

motive

February

1969

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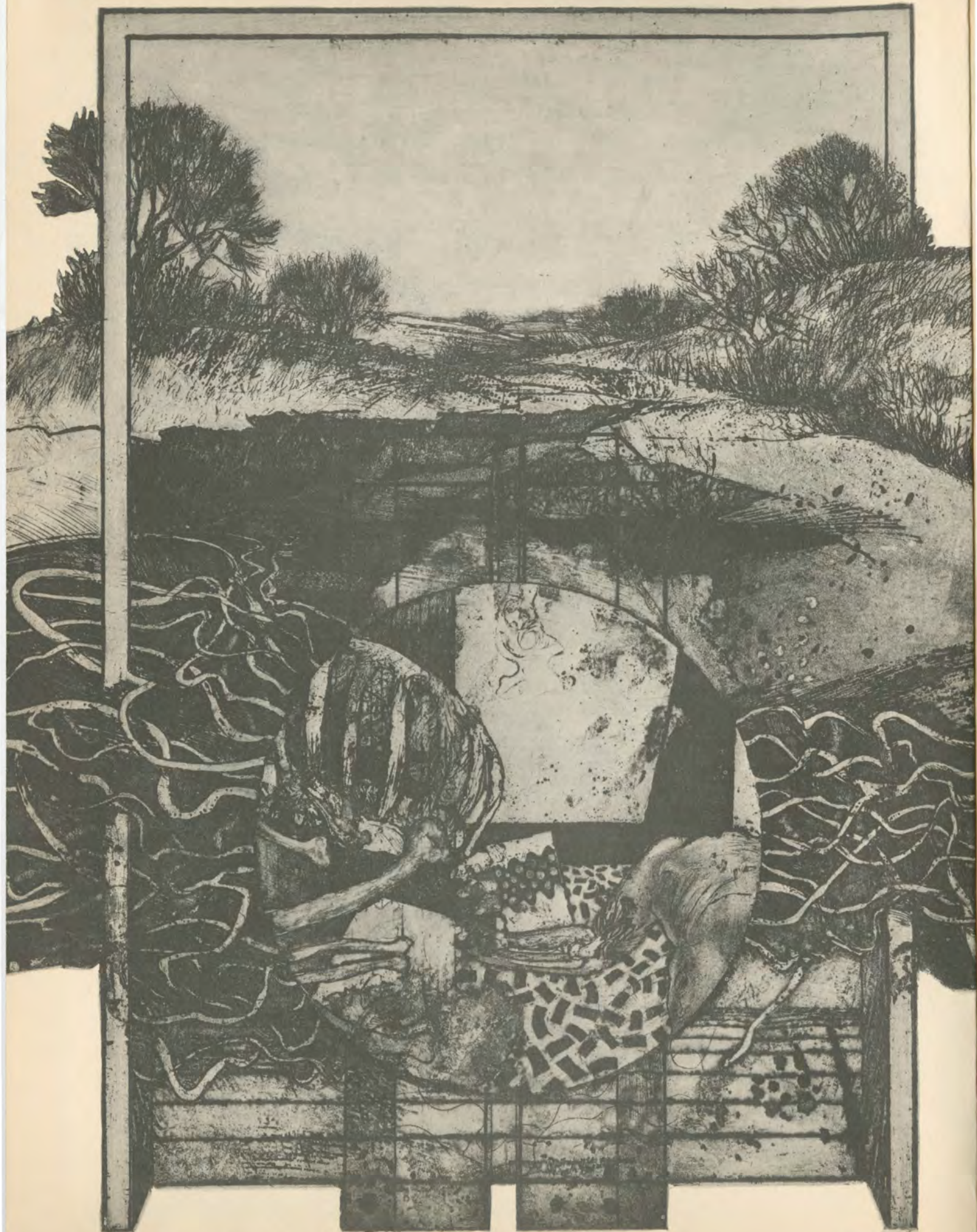


Human and political differences are no longer  
enough reason for hate and its poison.  
If there is to be dignity and equality in existence  
for all mankind, let it begin.

Compliments of the  
Colgate University Church

Abolish WAR

*N. O'Brien 1969*



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**COVER 1:** All the anguish and urgency of the moment is felt in the remarkable print of NATHAN OLIVEIRA, who is on the art faculty of Stanford University.

# motive

February 1969  
Volume XXIX, Number 5

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## HOW IT FEELS IS HOW IT IS

Two Poems by Todd Gitlin

### ECLIPSE

Part of the moon was smudged;  
I shrugged.

When Icarus an asteroid tumbled toward the earth  
and vague and wispy people cultivated images of doom  
and wandered practically to Colorado,  
one of them called Velikovsky  
and asked him whether this was it,  
the world-collision that would put an end to the mundane,  
and Velikovsky said, or so the story goes,  
"I have concluded that the next great catastrophe  
will not be natural  
but social."

### REVOLUTION IN OUR TIME

(on reading Trotsky, History of the Russian Revolution)

They say the calm comes before the storm  
But I believe before the storm the trees rattle,  
a thousand trees  
Nor after the storm is there calm, but another storm  
And between, a clear horizon slitting the sky  
from the churning sea and the rocks

The storm does not revenge, it happens  
The sharpest lines are unexpected but also happen

BRUCE CODY



R.S.V.P.

Words have floundered before,  
Like shored fish gasping,  
Breaking against the unbodied  
Air, pleading.

Children who have walked  
Apart too much, who have  
Seen the gift go to others,  
Know the fish, know the puckered,  
Violent mouth, the departing  
Wetness of his face, the round  
Eyes that are dry and  
Cannot shut.

But now an Important dance  
Is made. I have seen it,  
And know the shapes of its  
Hands, the leg slants, the  
Lovely syllables of its time.

If you suffer speech's absence  
And wish to join this dance  
Devised for fish and certain  
Children quite broken on the  
Dry, pulsing shore, then  
Leave the groups that have  
Crowded you without touching,  
Place your hand against your  
Own dear body, watch the others,  
And follow them into this new  
Element of circled blue,  
Singing.

-BOB SHAW



ETCHING: CHRIST REMOVED

LENNIE KESI

# TERROR and the ABSURD

## VIOLENCE AND NONVIOLENCE IN ALBERT CAMUS

By Thomas Merton

*ED. NOTE: Death dominated 1968; thus the almost simultaneous announcements in December of the deaths of Tom Merton and Karl Barth seemed to be somehow appropriate, in a perverse ironical manner. King, Kennedy, Barth and Merton intimately influenced the mood and priorities of motive, for a decade, and the loss of each has erased a point of reference for that generation.*

*The following article had been requested of Merton more than a year ago, but the final version came from him last summer just prior to his departure for Asia. We offer his thoughts on killing and destruction as tribute to his passionate concern for life and love.*

Despite his keen sense of tragedy, Camus was one of the more hopeful voices of his generation. It has been said of him, and quite rightly, that "his need to establish a passionately loved life on intellectual foundations that seemed valid to him (was) the strongest driving force behind his work and made a writer of him."<sup>1</sup>

Camus chose a more difficult and less consoling course than Sartre: that of continuing to hope for a third position between the capitalist establishment of the West and the rigid totalist establishment of the Communists. He saw that the world had reached a deadlock between these two forces and that there was nothing to be hoped for in merely supporting one of these against the other. No matter which side

one chose, both were wrong, both were corrupt, both were sterile. In the end, the struggle between them could only end in an intensification of nihilism and terror.

