-RELIEF

"
... out of the
library and
into American
culture ..."

However, it is the artist's control of media and his ultimate expression of content beyond just media manipulation that determines the strength of the artist. Coleman's expressive statement is that of a man familiar with the past, but deeply committed to man and his manners now. His passionate contemporaneity causes him to choose his subjects largely from direct, and consequently local situations, as his "Midwestern Landscape," and "Ak Sar Ben," demonstrate. It's seen, then, that his genius lies in his ability to use the mundane to enlighten and enrich, while remaining apart from that portion of the American scene that might pulverize his visual poems into a paraphrase. Finally, Coleman's work is profoundly affecting in that its fundamental character is an extension of a really modern man who works best in the midwest, keeping free from a bravado that is "as American as cherry pie."

The last time I saw Tom Coleman was at a foreign film at the theater on the Wichita University campus and our meeting was of no consequence other than we had not seen each other since we had been in school together. What is *important* to me is the memory of Tom sitting in the Kansas University Art Museum Library eating carrot sticks. The memory is indelible: this was the *right* thing to do in an art library. Now, Tom has stepped out of the library and into American culture, and the sound he makes eating from his esthetic bag of carrot sticks has just the right crunch.

SISTER LUCE

*Sister Luce is crazy if she only is an aunt.
I see her bleached eyes and they stare terrible
and beyond all desire for explanation
and she no longer puts her hand on my head
which it took to make me realize
the difference between distaste and horror.
Now when she lies down she folds her hands
as she has seen it done in hundreds of caskets
and pretends she is a corpse
and is angry with me that it isn't so.
I am not even permitted to sympathize
but I am permitted to give thanks that
she no longer puts her hands on my head
and this freedom is as precious as any other, I suppose.*

—NEAL ELLIS

TO AN UNKNOWN BIRD IN GUYANA

This over-sized canary
perched imperiously on my fence
puffs out his yellow chest
a veritable Master Sergeant of a bird
with striped helmet on his head
and wings like a khaki tunic.
He snaps out his three syllable command:
Nitch-he-voe
a strange native locution
but something obviously defiant and provocative
like:
Itch my toe!

But all that pride is obsolete.
We Invaders have his number
and can dispose of him anytime at our pleasure
by poisoning his mess.
Ask him where the hosts of proud robins are
in the lands we conquered last.

—ROBERT L. TYLER

Schizophrenia in Iowa



BY STEPHEN SHAPIRO

ETCHING: FLIGHT

DON CORTESE

The Second Biennial Conference on Modern Letters at the University of Iowa, organized by Robert Sayre around the theme of "The New Grotesque," turned out to be a very significant "happening," a kind of symbolic action that illuminated the situation of American intellectuals in surprising ways. The first speaker, Werner Berthoff told us that the novel was in trouble, and, like his master, Henry James, proceeded to tell us how thin American culture is.

We have all heard these tunes too many times. Berthoff, like everyone else at this conference who assumed traditional stances and proposed to con-

duct literary business as usual, found himself surrounded by radicals. This Conference was dominated by an awareness that a few days earlier, thousands of students at the University of Wisconsin had protested against the presence of napalm salesmen on their campus, that all over the country students were participating in draft resistance, that as our discussions came to a climax, long lines of people were converging on the Pentagon to confront the war-makers.

In such a charged atmosphere, it was almost impossible to discuss the conventions of realistic or post-realistic literature. And although Robert Cree-

ley, Stanley Elkin, Robert Kelly, and Jakov Lind read from their works, it was difficult to relish the play of art during those days, October 19-21. As Carl Oglesby remarked: "Vietnam is having its revenge. Our best things have been poisoned by the war."

The major fact about this Conference was that it forced American intellectuals raised in the apolitical atmosphere of the 1950s to grapple with the problems of literature and politics, thus clearly signaling a new direction in the literary situation of our time. We were all discovering or rediscovering the power of history to change our lives, to deflect interest from business as usual to the problem of the intellectuals' responsibility to confront a corrupt society.

Writers and professors who would prefer to dwell in a timeless world of words, in a land of universal literary categories, were discovering that we are of our own time; that we cannot escape the moral pressure being generated now against police violence in America and anti-Communist aggression abroad. What Sartre discovered in the Resistance Movement during World War II, we are discovering now—one must commit oneself to the present. The growing confidence of radical criticism of our society, the growing guilt of the liberals, the sense that things are changing—these were the striking features of the Conference.

The San Francisco Mime Troupe gave a brilliant performance of their adaption of Goldoni's *L'Amant Militaire* on Thursday and Friday evenings, making the audience see that play about the military and financial rape of Italy by Spain as a mirror of our own activities in Vietnam. For the Mime Troupe, art is what Sartre called a burning mirror. It confronts its audience with an image of itself in order to change the consciousness of the audience. To point the moral of the play, Ronnie Davis took off his mask and said to us what he said at the University of Wisconsin: "This is your society: change it. Or, if you can't change it, destroy it."

Davis and his group originated and still reflect some of the best values of the San Francisco scene. If something has to be done, do it. You. By yourself. Davis is an exemplar and he is conscious of leading an exemplary life. He goes to jail as an exemplar, challenges our values as someone who lives by his own. And he made his message outrageously clear in his "lecture" on realism.

The Mime Troupe, of course, has revived the traditions of *Commedia Dell'Arte*. Davis suggested that the traditions of realism are now unusable because contemporary reality is so grotesque that only a burlesque or surreal style is adequate to handle it. How can you satirize LBJ? *He is already a satire*. Every word the man speaks is self-parody. The war on poverty is the funniest show going. What can you do to Johnson but quote Johnson? What can you say to ex-president Eisenhower's evaluation of the U-2 incident, "Perhaps we should not have lied"?

Davis also argued that realism simply presents an audience with an experience of something grim without challenging the assumptions underlying the experience. That is, realism can leave an audience feeling very satisfied with itself because it has vicariously experienced the lives of unfortunate people. It now "understands." Davis' theater is not so comfortable. It is analytical, moral, and anti-aesthetic. It keeps breaking its frame to tell us: "Get off your ass and help stop this bloody juggernaut."

Standing inside the machine—the University of Iowa is part of the Establishment machine, all universities are part of the military-industrial machine—Davis said, "Separate yourself from the machine. Drop out. Stop helping the wheels turn." He poured scorn on "radicals in residence," on people Irving Howe calls "guerillas with tenure." He attacked both the ownership of property and Establishment intellectual's obsession with his intellectual property, his "field," his "book." His book is probably published by a company owned by another company that owns us all.

Davis is a revolutionary, an anarchist, and in some ways a very humble man. (Please remember that anarchists do not oppose order—they oppose domination, rule.) He does not say "Do my thing!" He says, "Do your thing." But *first* you have to know what you are doing. Who is using you and what you are doing. Is the CIA using you? What are you selling and who is paying you to sell it? Ronnie Davis is not for sale. His company is in debt from posting bond after getting arrested—for telling the truth. The Mime Troupe is squarely in the great tradition of Holy Fools.

Paul Krassner's "Eulogy to Lenny Bruce" told us more about the price of telling the truth in this country. Bruce was a genius. He could conjure up worlds almost instantaneously. The power of imagination is the power to restructure the world of fact; Bruce had that power. He could see, and make us see, the Pope as a dope addict—and turn that image into a source of insight. He became obsessed with obscenity laws after the machinery of the courts began to grind the absurdity and hypocrisy of our legal system into his bones. He offered us his agony and his wit. He did what all great comedy does, deflating the pretentious and the powerful by viewing them from the perspective of the animal functions. Sex and Shit are the great equalizers.

Krassner, like Davis, stood inside the machine, and with a curious impunity, said all the words that Bruce went to jail for saying. Perhaps Krassner's best story was the now-legendary exploit of the boy who took two buckets of shit into his local draft board and dumped them into the files. The first "shit-in." Krassner's talent is like that of Bruce in a way: he made us see the whole scene as a small drama; the boy marching confidently into the building; the



DON CORTESE

ETCHING: WILD DOGS

intimidated officials giving him directions; the climax. Hearing this story and looking around at the very institutional surroundings, remembering the sophisticated, esoteric sublanguage spoken by Professor Richard Poirier (another James scholar) in the lecture preceding Krassner's, one began to wonder whether Krassner could possibly be real.

Radicals were standing up in places reserved for "responsible" specialists and questioning the audience's right to exist, and the audience was applauding. The audience was a liberal audience, both in and against the system. They were moderates, but they were beginning to realize that the liberal's position was being eroded under their feet. They were not yet changing their lives, but they were willing to applaud people who told them to change. And they were not able to defend themselves against criticism directed against their life styles, against their conception of life as private reality.

Robert Creeley has a very moving personal style, but he is sometimes incoherent, and he perfectly embodied the divided mind of the Conference. He

spoke against the abominations of the war and the lies emanating from Washington and read some statements by William Burroughs. But Creeley really wanted to tell us about the power of the literary imagination. So he pointed at some empty chairs and said, "There are people in the chairs." He could make us see people in those chairs. There is no question that he is right when he says that writing creates reality, that books are things, that "language can create a place to be." Literature traditionally affirms the position that the imagination is the true man, that you can live in your own head. The study of literature in our universities continues to promote the notion that art is autonomous and nonreferential.

The question, however, is not whether we can live a private reality, but whether, given the historical situation we find ourselves in, we *should*. (It was disappointing that Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* and Mann's *Doktor Faustus* were not discussed.) I do not question the value of art, nor did Carl Oglesby when he asked, "When the house is burning down, does the poet have the right to finish the poem?" The

problem is one of the morality of play in a time of great social stress. Nobody was suggesting that art must cease until there is peace or that socialist realism is the one true artform, but there was a sense that a man who feels horrified at the present situation and who then sits down and writes a poem about it or reads a poem about it, and then writes or reads another poem, and then another one, is locked into a world of words, fails to complete a process that leads from thought to action, public action, commitment.

The problem is a failure of imagination. We are now, after all, very sophisticated about epistemological problems, about reality as words, about the symbolic representation or construction of reality. We are free to decide that President Johnson exists in our imagination and only there (as Creeley insisted), or we are free to recognize that we exist in President Johnson's imagination, that we inhabit the world he makes more than he inhabits the world we make out of words. We are free to choose irrelevance.

What are we going to allow to be read for us? That is the central question. Our own consciousness is real, our friends are real, our family is real. But are the black people in the ghettos real? Are the Vietnamese children real?



The Greek word "idiot" means private citizen. Artists, professors, and students who consider art the highest human category are moral idiots. We do not exist to serve books—books are made to serve us. Radicals are now bringing relentless moral pressure to bear on the liberal's attempt to dwell in a private reality. Much of that pressure is being generated on the campuses by SDS and radical Christian groups. When a religious man, a great artist, or a political radical looks at the world, he sees more than his own needs and satisfactions, he sees the needs of other men, men outside his class or nation. That kind of seeing leads to action in their behalf. That kind of seeing constitutes moral imagination—something our leaders sadly lack, choosing to profiteer instead on manipulated moral indignation at imagined situations in the communist countries. Moral imagination, which affirms that mankind is one body, destroys the official American worldview in an instant.

In one seminar, a professor was trying to get Jakov Lind to analyze the modes of his imagination or to comment on the forms of his stories. Lind responded with an eloquent plea for us to concern ourselves with the things that really matter: the avoidance of atomic war; the necessity to recognize the cannibalism that has made life in our century hellish; the necessity to love. An Austrian Jew who escaped from the Nazis in 1938, Lind now lives in London. He has written a cycle of three books about the war and its effects on postwar consciousness: *Soul of Wood*, *Landscape in Concrete*, *Ergo*. They are harrowing books.

Lind is a gentle man with a haunted imagination. He did not want to talk about his craft. He did not worry about being considered "anti-literary." "Look," he said, "I am a moralist." There are more important things to talk about than form. Sol Yurick, the author of *Fertig*, *The Warriors*, and *The Bag* is another author who had important things to talk about—how to expose and change the American Establishment.

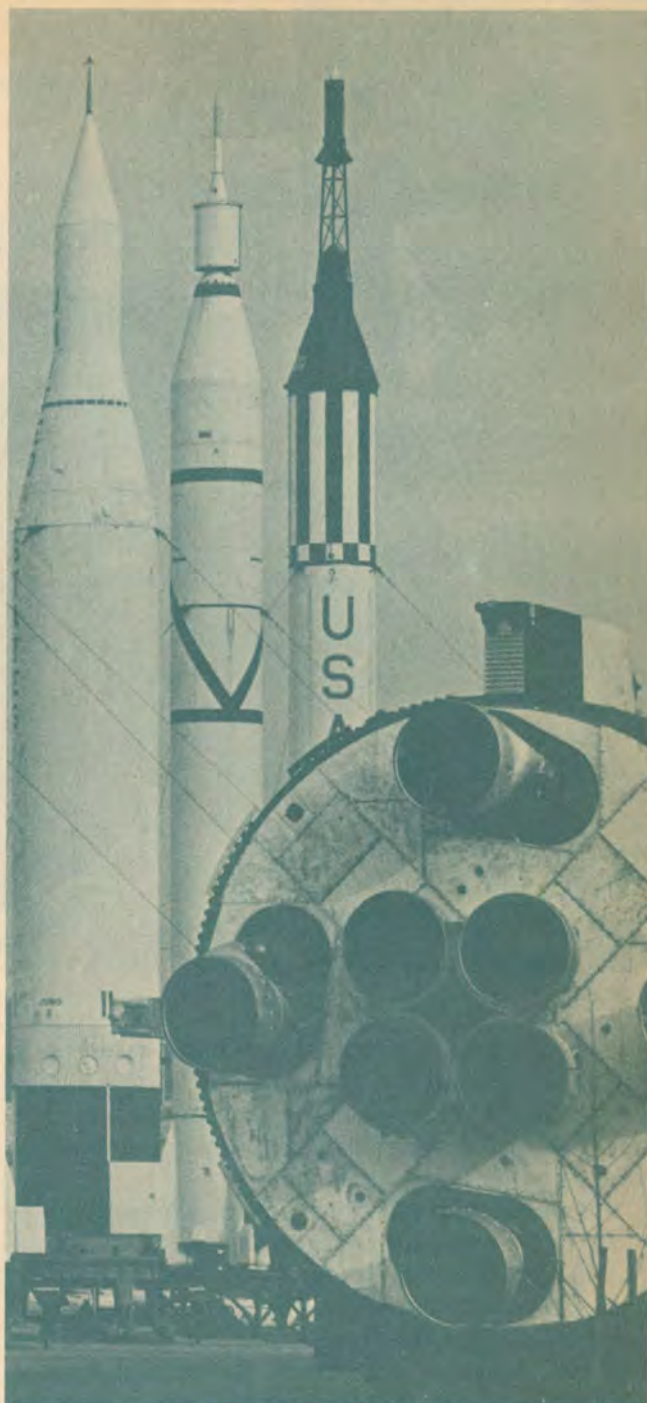
Carl Oglesby, one of the necessary social critics in America, gave the final lecture. It was called "The Deserters—the Contemporary Defeat of Fiction." Oglesby is a man who looks like Christ Crucified. He would like to retreat from politics and write songs. But he cannot. He would easily be able to make it in The System. But he chooses not to. He is committed to making a revolution in America. His strategy in this essay was to use Camus and Joseph Heller as examples of artists who fail to give meaning to history. Literature is a form of history: novels imply worlds. Heller and Camus imply that the world is unchangeable; therefore they are reprieved; they may desert, escape into a private reality, go to a neutral Sweden or the metaphysical elegance of Sisyphus' labors.