The "two imperialisms"—Eastern and Western—were for Camus a pair of twins "who grow up together and cannot get along without each other."<sup>2</sup> When it was objected that this confrontation was a reality, he replied that cancer is also a reality but that is no reason for not trying to cure it. He rejected the two systems along with their rival ideologies which "born with the steam engine and naive scientific optimism a century ago, are today obsolete and incapable in their present form of solving the problems posed in the age of the atom and of relativity."<sup>3</sup>

The only hope he saw was in a difficult and genuinely dialectical struggle to pass beyond either of these positions, and in the last analysis the success of such a struggle depended on the lucidity and integrity of individuals—"Rebels" in the special sense in which he used the word. Rebels both against a stagnant and ineffectual bourgeois culture and against a fanatical and arbitrary totalism. In a 1952 interview, Camus said: "We can no longer live without positive values. Bourgeois morality repels us by its hypocrisies and its cruelties. We find equally repugnant the political cynicism that reigns in the revolutionary movement. As for the independent left (Sartre, etc.), it is in fact fascinated by Communist power and entangled in a Marxism of which it is ashamed."<sup>4</sup>

In his most difficult book, *The Rebel*, Camus examines the problem and scandal of modern revolutions. Starting out with the affirmation of absolute liberty, these revolutions have speedily consummated their efforts in absolute tyranny, and having pleaded for a more abundant life, have ended in hecatombs of political victims. Camus views with concern the fact that revolutions which began with the "death of God" and put man in the place of God were unable to work out a morality worthy of man. Having rejected the Kingdom of God and the realm of grace, having put the realm of justice in its place, the revolution proceeded from justice to the reign of terror, demanding the complete suspension of all liberty in view of a perfect consummation postponed to the future. Having rejected God, the revolution proceeded to reject man in the concrete in favor of man in the abstract. In the name of this abstraction every violence, every cruelty, every inhumanity became permissible and even logically necessary.

### Compulsion to Kill

The key idea of *The Rebel* is that revolution nullifies itself when it resorts to massive killing. The need for the revolution to kill in order to maintain itself in power means that it no longer has the right to be in power. To build a society on the abstract concept of "justice" leads inexorably to the concentration camp. "Absolute liberty becomes a prison of absolute duties"—including the duty to exterminate thousands of one's fellow men in the name, not of a happy and life-affirming present, but of a hypothetical happiness in the future.

The "death of God" means, in the end, an imperialism of the spirit that seeks world hegemony and total control at the price of unlimited murder and terror. Note that this same logic operates not only in the death camps of a Hitler, the labor camps of the Soviets or Chinese, but also where the power of unlimited destruction is concentrated in nuclear and other weapons. It is the same logic of power and terror that grows out of a radical godlessness which leaves man to build his world alone. This is what

happens to man when, "refusing God, he chooses history," and seeks (with Hegel, Nietzsche and Marx) the eschatological unity of the human race "deified" by its own exercise of absolute political power. Once God is dead, the vacuum caused by His "death" sucks into itself this daemonic surge toward total power. To accept the death of God in some sense means to accept passively the awful force of this eschatological suction into the void created by His absence.

Camus grants all this without ceasing to hold his atheist position. Why? In common with those who more truly merit the name of existentialists, he considers that to accept the idea of God as the explanation and justification of an otherwise absurd life is a kind of "cheating."

The man who resorts to God to give sense to an otherwise senseless life is, according to Camus, evading the austere and stoical duty of facing up to "the absurd" and deciding to live with it. It has been said that Camus makes Pascal's wager—but in reverse. Instead of gambling on the possibility of God, he gambles on his impossibility and accepts the resulting absurdity of the universe with all its consequences—violence, ruthlessness, terror. For Camus, as for Sartre, theological faith is a temptation. It is "bad faith" by definition. But what is faith, anyway? Camus, as a typical modern, starts with the assumption that the world is absurd and that God then becomes necessary for some minds to explain the absurdity. God is regarded somehow as a *need* of man's mind and heart: and indeed a certain kind of apologetic in the past has been all too ready to advance this distorted and inadequate view of God. Here God is seen simply as the projection of man's need for clarity, for rationality. The act of faith then becomes a determination to convince oneself that no matter how absurd things may look, they are in fact quite reasonable because God must somehow make them reasonable. One believes because one refuses to despair of an absolute and infallible reason.

But this assumes that God is merely called into our lives as a kind of logical *Deus ex machina*, and that he is little more than a convenient hypothesis. Is this what is really meant by God in Christianity?

Camus, with Ivan Karamazov, examines the classic problem of evil in the world and rejects a hypothesis of a God whose rule may have to be justified at the price of the suffering of one innocent child. Camus, like Karamazov, says that if this is the case he will turn in his ticket to heaven. But then, resolutely facing a world that has become frankly absurd, he has to watch dry-eyed the suffering not of one innocent child but of millions of innocents: a suffering that is demanded by the logic of a world without God. Camus realizes the contradiction implied in this position. He does not bother to argue. He merely





INTAGLIO: I NEVER DID THANK SOPHIE FOR THOSE AIRPLANE BOOKS

BEN SAKOGUCHI

assumes that one cannot save the millions by bringing God back to life.

In spite of all this, one of the root problems of *The Rebel* is the problem of God. This problem, as stated by Camus, remains insoluble, and Camus simply bypasses it, not on the basis of any reasoning in metaphysics or theodicy, but simply because the historical forms of Christianity—and other religions—seem to him to demand of man a futile and degrading resignation that solves nothing and merely leaves him at the mercy of blind social forces that push him around in all directions.

### Mass Murder

Yet Camus recognizes that the problem of God arises in another inexorable form as the problem of murder. If the most critical problem of our time is the problem of (mass) murder and if human life has been reduced to an entity without value, this is because "God is dead." Camus admits it, without feeling any need for God to be other than dead. Bringing him back to life will, Camus thinks, do nothing to help us recover the sense of man as a value. Those who claim to represent God have done so much to cheapen man! If religious establishments have cheapened human life, if they have trivialized death, exalted nationalist or political abstractions and given a blanket permission to kill without limit in the name of patriotism or of revolution; then they have contributed their fair share to the "death of God" in the consciousness of twentieth century man! When the problem of God necessarily reappears as the problem of the sacredness of life and the prohibition of limitless killing, then Camus must grapple with it. The most tragic thing, the root of crime, is the silence and complicity which accept mass-killing as an unavoidable necessity.

"We live in terror because persuasion is no longer possible; because man has been wholly submerged in History, because he can no longer tap that part of his nature, as real as the historical part, which he recaptures in contemplating the beauty of nature and of human faces; because we live in a world of abstractions, of bureaus and machines, of absolute ideas and crude messianism. We suffocate among people who think they are absolutely right, whether in their machines or in their ideas. And for all who can live only in an atmosphere of 'human' dialogue and sociability, this silence is the end of the world."<sup>5</sup>

The face of Camus' "Rebel" now becomes recognizable. He is a man who protests, not against abstract injustice, nor in the name of a theoretical program, but in the name of man. He speaks out for individual and concrete man of flesh and blood, against the war-making arrogance of total power, against the abstractions on which power bases its claim to an absolute right to kill. The Rebel, moreover, refuses to be silent, and insists on an open dialogue which will help others like himself to ar-

rive at a lucid and common decision to oppose absurdity and death and to affirm man against all abstractions.

The starting point of Camus' ethic of revolt is a protest against passive resignation. Visiting a cemetery in Algiers he was revolted by the pious and conventional sentiments of the epitaphs and mortuary art he saw all around him. For him they were in fact a mockery of the awful seriousness and mystery of man's contingency, a pitiable evasion of the inscrutable reality of death.

He wrote, "Everything that touches on death is here made ridiculous or hateful. This people living without religion and without idols dies alone after living in a mob. I know no more hideous place than the cemetery of Bru Boulevard, facing one of the finest landscapes in the world. . . ." He goes on to speak of the sickening vulgarity of tombs on which angels fly in stucco airplanes, of hearts inscribed with words like "our memory will never abandon you"—or clusters of stucco flowers accompanied by the declaration: "Your tomb will never be without flowers." Here it is not religion that he derides, but the vacuous secularity that has crept in behind a collapsing religious facade. What is the facade? Resignation. And Camus, speaking now as a pure "Rebel," declines to be resigned. Even in Italy, where there was still some religious substance in the renaissance monuments to honor the dead, he said: "None of this convinces me. All of them . . . had become resigned. I shall not grow resigned. With all my silence I shall protest to the very end. There is no reason to say: 'It had to be.' It is my revolt which is right, and it must follow this joy which is like a pilgrim on earth, follow it step by step."<sup>6</sup>

### Rebel Refuses Alienation

The Rebel of Camus is therefore first of all the man who refuses to accept, with passive and unthinking resignation, a diminution of authentic and living possibilities. The Rebel is one who is not resigned to letting his life be mutilated in the name of something else, whether it be business, or politics, or money, or revolution—or religion. He is the man who refuses alienation. It is interesting to notice that in the same notebook Camus speaks with approval of the early Franciscans. He describes their religious poverty as a liberating force. It is clear that in Camus's eyes, Franciscan poverty was an enrichment of life and not a mutilation. Meditating in a cloister in Fiesole, he recognizes in himself a deep affinity with the early Franciscans, for they too are Rebels in his sense of the word:

Sitting on the ground I think of the Franciscans whose cells I have just visited and whose sources of inspiration I can now see. I feel clearly that if they are right then it is in the same way that I am. This splendor of the world (he alludes to the view from the monastery) seems to justify these



WOODCUT: WAITING

LOIS KOJOLA

men. I put all my pride in a belief that it also justifies me and all the men of my race who know that there is an extreme point at which poverty always rejoins the luxury and richness of the world . . . Being naked always has associations of physical liberty, of harmony between the hand and the flowers it touches, of loving understanding between the earth and men who have been freed from human things. Ah, I should become a convert to this if it were not already my religion.<sup>7</sup>

We may be tempted to think that Camus has ended by standing Franciscanism on its head. Camus's own neo-pagan and naive atheism rests on a refusal to trust anything that is not directly accessible to the senses. He knows and loves the world as he sees it, directly in front of his nose. The world is for him a unique and inexhaustible value, though it also confronts him with an absurd and enigmatic silence. For Camus, the religious and metaphysical arguments for another life, for Providence and so on, are not accessible. They are not a matter of experience or of immediate grasp. They are, therefore, he thinks, arbitrary fabrications.