I think that Oglesby simplified and distorted Camus' position somewhat; yet it is undeniable that Camus considered his private life as his real life and history as a kind of outrageous intrusion into his self-communion. But Oglesby was unconsciously quoting Camus when he asserted that silence was no longer an alternative; everyone is a partisan; silence supports the Status Quo in active ways. Oglesby was certainly right to point out that most people today join Yossarian in a metaphorical escape to a Sweden which is everywhere: in the Haight-Ashbury, in abstract art, in Marshall McLuhan, in Black Humor. History is only absurd if men let it be absurd. To exist in history is not a category for an intellectual to ponder, but a fact and a moral imperative.

To be a revolutionary in America is to be in a unique situation. Traditionally, revolutionaries speak for and identify with an oppressed majority. In America, revolutionaries must oppose a middle-class culture that essentially oppresses *itself* in the act of repressing American minorities and engaging in counter-revolution abroad. The task of the American revolutionary is to persuade his fellow Americans that affluent alienation is not a private disease but a social problem; to persuade them that corporate liberal society does not *accidentally* produce Vietnams; it makes such wars inevitable; to persuade them that the apparently utopian vision of a community of liberated individuals can become a reality. Carl Oglesby incarnates revolutionary idealism with great sophistication and exemplary passion. As one liberal professor admiringly, if reluctantly, admitted, "If Carl Oglesby were running for office, I would vote for him." A student asked, "And what will you do when Carl Oglesby goes to jail?" In our free society, FBI agents are as common as dogs.

Professor Robert Scholes of the University of Iowa offered a very humorous summation of the Conference by parodying the summation of a conference. He concluded nothing, answered every question he asked with another question. This too was a kind of symbolic act. Scholes is an excellent critic, and stoutly maintains that his job is to teach reading and writing. He refuses to be an exemplar. He is a professional scholar, not a politician. Therefore all he can do by way of drawing conclusions and taking positions is to humorously indicate the complexity of the problems and to suggest that perhaps it is impossible to conclude anything. Can we rest in ambiguity?

How do we judge the German professors who conducted business as usual while Hitler murdered millions of people? A liberal responds by saying it is not yet *that* time. We can still live in a private reality without suffering irredeemable guilt. What time is it? Carl Oglesby points to the big clock on the Pentagon; liberals look at their wristwatches. What time is it? Again, one feels a



curious kind of unreality. In Iowa City everything seemed normal: the beer tasted right; the leaves were burning gold and red in the sunlight; the girls were pretty. Yet in Oakland and in Washington heads were being broken by policemen; bayonets were drawn. What time is it? It is a question of imagination. What shall we allow to be real?

Part of the drama enacted at the Iowa Conference was a submerged conflict between two concepts of education. Radicals insist that education be the education of the whole man; knowledge, personality, and politics should be fused into a life style. A radical's best argument is always the ethical appeal of his own life. (This is, of course, true of the saint, too.) The liberal or the defender of the Establishment has



PHOTOGRAPH

AL CLAYTON

already accepted a notion of education based upon specialization and the fragmentation of the human personality. A professor of ethics or political science need not *do* anything or *be* anybody in particular as long as he performs his function.

But men are not functions. Salvation means wholeness. The struggle for an integrated, relevant education is a struggle with desperately important political and spiritual consequences. The value of the individual human life is inseparably wedded to the notion that one man can understand, judge, and help to change his world. If we accept the notion that the best education is the education that most efficiently gears a person to service the machine of the State, we doom ourselves to totalitarian rule. In order to remain individuals, in order to sustain the idea of the individual human life as *the* source of value, every individual must take responsibility for the whole world. To say, "I don't care about the Vietnamese or the Negroes" is to condemn yourself.

One of the great barriers to political commitment in this country is the typical American illusion about the inevitable dirtiness of politics and the moral superiority of withdrawal. Millions of Americans refuse to act because they are waiting for innocent alternatives. The Vietcong

use terror; the Black militants use terror; the Resistance is talking about using violence—therefore, as Carl Oglesby might say, "pure" Americans feel justified in washing their hands and deserting. "One side is as bad as the other." But one can only compare similar things. The military power of the State used to enslave people is not the same as the essentially sacrificial violence used by helpless people to free themselves.

The question is not how violence can ever be justified, but how can anyone justify inactivity in the face of the frozen but immensely volatile violence that structures and supports the policies of our government? "What violence?" you may say as you look around you at your comfortable and secure room. Who could even dream of revolution? Is the blood of others ever real? Once again, it is a problem of moral imagination. Radicals do not want to argue about whether the failures of the United States are worse than the failures of the Soviet Union. A radical is concerned only with the gap between his recognition of a rotten reality and his vision of an achievable possibility. The world is and is not made of words. Words can sustain one's faith in the Welfare-Warfare state or persuade one to oppose it. But the world can be changed only if words drive men to participate in political organization and action.

NINE NATIVE SCENES

I

In Alaska, a Chilkat Indian, his stomach
Rumbling, explains his native craft
To three white Brownies and a professional publicist,
Who is out of sight, bored stiff, and too cold to smoke.

II

Last night on Belle Isle, a girl of sixteen,
A runaway, placed her cheeks against an old oak tree
Whose roots lay out twisted, but solid in any
Weather, and spoke in colors of her hungry soul.

III

In Oakland, in front of the bus depot,
A man in a long brown gown stands behind
A placard named "Alma Come Back." His toes appear
As neat red acorns, all in a row.

IV

Opposite the Northland Nursing Home, a man and wife,
Body to body, describe whole dreams.
Once, a flashing red light woke them, momentarily.
The snow, bone white, continues everywhere.

V

In Hartford, a teacher stays in a small room
With black cats and strange plants that grow
Large in gray seasons. His peers wonder why.
Next year his superiors will not ask him back.

VI

From a motor hotel in St. Paul: "We stayed
Here last night. Took the packers till four a.m.
To finish. Ugh! Pat's baby boy was born dead
At four-thirty. She is *awfully* bad. Love, Corky."

VII

In Des Moines, native ladies are gathered round
A room on laid-out comic strips and recipes
From the *Register* and *Tribune*. Busy as bees, they
Learn the art of feeling wet naked plaster.

VIII

In Detroit, inside the bleak Grecian Gardens,
A black-eyed singer with ivory knees wiggles
Her chunky fingers for Sobel, the artist who suffers
One wish: a dish of pressed duck to escape the routine.

IX

Below my den, workmen chained to a manic saw
Attack the dying elm. But that's the way
On this cheap street: you perform in the raw
Circle of things, or lose.

—GARY GILDNER



DRYPOINT: THE GREAT SOCIETY: ART AND EDUCATION



Mr. Slavitt's essay is part of the distinguished new collection of views of the film experience, *Man and the Movies*, edited by W. R. Robinson and published by LSU Press (371 pp., \$7.95).

Other contributors to the volume include Leslie Fiedler, Nathan Scott, R. V. Cassill, and a dozen others; we especially recommend poet Fred Chappell's "26 Propositions About Skin Flicks," one of the most helpful assessments of the anti-erotic elements of popular culture we've see.—EDS.

CRITICS AND CRITICISM

By DAVID SLAVITT

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My daddy," says the first little first-grade kid, "is a dentist."

"Very good, Harvey," says the teacher. "And you, Edna? What does your daddy do?"

"My daddy is a grocer."

"Very good. And Jimmy, what does your daddy do?"

"My daddy plays the piano in a warehouse."

Consternation! Shock! Fury! And off to the principal's office, where little Jimmy is asked to explain this bizarre tastelessness, and, the joke goes, he does explain, saying that actually his father reviews movies for *Time*. But he didn't want to tell that to the class because he was ashamed of it.

And the funniest part of it all is that little Jimmy is right. It isn't respectable. I could never even bring

myself to say, with a straight face, that I was a "film critic," but used to admit to being a "flicker picker," which had about the right ring to it—glib and brassy—and was just puzzling enough so that by the time people had figured out what the hell I was talking about, the shock of it had worn off a little. It wasn't *Time*, but *Newsweek*, the main difference being that *Newsweek* pays a little less.

It was a weird life. I used to see six or eight movies a week in a good week. In a bad week it could go to fourteen. Once, I think it was twenty. Fantastic! And not entirely unattractive—I liked it, actually. It was fun to race around from screening room to screening room, accumulating cast-and-credit sheets and mimeographed synopses that were invariably inaccurate and seemed to have been translated, badly, from the Japanese. I got used to seeing cowboys shooting the hell out of each other at ten in the morning, while I smoked cigarettes and drank coffee from Jack-Mo's Delicatessen on West Forty-ninth Street.

I got to like the routine of absorbing all those movies and then at the end of the week squeezing my brain like a sponge to turn out the reviews. And it did get to be a routine. It even got to the point where I was playing games with myself, the way I did when I was a youngster and had a summer job stamping textbooks for the Row Peterson Company, "Property of the Board of Education of the City of New York." At Row Peterson the game was simply one of speed—to see how many of those waxy workbooks one could stamp in three minutes. (I still remember the *Through the Green Gate* workbook: Alice of the old Alice and Jerry duo, was bending over and it was a refinement of the simple race to require that the stamp be right on Alice's backside.) And with movie reviews, too, I started racing with myself. I did a standard sixty-line movie review in about twenty minutes.

I have been trying to make this as homely and as vulgar as possible, because it ought to be. It was.

There is not any such thing as film criticism, and that gaggle of reviewers, magazine and newspaper reviewers alike, were all faking it, one way or another. Or they were lucky enough to be such natural fakes that they could do it sincerely, take it seriously, have commitment. But what good is the sincerity of a natural-born fake?

The situation is simple enough. Our best criticism, by which I mean both best written and with the greatest degree of influence, is criticism of poetry. The only people who read poetry anyway are poets and critics of poetry. It is a nice, or nicely nasty coherent community. One writes about poetry with a comfortable certainty that one's audience shares at least a few assumptions about the value of art, and the aims of art. The art itself is sufficiently moribund to allow for brilliant demonstrations of its anatomy.

Movies, however, are distressingly alive. Film is the great popular medium, with an audience of incredible size, a commercial vigor which, though somewhat diminished from the halcyon pre-television days, is still staggering, and perhaps most appallingly even an artistic potentiality that realizes itself with some frequency in works of an undeniable excellence. There are more good movies in any given year than there are good plays or good novels. Reviewing films, then, or criticizing films, is like reviewing or criticizing a blizzard or a war. The critic is laughably impotent, has no influence either with the film-makers or with the film audiences, has no suitable or adequate vocabulary with which to discuss the films for his putative reader, and, perhaps worst of all, has no position on which to stand, from which to formulate a general theory of what he is trying to do or wants to say, and no way of rationalizing his intellectual career. One cannot write about *Cleopatra* and *Otto e Mezzo* in the same week, on the same page, without going a little bit schizy. So, one makes it up, one fakes it. I suppose the formula is sociology and psychology for the pop films and belle-lettrist aestheticism for the "serious" films. But it's treacherous. Laurel and Hardy, who were always condemned by the critics, are now revived. So pop comedy is "serious." But the only pop comic working now in America is Jerry Lewis, who is terrible, but not quite terrible enough to be dismissed out of hand.

Or, to go at it from another angle, consider the only recent attempt at a general theory of film to have had any currency whatever in the past five years or so. The *auteur* theory of the *Cahiers du Cinéma* people willfully ignores the dank jungles of personality and commerce in the depths of which directors must stalk their elusive quarry of quality. Blandly, they pin it on the director as if he were a poet, sitting at a desk somewhere with a nickle pencil and a dime pad, creating. But he isn't. None of them is. He's got a two-million-dollar pad, and a pencil with its own vanity, temper, ability, or lack of it. His success will depend on the script, of course, but on the budget, too. And on the cast, and even on the scheduling. No movie can be serious, can afford to take the risks that are a part of seriousness, with a budget of more than ten million dollars, no matter what *auteur* you've got setting up the shots. The genesis of the theory, however, was legitimate enough. When Manny Farber observed, back in the forties, that Howard Hawks on his crummy "B" budgets was turning out nice, grainy, tough movies, and coined the phrase "underground films" to describe Hawks's spectacular successes, working against the very grain of the industry, he made an absolutely legitimate observation . . . about Hawks's films of the forties. The *auteur* theory merely generalizes from this. A Hawks film is now a good film. A Minelli film is a

good film; Hitchcock is good. But it doesn't work. Hawks, Hitchcock, and Minelli have been awful, especially lately (*Hatari*; *The Birds* and *Marnie*; *The Sandpiper*).

But no matter. The question is not one of accuracy in the reviews but sanity on the part of the reviewer. It isn't just that very expensive movies tend to be bad, and cheap movies tend to be bad. That would be easy. But good movies tend to be bad. (Bresson is very pure, but boring. Fellini is theatrical, but often in a vulgar way. Antonioni, who is serious, is often both boring and vulgar.*) And bad movies tend to be good. (Laurel and Hardy, Busby Berkely, Bogart, Jerry Lewis, even Elvis Presley, in a slick, glycerined, unpretentious way.)

Small wonder, then, that most critics are nervous, twitchy fellows who are comfortable only in dark rooms. They manage, one way or another, to survive, but the one way is incompetence and the other is lunatic pretension.

The newspaper critics are mainly incompetent. The best of them are in New York, and the ones in New York are terrible. (Judith Crist was the only one who could pass a freshman course in expository writing in even the most obscure cow college in the country—and her paper folded.) Archer Winston knows something about film, but can't write. The important, influential critics, of course, are Bosley Crowther, for the washed, and "Kate Cameron" for the unwashed hordes. ("Kate Cameron" is a fake name, like "T.V. Dailey," who writes the "Pick of TV" column in a lot of newspapers. I forget, or have blocked out, her real name.) Mr. Crowther is a national disaster, and "Kate Cameron" is a joke. Crowther cannot write and doesn't know anything about films, but he's a nice man and tries very hard, which only makes matters worse. He is usually about two films behind everyone else, so that when *L'Avventura* came out and everyone else thought it was either good or interesting or worth something, he thought it was terrible. To make up for this he liked *Red Desert*, but by that time the tide had turned, and everyone else hated it. He detested *Dr. Strangelove*, but by the end of the year seemed to have heard that other people had liked it, and there is was at the top of his "Ten Best List." He liked *The Longest Day*, and *Cleopatra*, and . . . but he can't help it.