On the other hand, his approval of the Franciscans is based on the fact that he thinks they see things his way. They have gambled as he has: not on logic and ideas, but on immediate facts: the burnt hills of Tuscany, the vineyards, the poverty of the people, the poverty of Franciscan life. All these are immediately experienced. They are not mere objects of rationalization.

There is something to this intuition. The vision of a St. Francis is not the vision of an abstract and transcendent God dwelling in eternity, but the immediate, overwhelming, direct, tangible confrontation of "God who is" simply in the "is-ness" of everyday reality. The belief of a Franciscan in eternal life does not determine how he lives—it flows from his life and is part and parcel of that life. If Camus had been able to follow this through he would have realized that the abstract God he could not believe in was not, and never had been, the living God of authentic Christianity.

Camus contrasts the peace and joy of life-affirming love with the frenzy of abstractions which followed the French revolution. Reason, disincarnated by godless revolution, "floated off like a balloon into the empty sky of the great principles" and therefore it needed the support of force: "To adore theorems for any length of time, faith is not enough: one also needs a police."<sup>8</sup>

The root of Camus's ethic is, then, not a fanatically reasoned nihilism but, on the contrary, an affirmation of life. In fact, the root of his ethic is love. In his notebooks we find this:

If someone here told me to write a book on morality, it would have a hundred pages and ninety nine would be blank. On the last page I should write 'I recognize only one duty, and that is to love.' And as far as everything else is concerned I say no.<sup>9</sup>

If the godless revolution denies itself and cancels itself out in the blood of human victims, will Camus turn to a nonviolent revolution in the name of God and of love? No, for since to him God is only an inadmissible logical hypothesis, he has to engage in an intricate dialectic between godless violence and religious nonviolence in order to reach a different synthesis.

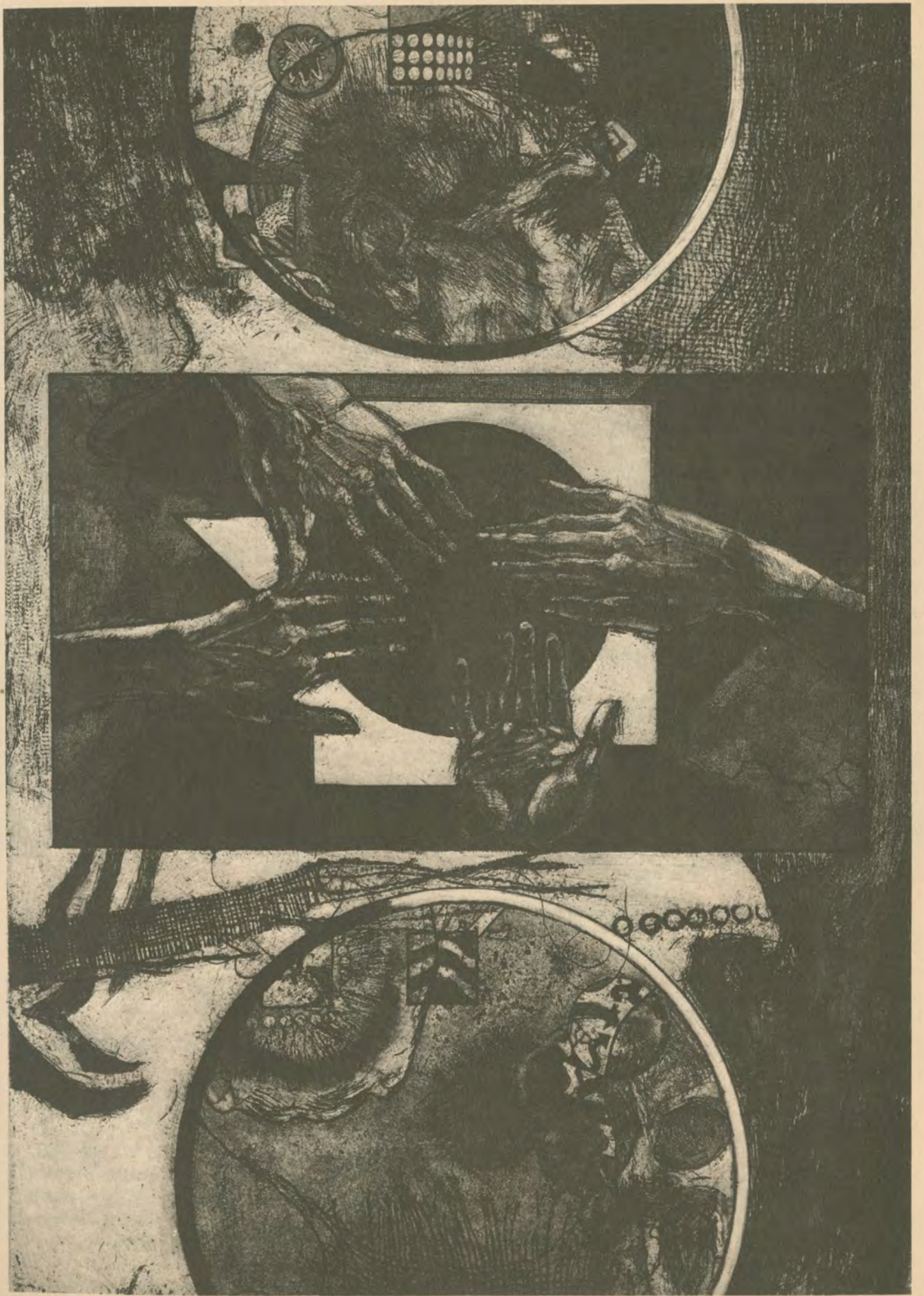
His conclusions are not those of an ideally Christian nonviolence. But they are a more strict and rigorous rejection of force than we find in the traditional Christian "just war" theory. In practice, we can say that Camus, while admitting that violence may be necessary, speaks and writes as a pacifist not only in the face of global war but also in the face of world revolution. He contends that the power struggle of our time, whether on the side of capitalism or on that of communism, is essentially nihilistic. It justifies in practice torture, genocide, the police state, the death camps and the obliteration of nations by nuclear war. All this in the name of a humanism postponed to an indefinite future when full justice will have been carried out on the adversary. Camus will have none of this double-talk.

In 1946 he said: "*There is only one problem today, which is that of murder. All our disputes are vain. One thing alone matters: peace.*"<sup>10</sup>

All men confront the problem of cooperation in murder, perhaps even in genocide. "We are in a world in which one must choose between being a victim or an executioner."<sup>11</sup>

To face such a world and such a choice means to confront the absurd. Either we know it or we do not. If we accept the absurd choice as perfectly reasonable or at least as an inevitable necessity, we resign our human dignity and freedom, we surrender to unreason and unfreedom, in the name of abstractions which ignore our human measure and inexorably lead to our own destruction. There is only one answer: to become a Rebel—*un homme revolté*. The Rebel is distinguished from the conformist who accepts a conservative establishment and its injustices, and from the revolutionary who, in the name of an ideology and an abstract utopian humanism, consents to the alienation and destruction of his fellow man. The Rebel refuses to be an executioner, and if he has to be a victim, he will at least know why. As soon as he takes up this position of refusal, autonomy and self-determination in the presence of the absurd, he finds himself in solidarity with other Rebels who have made the same commitment. "I revolt, therefore we are."