The other influential critics are *Time* and *Newsweek*. The foregoing is a tortured grammatical construction, because the reality is a tortured situation. Any clown whom *Time* or *Newsweek* hires for the movie desk becomes, ex officio, the second or third most influential critic in the world (Crowther is number one). This influence is partly a function of circulation and partly the result of utter corruption

* No, no, I don't mean dirty. I mean vulgar. Soap opera-ish. Extravagant. Excessive.



in the provinces, where reviewers on out-of-town papers find out what they think by reading the *Sunday New York Times*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*. So, at twenty-seven, I had not only *Newsweek's* eight million or so readers, but all the readers of all the "critics" who were copying from me. (Power? No! Movie reviews don't make any difference, anyway, except on art films from Europe brought in by small distributors who don't have the money for big ad campaigns or the leverage to get the mass bookings.)

The *modus vivendi* at the "weekly newsmagazine" and the "newsweekly" is a sort of freneticism of life and prose. A friend of mine, a former *Time* man who once sat in for writer Bradford Darrach, the then movie critic, while Darrach was on vacation, tells me that in the course of rummaging through Darrach's desk drawers looking for booze, candy bars, cigarettes, and other treasure, he discovered a box of three-by-five index cards of puns, which fragments Darrach had shored against his ruin. I am not sure that this is true (my friend is a great liar), but it might as well be. "Timestyle" is nowhere more extravagant than in the Cinema section, where it serves an additional function of giving

motive

the writer something to hide behind. If hyped-up prose, puns, and enjambments like "cinemoppet" are annoying after a while, they are less limiting than something like the *auteur* theory, and they serve the same function. It is a point of reference, an established attitude which the writer can take toward the bewildering variety and diversity of the films about which he writes.

The *Newsweek* persona is a little less definite. Nobody ever said this to me, but I soon found out that the way to survive was to be like *Time*, only a little less so. I punned less frequently and only hyped up the prose an eensy bit. And I found a sort of attitude, which might best be characterized as a perpetual condition of raped innocence. (Innocence, perpetually raped, cannot long survive, and after two years I was beginning to enjoy it, so I quit.) *Newsweek*, because it is less stylized than *Time*, throws the writer more and more back upon himself, which is good, but that makes for difficulties too. The copy does go through the hands of four editors, and the more self one puts into it, the more one resents changes. I remember I was furious when one of the editors changed "Feh" to "Fah" because "Feh" sounded too Jewish. They used to take out puns, too, sometimes, but I could always save them up and use them later in the *Yale Review*.

The *New Yorker* is the other special case among magazines, in that it too has an identity of a kind, a personality into which the reviewer can merge himself, and in which he can hide, when necessary. The *New Yorker* is especially fortunate in that Brendan Gill is its reviewer, and he is so successful posing for them as the world's most sophisticated man that I am willing to grant that he is the world's most sophisticated man. He writes well, is intelligent about movies, and is flexible enough to be able to respond on the widely different levels that the differing films demand. He can review Satyajit Ray or Nicholas Ray and not go out of his mind trying to make the jump. He makes mistakes sometimes, and likes bad movies, or dislikes good ones, but he is nearly always right, and nearly always worth reading. The point, anyway, is not to be correct in grading these movies, but to write interestingly about them. Dr. Johnson was often wrong, and was a great critic anyway. The only regrettable thing about Brendan Gill is that he is a very good novelist, but those people who have heard of him mostly think of him as the *New Yorker* movie reviewer. He won, and deserved to win, a National Book Award, but he's still the *New Yorker's* man at the movies. Which is a shame.

For the rest, there is no mask, no mold, no disguise, and they all have to make it up for themselves. They take their cues from their magazines about the level on which they ought to try to write,

but even that is precious little help. The movies themselves are so unruly as to make the mass magazine critics inadequate and the academic and scholarly quarterly critics uncomfortable. There is simply no comfortable posture to take. The *McCall's* critic is strained to fantastic intellectualism, while the *Partisan Review's* critic is on a slumming party. Some get around it by dint of personal eccentricity. Dwight MacDonald, for instance, having come to this peculiar cultural cul-de-sac of writing about movies for *Esquire*, brought a history of political involvement which was not entirely irrelevant. Having given up on everything about the Russian Revolution except its notion of the possibilities of the film as the art form of the masses, he maintained an allegiance to Eisenstein and Pudovkin, which, with his own crankiness and good prose, was enough to get by on.

Stanley Kauffmann, who was at the movie desk of the *New Republic* when I was working, got by on a strange kind of stuffiness which was leavened by lechery. His prose came alive when he addressed himself to some gut issue, as, for instance, the relative attractiveness of Ann-Margret and Jane Fonda. If anything saved him, that did, for one cannot write about the standard Hollywood product for very long without some feeling of connection, and that was a connection. Unfortunately, he split himself, and in his anonymous reviews for *Playboy* gave more attention to the girlies—which was sensible, but which impoverished the pieces for the *New Republic* somewhat. He was stuffier there. Kauffmann has since left the *New Republic* for the drama page of the *New York Times*, and returned to the old stand to write mostly about first novels (in which no one is interested). Pauline Kael, who now deals with movies for the *New Republic*, is rangier than he was, rangier, in fact, than any American critic, responds across the board, does not flinch from using her feminine license to be bitchy, and is the only critic beside Brendan Gill whom I still read with any regularity or interest.

Perhaps the worst film criticism is in the best magazines, the intellectual quarterlies, and the serious film magazines, in which the most intelligent and the most nearly literate practitioners try to function. They are not stupid or imperceptive, but, precisely because of their deficiencies in stupidity and unfeelingness, they writhe on the wrack of unreasonableness which the medium demands. You cannot, with a straight face, examine a gesture in a film—Mastroianni, say, sucking at his tooth, or Belmondo rubbing his upper lip with his thumb—in the same way and with the same seriousness and exactitude your neighbors in the magazine display when they analyze an image in a poem or a trope in a novel. The techniques do not apply, and there is nothing more ridiculous or pathetic than the scholarly apparatus grinding away at nothing in

elaborate discussions of images of triangles in *Jules and Jim*. The alternative is to go against the grain of the magazine, to be folksy, or casual, or hip, which fails too, because it is embarrassing. Or fails because it succeeds too well, and the readers are convinced not that the critic is *posing* as a lowbrow jerk, but that he *is* a lowbrow jerk, in which case to hell with him.

This is not a difficulty peculiar to film criticism. The whole boom in pop culture is a larger manifestation of this same phenomenon. One is uncomfortable on any level and is either too serious or not serious enough. Pop art and pop literature derive from comics and movies, but comics have the advantage over movies (and are therefore more important in pop art) because of their consistency. Comics are always bad, always stupid, always disreputable. To discuss comics in a serious way, to use them in painting or in fiction as if they were serious, is a simple business of bringing out into the open a taboo object. Mom, Dad, and teacher disapproved of comics. We'll show them. We'll make comics respectable. The satisfaction is the same as that derived from telling a dirty joke in mixed company for the first time and getting laughter and approval from everyone. With a large part of the movie culture you can work the same kind of kick. Mention Carmen Miranda in a serious way to a lot of intellectuals, and you're a genius. But mention Jeanne Moreau in a serious way, and you've said something merely banal and obvious. So you have to retrieve your status by going through some preposterous contortion like claiming that Moreau in *Viva Maria* was Carmen Miranda. To Brigitte Bardot's Jane Powell?