From this solidarity and from the compassion it implies, emerge the reasons by which one can decide for or against violence.



INTAGLIO: CONCERNING THE PHRENOLOGIST

BRUCE CODY

The aim of revolt is the pacification of men. Any revolt reaches the ultimate and reverberates in the assertion of human limits—and of a community of all men, whoever they are, within those limits. Humility and genius.<sup>12</sup>

The nature of revolt, as opposed to the rigid authoritarianism of a totalist revolution directed from above by "the Party," is that it springs from the warmth and authenticity of human solidarity and compassion. Revolt is based on love, Revolution on a political abstraction. Revolt is therefore real, and its reality is defined by risk, limitation, uncertainty, vulnerability. It has to be constantly created anew by a renewal of fervor, intelligence and love. Revolution is abstract, and it seeks to guarantee itself indefinitely by the exercise of power, therefore by murder. Thus it cancels itself out and makes renewal impossible. Revolt is the only thing that can give to revolution the renewal and lucidity it needs. Revolt strikes at every form of power that relies on blood.

My effort: to show that the logic of revolt rejects blood and selfish motives. And that a dialogue carried to the absurd gives a chance of purity—through compassion? (suffer together).<sup>13</sup>

The logic of revolt demands dialogue, openness, speech. Therefore revolt protests against the conspiracy of silence which, everywhere, both under totalism and under capitalism, seals men's lips so that they do not protest against organized murder but approve it.

What balances the absurd is the community of men fighting against it. And if we choose to serve that community, we choose to serve the dialogue carried to the absurd against any policy of falsehood or of silence. That's the way one is free with others. . . .<sup>14</sup>

The universal order cannot be built from above, in other words through an idea; but rather from below, in other words through the common basis which. . . .<sup>15</sup>

The phrase is unfinished but we can easily reconstruct the rest of Camus's idea from other passages in the notebooks: when men resolve to speak out, they define for one another the absurd. When they find themselves in the presence of the absurd and recognize the need for Revolt against it, their own lives acquire the meaning and the direction which alone overcome the absurd. This is Love.

Thus starting from the absurd it is not possible to live revolt without reaching at some point or other an experience of love that is still undefined.<sup>16</sup>

In *The Myth of Sisyphus*, man who has come to terms with the absurd does not yield to the temptation of suicide—a form of "resignation" or demission. On the contrary, man makes something out of the absurd by not agreeing to it. "The absurd has meaning only in so far as it is not agreed to."<sup>17</sup>

The Rebel must face a difficult dialectical choice between a passive and religious resignation (the yogi) and active revolutionary commitment (the commissar)—a choice which Camus also describes as being "between God and history." The Rebel chooses neither the absolute and transcendent God who "explains everything" and gets rid of the absurd, nor a historical dynamic which promises to wipe out all absurdity in the future, while in the present it wipes out the people who are responsible for all the absurdity. In his refusal of either of these consolations, the "absurd man" maintains the possibility of a vocation to Revolt.

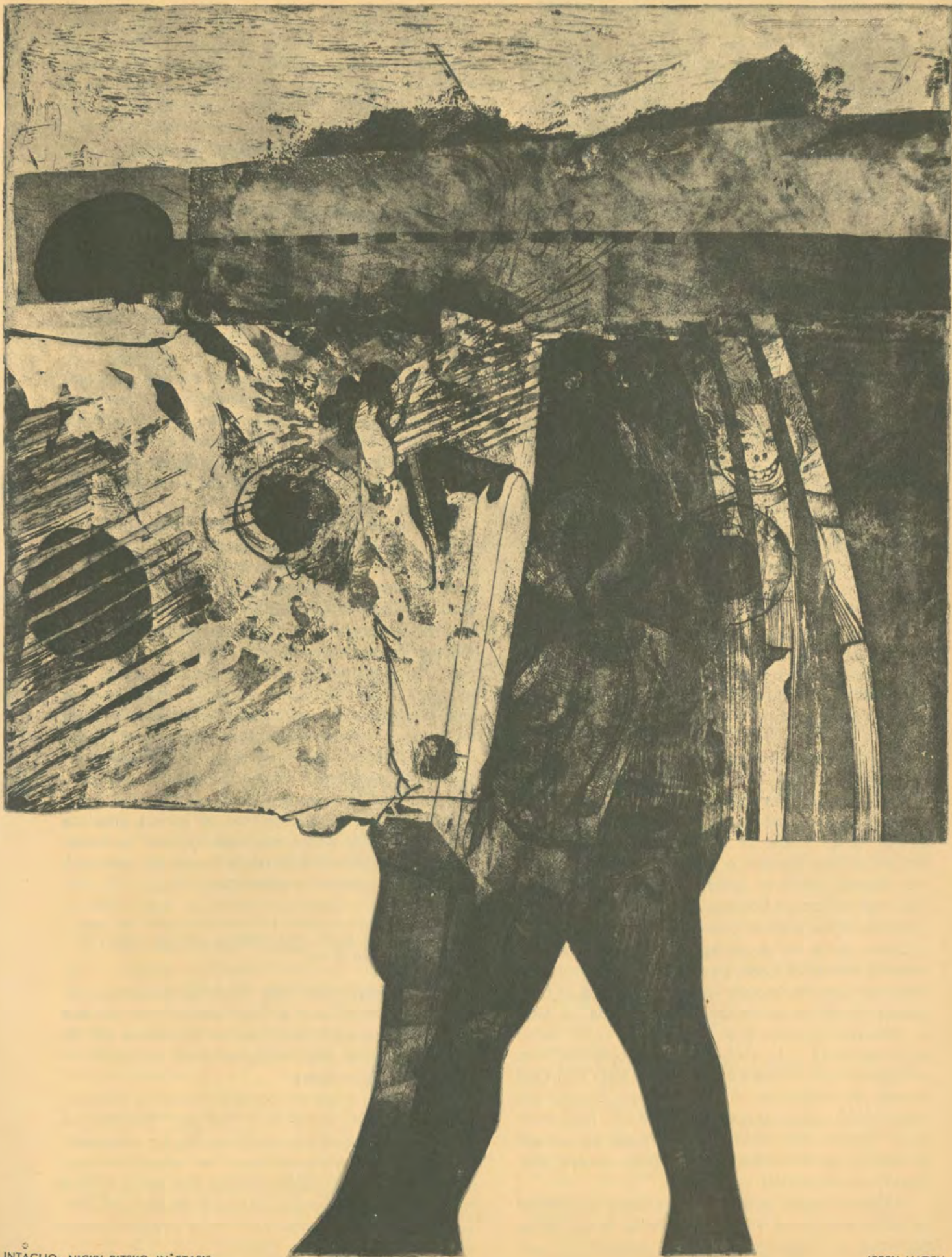
Relation of the absurd to revolt. If the final decision is to reject suicide in order to maintain the confrontation, this amounts implicitly to admitting life as the only factual value, the one that allows the confrontation, the value without which nothing. Whence it is clear that to obey that absolute value, whoever rejects suicide likewise rejects murder, or the justification of murder. Ours is the era which having carried nihilism to its extreme conclusions has accepted suicide. This can be verified in the ease with which we accept murder or the justification of murder. The man who kills himself alone still maintains one value, which is the life of others. . . . But the men of Terror have carried the values of suicide to their extreme consequence which is legitimate murder, in other words collective suicide. Illustration: the Nazi apocalypse in 1945.<sup>18</sup>

The great danger to lucidity and to revolt is the silent acquiescence in absurdity: the homage of unquestioning acceptance which the majority of men offer to the political idol. Hence the obligation to speak.

Mankind's dialogue has just come to an end. And naturally a man with whom one cannot reason is a man to be feared. The result is that—besides those who have not spoken out because they thought it useless—a vast conspiracy of silence has spread all about us, a conspiracy accepted by those who are frightened and who rationalize their fears in order to hide them from themselves, a conspiracy fostered by those whose interest it is to do so. . . .<sup>19</sup>

(We confront a world) where murder is legitimate, and where human life is considered trifling. This is the great political question of our times, and before dealing with other issues one must take a position on it. Before anything can be done, two questions must be put: "Do you or do you not, directly or indirectly, want to be killed or assaulted? Do you or do you not, directly or indirectly, want to kill or assault?" All who say "No" to both these questions are automatically committed to a series of consequences which must modify their way of posing the problem.<sup>20</sup>

It is obvious that neither side in the power struggle really claims to want death or killing. But Camus believes that the power struggle is essentially a dilemma in which both sides must in the end, in spite of all their professed humanistic and peaceful aims, be committed to unlimited killing because of their implicit justification of mass-murder, a justification which is at the heart of their absurdity. Camus cites with approval Simone Weil's remark that official history is a matter of believing the self-justifications of murderers.



## Religious Pacifism Doomed

But can one escape implication in a murderous power-struggle? Is there another choice? What about the choice of religious nonviolence?

Since in fact Camus did at times speak like a pacifist and came so close to the nonviolent position, his adversaries thought that to refute Camus it was enough to refute nonviolence. To one of these critics (a Marxist), Camus replied in 1948:

I have never argued for non-violence . . . I do not believe that we ought to answer blows with blessings. I believe that violence is inevitable, and the years of the (Nazi) occupation have convinced me of it . . . I do not say that one must suppress all violence, which would be desirable but, in fact, utopian. I only say that we must refuse all legitimization of violence, whether this legitimization comes from an absolute *raison d'état* or from a totalitarian philosophy. *Violence is at the same time unavoidable and unjustifiable.*<sup>21</sup>

Hence violence must always be confined to the strictest possible limits. In an age of nuclear war, complicity with violence and force is a criminal absurdity and hence Camus is, in practice, a 'nuclear pacifist.' In the face of the disastrous consequences of atomic war, he has no other choice but "the fight against war and the very long effort to establish a true international democracy."<sup>22</sup>

What about Christian nonviolence? Camus admits that such a philosophy is possible and reasonable. In fact: "In today's world a philosophy of eternity alone can justify nonviolence."<sup>23</sup> He agrees here with Gandhi, for whom *Ahimsa* (the principle of nonviolence) was not really possible without faith in God. Unfortunately, to solve the problem of killing by a resort to God is, for Camus, no solution. It merely raises once again the whole question of the metaphysic of evil. The lucid Rebel cannot choose a nonviolence based on faith in God because he cannot choose God. To choose God, for Camus, is to choose an *explanation* and hence to evade the bitter honesty of direct confrontation with the absurd, "without appeal" to any force other than that of human honesty and courage within the confines of the human condition.

Camus does not argue against God. The absurd is not a denial of God. Like the radical Protestant death-of-God theologians who often appeal to him, Camus simply discards the whole notion of God as irrelevant because it is *inaccessible* to the mind and experience of so many modern people. He does not go so far as to make a basic act of faith that God *cannot be accessible* to any modern believer as some of the radical theologians seem to. He simply says: "If today one could neither live nor act outside of God, a great number of Westerners would perhaps be condemned to sterility."<sup>24</sup>

In Camus's eyes, religious nonviolence is doomed to failure because it is in fact unfaithful to the actual condition of (unbelieving) man. It is based on pre-

suppositions which most men simply no longer find acceptable or even conceivable. Thus in fact, in his eyes, the choice of religious nonviolence based on an appeal to God and to eternity would end only in political quietism, in silence, in resignation, in acceptance of injustice, in final submission to one side or the other in the worldly power struggle.

At the same time, religious nonviolence is to him suspect because it savors of the futile desire of the bourgeois to convince himself of his perfect innocence. A religious nonviolence produces in its devotee a pure and virtuous conscience, a sense of subjective righteousness which may blind him to the fact that he is still deeply involved in collective guilt and violence. We must be very careful not to impute this desire of moral unassailability to Camus's Rebel. If the Rebel rejects a purely religious nonviolence, it is because he insists on not regarding himself as any more innocent and "pure" than anyone else. True revolt is not clothed in virtuous justification: it has nothing to be proud of but its own naked lucidity and anguish in the presence of the absurd—and its love of man who is caught in absurdity.

One more complaint against religious nonviolence. It is, Camus suggests, inclined to accept defeat virtuously rather than to engage in efficacious combat. For him, nonviolence in the pure state is demission, resignation or simply illusion. The true Rebel, according to Camus, is allowed to choose neither terror and murder on one hand nor resignation, nonviolence and silence on the other. The question arises why Camus so easily identifies nonviolence with silence, submission and passivity when authentic nonviolent resistance is active and should be highly articulate, since, if it is understood in the Gandhian sense, it demands much more lucidity and courage than the use of force does.

In any case, Camus refuses to accept absolute nonviolence. His Rebel may take up arms, and may indeed be compelled by duty to do so, but with one most important reservation:

Authentic action in revolt will consent to arm itself only for institutions which limit violence, not for those that give it the force of law.<sup>25</sup>

This is all very fine—but what war-making institution does not claim to be limiting violence and fighting for peace? The massive escalation of the Vietnam war by the Pentagon is all, allegedly, in order to *limit* violence!

Camus does, however, come very close to the non-violent position. While admitting that violence and killing may, in certain circumstances, be necessary, he lays down one condition: he who kills must do so only on the understanding that he is willing to pay for the adversary's life with his own. In this, Camus points with approval to the revolutionaries of the 1905 uprising in Russia.<sup>26</sup>



This idealistic example is perhaps aesthetically satisfying but has no real application in politics. It is at best one symbolic and edifying instance. The real meaning of Camus' position is to be sought elsewhere.

### Context for Choosing

Camus left the way open for the use of force in a situation where there might be no other way of liberating oneself from intolerable opposition. He did not declare *a priori* that nonviolence was necessarily more efficacious in the long run than force, since he doubted that most people would be capable of understanding and practicing nonviolence in its highest religious sense. To preach an abstract and ideal nonviolence and to deliver this doctrine into the hands of people who do not understand it, leaving them to improvise and experiment with it, would simply play into the hands of the violent. Perhaps, too, Camus was thinking of the problem that arises when the illuminated moralist, speaking from the Olympian heights of privilege, presumes to make ideal choices for others whose situation is far from privileged.

Camus's Rebel "is not only [in rebellion] a slave against master, but *he is man against the world of master and slave.*"<sup>27</sup> The logic of Revolt is not that of destruction but of creation.<sup>28</sup> It is basically "a protest against death."<sup>29</sup> The Rebel cannot take refuge in self-righteousness: he recognizes in himself the same universal tendencies toward murder and despair. "The value that keeps him on his feet is never given him once for all, he must constantly maintain it in existence."<sup>30</sup> He cannot take refuge, either, in the self-assurance provided by a religious or political system that guarantees infallible knowledge. He must admit a "calculated ignorance" and never affirm more than he actually knows. He must be faithful to "human limits" and the "human measure" and he must be ready to risk even inevitable violence, because to pretend exemption from this would seem to be a denial of the human condition and an attempted evasion from practical reality.

Let the basic choice remains this: *the refusal to be a murderer or the accomplice of murderers*, and this demands above all the resolute refusal to accept any system which rests directly and essentially on the justification of killing, especially mass-killing, whether by war or by more subtle forms of destructive domination.

Over the expanse of five continents throughout the coming years an endless struggle is going to be pursued between violence and friendly persuasion, a struggle in which, granted, the former has a thousand times the chances of success than that of the latter. But I have always held that, if he who bases his hopes on human nature is a fool, he who gives up in the face of circumstances is a coward. And henceforth the only honorable course will be to stake everything on a formidable gamble: that words are more powerful than munitions.<sup>31</sup>

RODNEY FREW

INTAGLIO: MEMORIAL



### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Germaine Bree, *Camus*, Revised edition, New York, 1964, p. 27.
- <sup>2</sup> An interview, December 1948, in *Camus Essais*, Pleiade edition Vol. II, pp. 1587-1588.
- <sup>3</sup> "Response a' E d'Astier" *Actuelles*, I., Pleiade. Vol. II. p. 358.
- <sup>4</sup> Quoted in G. Bree, *Op. cit.*, p. 57.
- <sup>5</sup> "Neither Victims nor Executioners," translated by Dwight MacDonald in *The Pacifist Conscience*, ed. by Peter Mayer, N.Y. 1966, p. 424.
- <sup>6</sup> *Notebooks*, 1935-1942, translated by P. Thodey, N.Y. 1963, p. 64.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.
- <sup>8</sup> *L'Homme Revolte*, pp. 154, 155.
- <sup>9</sup> *Notebooks*, 1935-1942, p. 54.
- <sup>10</sup> See Pleiade edition, Vol. II, p. 1569.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1567.
- <sup>12</sup> *Notebooks*, 1942-1951, p. 144.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 147.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.
- <sup>17</sup> *The Myth of Sisyphus*, trans. by Justin O'Brien, Anchor Books edn. N.Y., p. 24.
- <sup>18</sup> *Notebooks*, 1942-1951, p. 149.
- <sup>19</sup> "Neither Victims nor Executioners," in *The Pacifist Conscience*, p. 424.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 425.
- <sup>21</sup> "Response a' E d'Astier," *Actuelles* I. Pleiade ed., Vol. II, p. 355.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 359.
- <sup>23</sup> *L'Homme Revolte*.
- <sup>24</sup> Interview, 15 November 1945, see Pleiade edition, Vol. II, p. 1426.
- <sup>25</sup> *L'Homme Revolte*, p. 360.
- <sup>26</sup> *L'Homme Revolte*.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 351.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 352.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 352.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 353.
- <sup>31</sup> "Neither Victims nor Executioners," *Op. cit.*, p. 438.