I suppose another way of putting all this would be to say that the film critic cannot take his identity from the art form, because the movies don't offer any identity. He can't take it from the magazine because, except in very special circumstances, he will be either uncomfortable or impossibly restricted. And he can't take it from literacy and intellectual fashion, because that way lies even surer madness than in the movies themselves. What he must do is what those few movie critics who have amounted to anything have done—and that is find it, somehow, somewhere, in himself. It's terribly unfair, and I can think of no other area of criticism which demands this kind of psychic integration on the part of its practitioners.

The late Robert Warshow, who was one of the few first-rate movie critics we have had, suggested that "a man watches a movie, and the critic must acknowledge that he is that man." When I first read that, I thought it was semi-opaque nonsense, but that was before I had been promoted from my position as saloon editor to the movie



LITHOGRAPH: THE SECRET SOCIETY

KRIS HOTVEDT

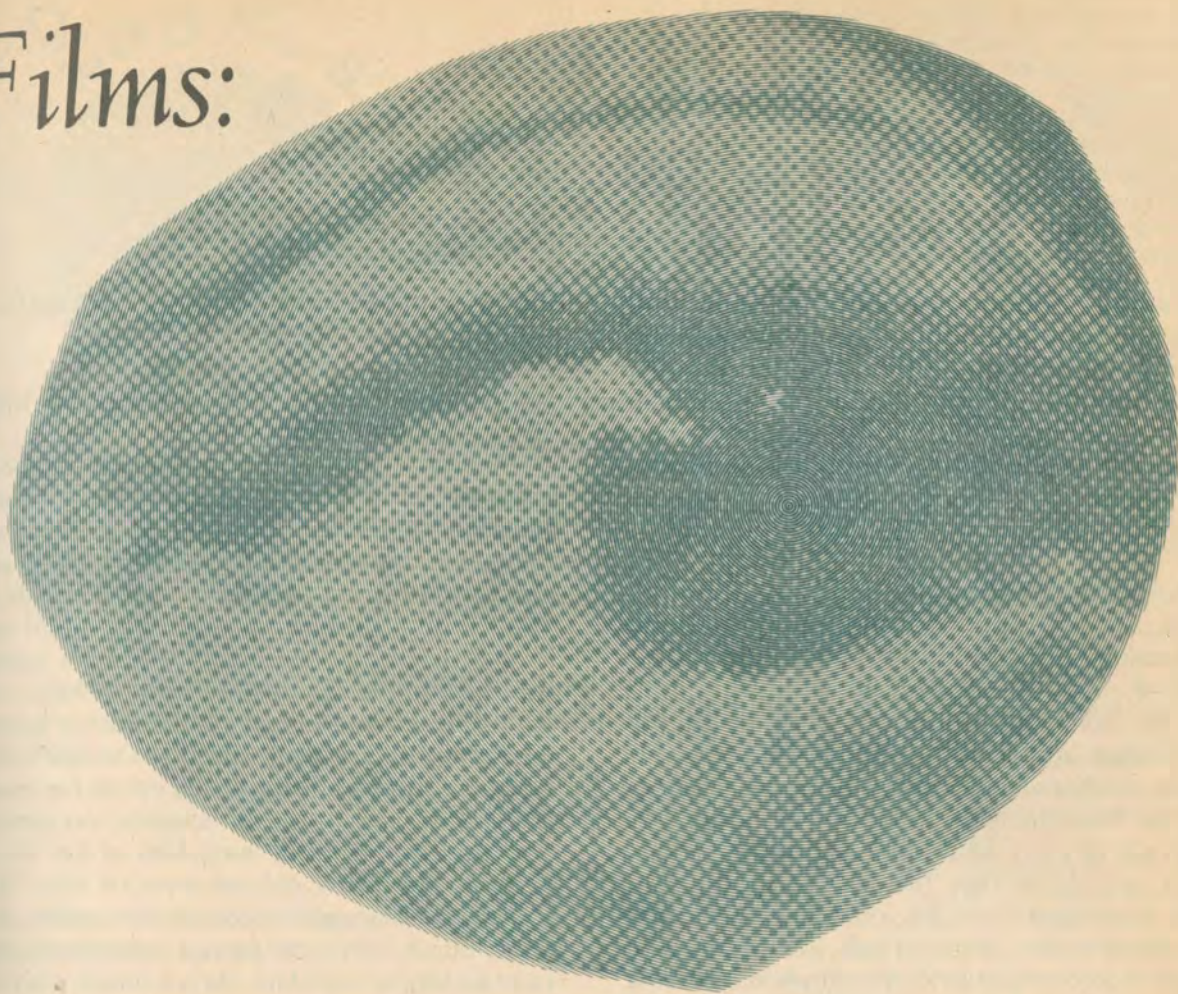
desk. I am amazed now at the lucidity and good sense of Warshow's observation. The critic has to admit that he was there. There is no theory to save him, no tradition to rely on, no coherence but the coherence of his soul. You sit there, in the dark, and are bombarded by images, dramatic sequences, painterly constructions, dialogue, cutting, acting, flesh, and you sip your coffee from Jack-Mo's Delicatessen and watch and listen.

The medium is seductive (if you go into any movie in the middle and sit down, the first five or ten minutes is interesting, until it does something stupid or wrong), and you can't fight that, but neither can you give in to it, entirely. And then, at the end, you sort out not just whether it was any good, but whether it was good-good, or bad-good, or good-bad, or what. . . . And then, when you write about it, you're not writing about the work of one man, but of fifty, and not about pure art, but about a strange soap made of many and morals and ego and, yes, art, too. And all you can do is try to be reasonably honest, not just in saying what you think, but in making sure that you do think what you think, or that you think at all.

In the end it is wearing, it is destructive, it is hopeless. It would be tolerable if movie critics were not widely read. Such a situation can be perfectly healthy. But to be read and *still* to be ignored is confusing and depressing. One learns to live with that, too. For a while.

It used to be, in the bad old days, that the movie companies would try to bribe the critics. Not directly, of course, which would have been at least honestly dishonest, but through the papers, by pulling ads from papers that had tough critics. They still do it, from time to time. But mostly it isn't necessary. The critics are a bunch of clowns promoted from covering weddings or shipping news or fires in Brooklyn to this dubious eminence. Or, occasionally, by some fluke of luck or nepotism, there is a bright, intellectual youngster all hot to write great film criticism. But the movie men have learned that, given a little time, such a bright young man is more than likely to corrupt himself.

Films:



Reflections In A Golden Eye

a study in neuroses

There are rewards and difficulties in adapting the work of Carson McCullers for the stage or film. Edward Albee discovered some of the problems in his unsatisfactory rendering of her novelette *Ballad of a Sad Cafe* for the stage. John Houston fares not much better than Albee in his adaptation of her chilling novel for film. However, he also does not fare any worse than Albee, either.

The movie, while not the masterpiece which the novel is, has much to recommend it. It carries about ten per cent of the nightmare, the horror, the vulgarity, the tenderness of the novel. But ten per cent of Miss McCullers can be very potent indeed.

I remember very well the first and only time I met Miss McCullers. She attended a worship service at my church and I found myself preaching before a woman who had long since been a particular idol of mine. She was already quite ill and had to be carried to her seat and carried out again. As we talked after the service I was struck by her frailty; I kept remembering the incredible and powerful passion of her novels. For she was a master of writing about passion.

Carson McCullers is probably the most profound writer about human passion that America has produced, with the exception of Melville. That is not to say that she is America's greatest novelist at all. She

is not; but her preoccupation with the strength and the depth of human sexual obsession is unequalled in modern American novels. This, of course, is one reason her work is so difficult to adapt to the stage or screen. You can write a great many things about passion with subtlety and distinction—as she did. Literally portraying those experiences is a different matter altogether.