# An Introduction to Some Friends

*Recently I traveled over a large portion of the country in search of young artists who might be interested in publishing their work in motive. And incidentally, I wanted to see if there was any sign of a neo-regionalism developing in the visual arts, a favorite notion of mine that I tend to labor. In the future I hope to advance this view as a reaction to the New York One World Esthetic with a certain "I told you so" attitude. But it is not yet time to write this article, for only in the rarest instance are there artists who are doing the folk-art I envision.*

*McLuhan doesn't encourage regionalist statements either for he is extremely persuasive in his concept of the global village where communications media constantly brings imagery developed throughout the world to the attention of all the tribe, and its effect is especially great upon the artists. What is happening as the artist responds is the evolving of a visual language of sensibility in authentic human encounter which transcends any regional limits. For what is being said in this visual process, in a beautifully unexpected way, is that a sensitivity to others that approaches a Christian brotherly love, in its truest sense a caring that keeps faith with a life lived totally, can move beyond mythology.*

*It can achieve this because the creative process is an act of personal revelation. An equally open response on the part of the perceiver of an authentic image can result in enriched self-understanding and a greater capacity for sensual experience. This is sustaining the hope of the young for whom these artists speak generally. As a result they will be able, in the most human way, to touch one another psychically.*

*The works of some of these artists are featured on the following pages. Having faith in them, I am willing to keep my neo-regionalist notions to myself as they develop the soft sounds of their own voices, opening themselves to us in the process.*

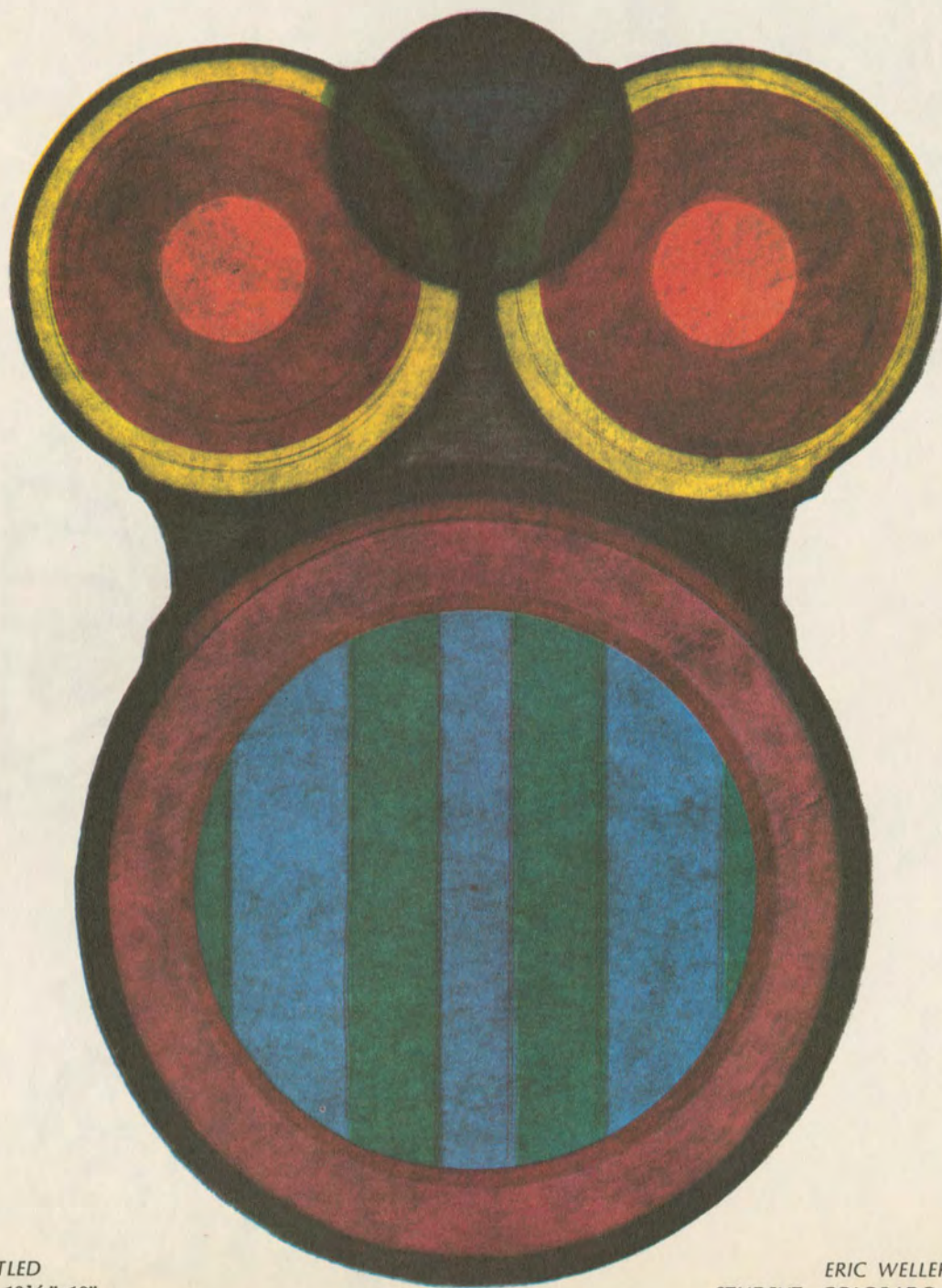
—DENNIS AKIN

# SELECTIONS

*A gathering of prints by university artists,*

*disclosing an imagery*

*which becomes the language and the fact of authentic experience*



UNTITLED  
INTAGLIO: 13½"x18"