R*eflections in a Golden Eye* is a story of the life of men and women at an army camp in the South; Marlon Brando plays the part of a career soldier—a major obsessed with a young private under his command. Elizabeth Taylor plays the major's vulgar and likeable wife. Unsatisfied by her husband, she has an affair with a bluff, hearty officer played by Brian Keith. Keith has a wife also, an invalid as out of place with these animal people as a peacock among vultures. The final complication of the plot is revealed when the young private is shown to be voyeuristically obsessed with the major's wife.

Here are all the elements of a purple melodrama. Only the cool, clean mind of Miss McCullers saves the story from drowning in its own incestuous heat. But this is her most brutal book, and while the characters are revealed with compassion and understanding, they are also treated quite objectively. Seeing the movie is a bit like seeing a case history of neurosis presented by a skillful and compassionate psychiatrist.

Marlon Brando begins his portrayal of the major with some of the overdone mannerisms which have become acting clichés. But gradually he moves into the part and gives, by the end, a stunning performance of a man in hell. He wisely adapts his acting to the sexuality of the major's dilemma rather than the "homo" aspect. The theme of homosexuality is a difficult one for an actor or a director. Carson McCullers understood homosexuality as part of the dilemma of human sexuality itself. Houston and Brando have followed her lead in their portrayal of this agonized man who hates himself for a passion he cannot control.

Miss McCullers was fond of reminding us in all her books that the human heart is stranger than all the theories about it and all the categories in which we place it. One can fall madly in love with a midget, a mute, a psychotic, a man, a woman. And none of the brilliant theories about why it happens can equal

the extraordinary intensity of the fact *that it does happen.*

The object of Mr. Brando's passion might as easily have been a WAC or a horse. It, in the inscrutable mystery of humankind, happened to be a male in the army. Mr. Brando's performance reveals the happenstance and the fate involved in such a situation. Elizabeth Taylor is the cheating, adulterous, warm-hearted army wife who, through all her "sin," is an amazingly innocent and stupid woman.

Julie Harris does not bring to life the strange invalid wife of the colonel. In the book she is a towering figure. An intellectual in the midst of barbarians, her rarified nature finally succumbs to death, brought on by the sheer animality which infects her existence. Julie Harris plays her too precious, too cameo-like, and loses the exquisite bitterness of her life. Brian Keith as the hearty colonel-lover of Miss Taylor is superb. He manages to convey the reality of every poor, dumb slob who cannot understand why life can't be simple and plain. He is a simple man looking for a simple life, and he is swept into the neuroses of his companions in spite of himself.

Reflections in a Golden Eye is basically a novel about the neurotic state. The unfulfilled passion, the rigid army discipline, the mania for order—all are incredible unless that basic reality is seen. To advise Mr. Brando just to get himself a boy friend and leave the private to his wife might be a neat solution, but these are neurotic people. The major's passion cannot be fulfilled for then he would have no structure to support his neurosis and so would find another one.

But to say a condition is neurotic is not to say that it is unreal or somehow not important. The great passions of history would show up as neurotic on the health charts, I am sure.

Miss McCullers, and, to his credit, Mr. Houston, cuts through all the psychologizing with which we surround human life, and reveals the livid flesh of pain and obsession. That is all that art can do. The audience the night I saw the film was particularly embarrassed by the nature of Mr. Brando's passion. A lot of men hee-hawed insanely when any indication of the major's torment was shown. I wonder why?

—AL CARMINES

motive



Seymour Martin Lipset, ed., *Student Politics*. Basic Books (1967), 403 pp., \$8.95.

A great deal has been written already about student politics both abroad and in the U.S. But, apparently, Seymour Martin Lipset and a host of intimates, funded by "Ford and Carnegie and Federal and State grants" (p. ix), mean to write a great deal more. This book, we are told, is only the first in an upcoming series called "Student Movements—Past and Present," all edited by Dr. Lipset.

Yet if succeeding volumes are as bloated with classic footnotery, as obviously predisposed against radical student action, as devoid of even one word written by an actual student anywhere, as utterly incapable of coming to definite conclusions without qualifications which negate their significance, as dependent on often absurd sources, and as studiously lacking any of the passion and experience of the student revolutionary—if succeeding volumes are like this one, brothers, the movement is dead. It will be clubbed unconscious by parasitic social scientists who claim to have no meaner motives at heart than the gathering of pure knowledge.

Lipset and fourteen other scholars, ten of whom worked with him in Berkeley's Comparative Student Project, have gathered, with widely varying degrees of objectivity and clarity, 403 pages and 550 footnotes which analyze student activists in many countries. The data is all there—their parents, their incomes, their allegedly prolonged virginity, their religions, their campus environments and, most of all, their teachers—but hardly ever their complete political programs and serious objections to establishment moralities. "Activism" is persistently stigmatized as "indiscipline," and manifests a lack of what Lipset calls "satisfactory social adjustment." George Z. F. Bereday classifies the 1964 Berkeley demonstrators as

"rioters" who "seem to have received their training and developed their style in civil rights demonstrations."

Lipset and Philip G. Altbach impugn both SDS and SNCC as members of a disorganized, unreasonable "extreme" element and prefer the "responsible criticism of American foreign policy" which they see emerging from the Young Democrats, student YMCA groups, and (ready?) motive. Principled youth idealism, we are led to conclude, is as inevitable, harmless, and almost as foolish as spring panty raids, since "in all countries, of course, reality is usually at variance with principles," and (presumably) must continue to be. Tables, charts, and percentages follow in exhaustive procession. Among the findings:

- 82 per cent of American students believe the U.S. has "an obligation to provide military assistance to Vietnam." (Source: a *Playboy* survey published in November, 1965.)

- "Free University" courses, which "range from Marxist philosophy and revolutionary theory to discussions of erotic literature and the social uses of narcotics" (a pretty nefarious range, eh?) "vary greatly in quality" and "involve only a tiny fraction of the student population." (Source: an article, 'Students of Left Set Up Colleges,' in *The New York Times*.)

- "Right-wing student activity" (not to be confused with the apolitical majority) "probably still includes many more students in its membership than does the organized left." (Only source cited: "the president of the most significant such group, the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF).")

- "A comprehensive study" indicates fewer than five per cent of students are activists at every college in the nation excluding one-half of one per cent of them. (Source: 849 Deans of Students!)

The entire data-gathering orgy rises to the level of high comedy, however, on page 220, where we learn that "almost four-fifths (78 per cent) of those sitting-in (at the University of Chicago) reported family incomes of over \$15,000 a year." Notwithstanding the obvious point that almost any sample of students at a major bourgeois university would largely come from such an income bracket, try to imagine the angry, committed sitters-in pausing to chorus their "reports" on Dad's income for the data-gatherers. It's a premise worthy of a Lenny Bruce routine.

As a study of student politics here and elsewhere, then, this book actually flaunts its two most disastrous faults. The first is that it neglects even a puny attempt to recreate the *experience* of the student in revolt, preferring to reflect him in the same statistical terms which university administrations use to "characterize" immense student bodies. The second fault is that it ironically represents in itself many of the educational irrelevances which are pushing students to coordinated revolution.

If Americans do not sympathize with black insurgency or the nationalist fervor of the Viet Cong, for example, it is not because they don't know the statistics on black unemployment, the deprivations of ghetto housing, or the atrocities of the Diem *et. seq.*, regimes in South Vietnam. It is because they have not themselves *experienced* these abuses and insults, and because not enough effort has been made to bring these experiences closer to their understanding.