ERIC WELLER  
STUDENT: COLORADO UNIVERSITY



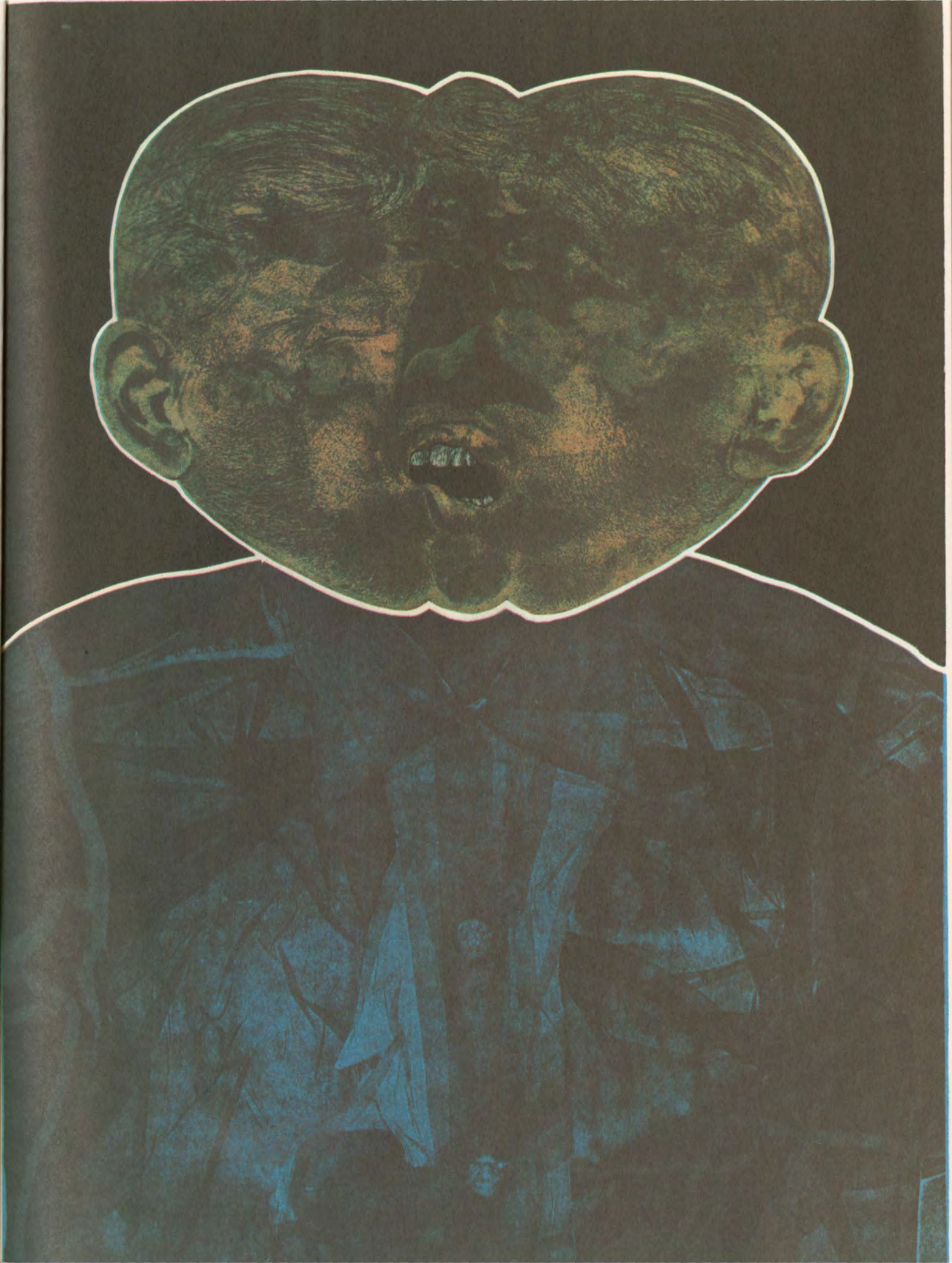
PALMER CHALLELA  
SOLAR FLARE EVALUATION  
INTAGLIO: 12"x22<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>"  
STUDENT: COLORADO UNIVERSITY



RICHARD HAYES  
PETERLASHARO  
INTAGLIO: 17<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"x23<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"  
STUDENT: NEBRASKA UNIVERSITY

TOM COLEMAN  
PLUTO  
ENGRAVING: 11"x13"  
PROFESSOR: NEBRASKA UNIVERSITY







GUNARS STRAZDINS  
ALE  
PHOTOELECTRIC ENGRAVING: 16"x24"  
STUDENT: COLORADO UNIVERSITY



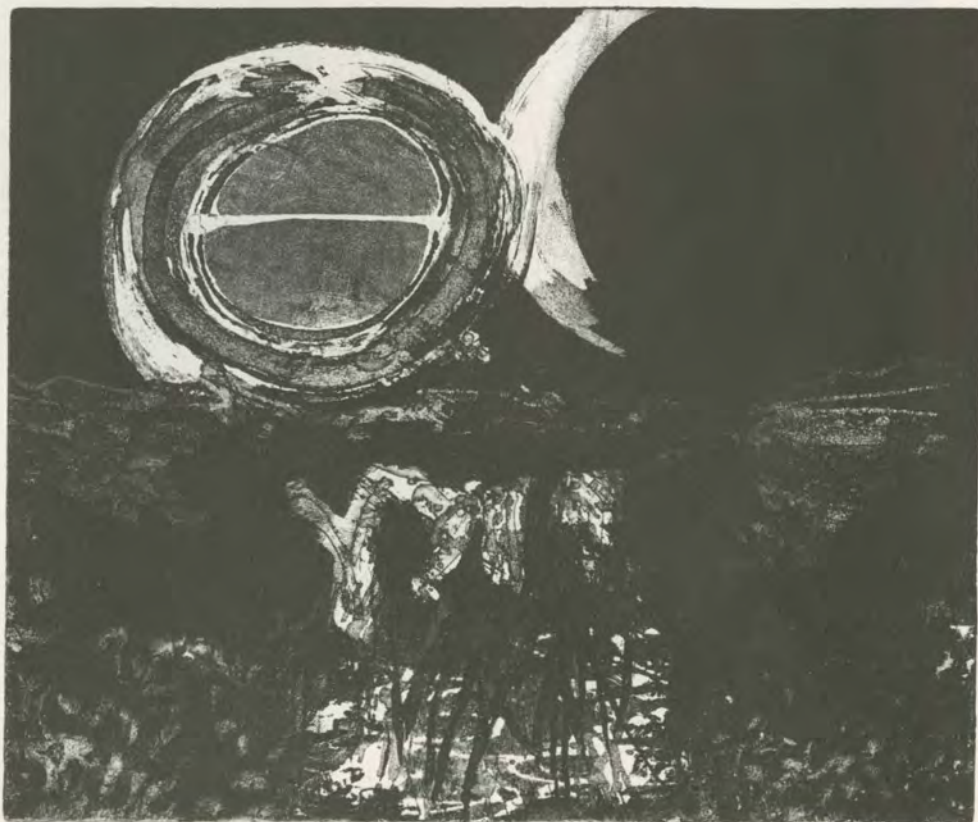
SUSAN B. HALE  
A PORTRAIT OF YESTERDAY, FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT TOMORROW  
INTAGLIO: 15 $\frac{1}{8}$ "x9 $\frac{3}{4}$ "  
PROFESSOR: MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY



ROGER BAILEY  
UNTITLED  
LITHOGRAPH: 20"x24<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>"  
STUDENT: NEBRASKA UNIVERSITY

JAMES BUTLER  
ON THE BEACH  
COLLOGRAPH: 23"x30<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>"  
STUDENT: NEBRASKA UNIVERSITY

TOM TOPERZER  
THE BIRTH OF A TERRIBLE BEAUTY  
INTAGLIO: 17<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>"x14<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"  
STUDENT: NEBRASKA UNIVERSITY









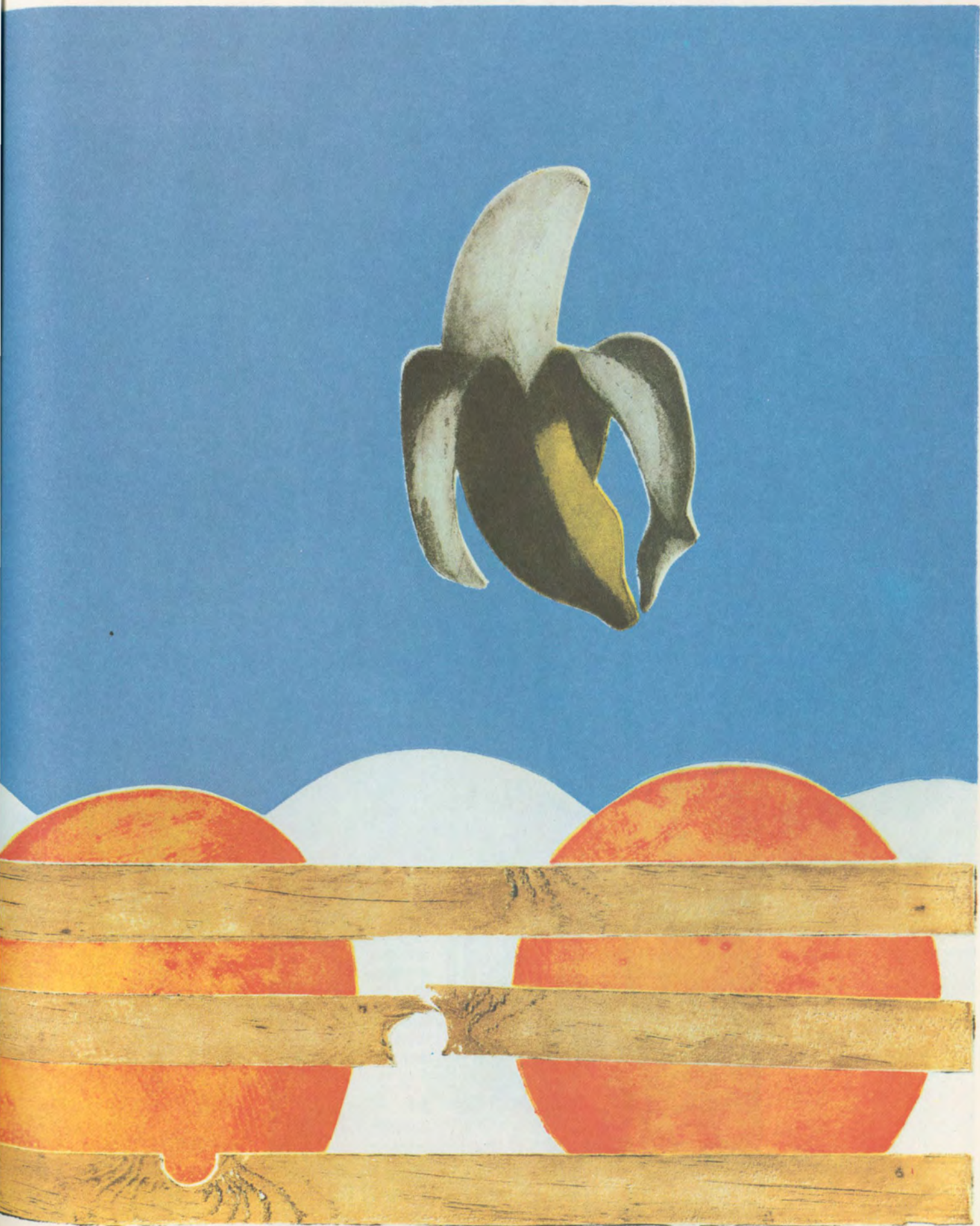
KEITH ACHEPOHL  
MEMENTO MORI  
INTAGLIO: 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ "x23 15/16"  
PROFESSOR: HOPE COLLEGE