My own experiences with student movements practicing consistent, informed rebellion against intolerable circumstances (in a subtle, flexible manner) render Lipset's data meaningless. A selection of articles by students, American and overseas, would have been enormously more valuable than all of this book, especially if combined with what firsthand research there is in it, such as E. Wight Bakke's accounts of activism in six countries. Astonishingly, all of Lipset's conclusions about students

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in "underdeveloped countries"—chapter one—seem to be based on secondhand library references—114 of them in a 34-page article.

The ironies enmeshed in the fabric of this anthology are so powerful as to be much more fascinating than the "information" it contains. It insists, for example, that SDS is chaotic and incapable of sustained leadership to date, while admitting that SDS is the strongest, most numerous group in American radical student politics—which is "significant" enough to warrant all this research and more to come. It cites lack of respect for faculty members as a cause of student revolt, while itself being so pedantic and inconsequential as to engender that very lack. It pleads for better understanding of the activist—while offering little.

At one point Lipset subtitles a chapter "The Need for More Research" (i.e., for more systematic accumulation of data) when the need is quite obviously (as some other authors in the same book sometimes suggest) for philosophy, poetry, and exposition. It cites academic overloads as a cause of unrest when it is apparent that a virtual army of graduate students were employed, as they frequently are, to gather and collate all the obscure journals and unpublished theses on which so many of these articles rest their observations.

Student Politics as an explanation of international student activism is comparable to William F. Buckley's observations on black power, or Harry Aschlinger's on LSD; it was written about young people caught in a growing movement by "bald old gents with glasses" (as John Lennon would say) sitting in Burtonian poses of omniscience in the Widener and countless other libraries. And, as failure, like virtue, is its own reward, it will largely be confined to their vaults.

—RAY MUNGO

BOOK NOTES

Macmillan has published *Containment and Change*, by Carl Oglesby and Richard Shaull. A working draft of Oglesby's significant critique of the U.S.' international stance appeared in this magazine last year. *motive* readers will be interested in the final version of that essay, and in Shaull's provocative theological response. (Carl Oglesby's latest essay, discussed on page 42 of this issue by Stephen Shapiro, will appear here next month.)

Our own William Stringfellow and Anthony Towne have collaborated on *The Bishop Pike Affair*, published recently by Harper & Row. Too, Towne's infamous satire, "God is Dead in Georgia," has been collected in Walter Wagoner's anthology of "twentieth century religious satire," *Bittersweet Grace* (World).

John William Corrington's second novel, *The Upper Hand*, was recently published by Putnam. A major section of the novel appeared here.

Miller Williams has just published the first American translation of *The Poems of Niccanor Parra*, a project which had its genesis in the feature on contemporary Chilean poetry he prepared for *motive* (Feb. 1965). The new collection is published by New Directions.

Jack Matthews, whose fiction and poetry have both graced our pages, has recently published his third novel, *Hangar Stout, Awake!* (Harcourt-Brace).

And, last but not least, a couple of *motive's* special issues have gravitated their way into books. Our January/February 1964 double issue, in part, forms the nucleus of Nathan Scott's *The Modern Vision of Death* (John Knox). And our March/April 1967 double issue, guest-edited by Robert Theobald, has been shorn of its poetry and re-incarnated as *Dialogue on Technology* (Bobbs-Merrill).

WILLIAM STRINGFELLOW



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WARRINGTON COLESCOTT

THE DILEMMA

The throbbing of his left great toe brought the deputy marshal awake. He speculated dimly whether this bunk, these blankets, the cabin roof beams above him, the sizzle and smell of frying bacon were all parts of a delicious hallucination. But if he was still out in the snow, that toe would not throb. It had been the first part of him to signal the treachery of false warmth as he stumbled along in the arctic snow.

He rolled his head and saw the big man fussing with the skillet at the sheet-iron stove. The big man had matted red hair and a curly beard. He was Paul Richards. The deputy had been brought out of the cold by the man for whom he was searching.

Richards turned from the stove, grinning through his curly red beard. "That was close," he said. "Lucky my dogs picked up your scent as I turned into the gulch. I'll bet you could eat. Say, do you play chess?"

Days passed. When the deputy's left toe began going green, Richards did a neat bit of surgery with a hammer and chisel. Richards taught him chess, and through the long nights and days the deputy would sit staring at the board, absently cracking his knuckles, trying to think of chess and not the other problem.

The big man had hung the deputy's revolver and holster on a wall peg by the bunk. Once, when Richards was out, the deputy found the weapon still loaded.

A month went by. The deputy knew he could travel. He became moody.

"You can't play chess worth sawdust," the big man grinned. "Watch out for your queen."

"Look here, Paul!" the deputy exploded. "No use beating around the bush. You know I am after you. This is working on me. I've got to take you in, Paul."

"Sure—duty and all that." The big man kept grinning. "Go ahead; it's your move."

"Paul, what was the reason you killed that partner of yours?" The deputy was groping for an out. "It wasn't just cold-blooded murder like they say, was it?"

Richards shrugged. "Ole Ralph was a nice guy, too, but he drove me wild. I taught him chess that winter we stayed together, and by Christmas we were nip and tuck. I remember one game. . . ."

"Never mind about that. Why did you kill him?"

"Why, he wouldn't wash his socks. Two men in a cabin all winter, and he wouldn't wash his socks. Finally, it was too much. It drove me wild."

The deputy cracked his knuckles, pondering.

"Did you kill Swift, the other deputy who came after you last year?"

"It was either him or me."

"Then, why did you bring me in out of the snow?" the deputy growled.

"I wouldn't just leave a man to die, would I?" Then, the big man flashed his grin. "Anyhow, I'm a friendly cuss. Looked like I'd found a chess partner."

The deputy got up from the table, turned to the wall and drew his revolver from the holster. He gave Richards plenty of time to get the rifle in the far corner of the cabin. But when he turned, the big man hadn't moved.

"You're under arrest, Paul Richards," the deputy marshal muttered. He felt foolish, but he went on doggedly. "I'm taking you to Teton to stand trial for murder."

"You'll feel better after dinner," the big man soothed. "Come on, let's finish the game."

"I mean it. I've got to take you in."

"Why?" Richards responded blandly.

"You're a nice guy and I really like you. I know I owe you my life. But you've murdered two men, and I'm a deputy United States marshal. I just never learned how to cheat, myself."

"Upward and onward," the big man said.

The deputy wet dry lips. "Tagging it don't help. I can't cheat, one way or the other. If I don't take you back, then I just won't go myself."

"Fine!" beamed the big man. "Fine! You stay here with me, and we'll play a lot of chess."

The deputy hadn't meant it that way. "I've got things to go back to. A job. Friends. Something they call self-respect. And—well, there's a wife and baby."

"Poof!" The big man spread his hands. "I've left two wives, three kids! Shucks, you forget 'em. Come on. Let's finish this game. And watch your queen. Or," the big man added softly, "shoot me now and get it over with. Let's settle this foolishness."

They played a lot of chess during the winter. The deputy viciously disciplined his mind in that one channel. After the New Year, he never lost a game. The big man became morose and sullen. For almost a month in the early spring Richards communicated only in grunts and gestures.

Then one day the deputy was hunched over the board, cracking his knuckles while he studied his play. The big man arose and walked around the table. The deputy glanced up just as Richards rushed with the upraised ax.

"Quit popping them knuckles!" he screamed, bringing the ax down.

Jerking back, the deputy felt the blade brush his hair before sinking deeply into the thick table top. The ax stuck in the plank just long enough for the deputy to come around and up, slugging. Richards crumpled.

He handcuffed the sagging man.

"All right, pal," the deputy said grimly. "Now I can take you in. Now we're quits."

—ROBERT D. PERRY