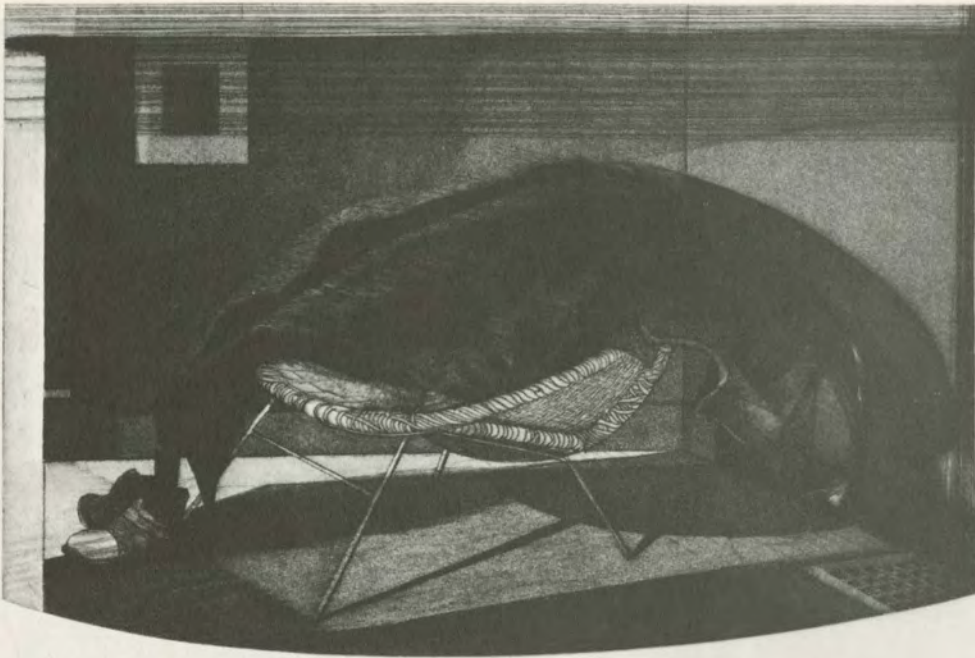
DON CORTESE  
FROM "CANIDAE"  
ETCHING: 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ "x9 $\frac{1}{4}$ "  
PROFESSOR: SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY



WES SIMPSON  
PIE IN THE SKY  
INTAGLIO, COLLOGRAPH: 26¼"x19¾"  
STUDENT: NEBRASKA UNIVERSITY







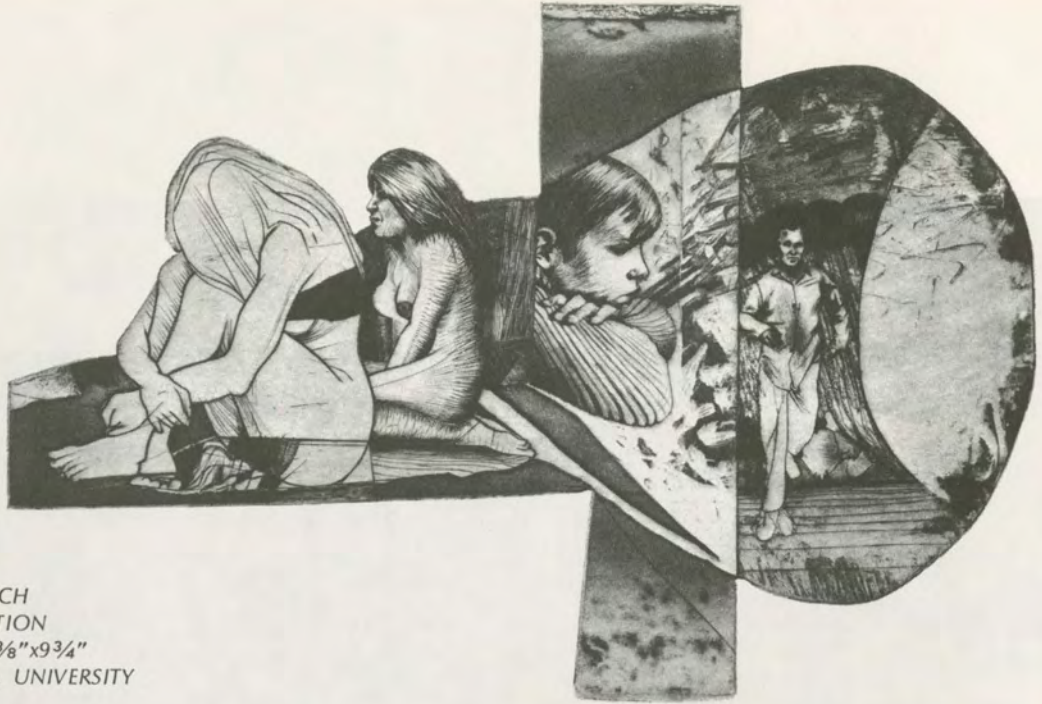
HAROLD BOYD  
INTERIOR  
INTAGLIO: 16 $\frac{7}{8}$ "x11 $\frac{1}{4}$ "  
PROFESSOR: ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

RITA MESSINGER  
MATRIX  
INTAGLIO: 16"x18"  
STUDENT: MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



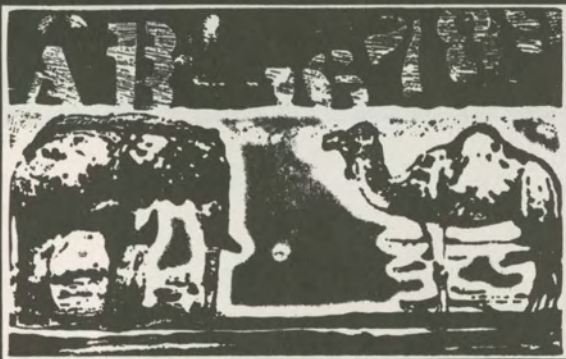


JOHN T. HUGHES  
AT RIGHT OF NINE  
SERIGRAPH: 22 $\frac{1}{4}$ "x15 $\frac{1}{4}$ "  
STUDENT: NEBRASKA UNIVERSITY



JERRY HATCH  
ENCULTURATION  
ENGRAVING: 14 $\frac{3}{8}$ "x9 $\frac{3}{4}$ "  
STUDENT: NEBRASKA UNIVERSITY

RICHARD ASH  
DROMEDARY CAMEL  
RELIEF INTAGLIO: 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ "x13 $\frac{3}{8}$ "  
PROFESSOR: MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY

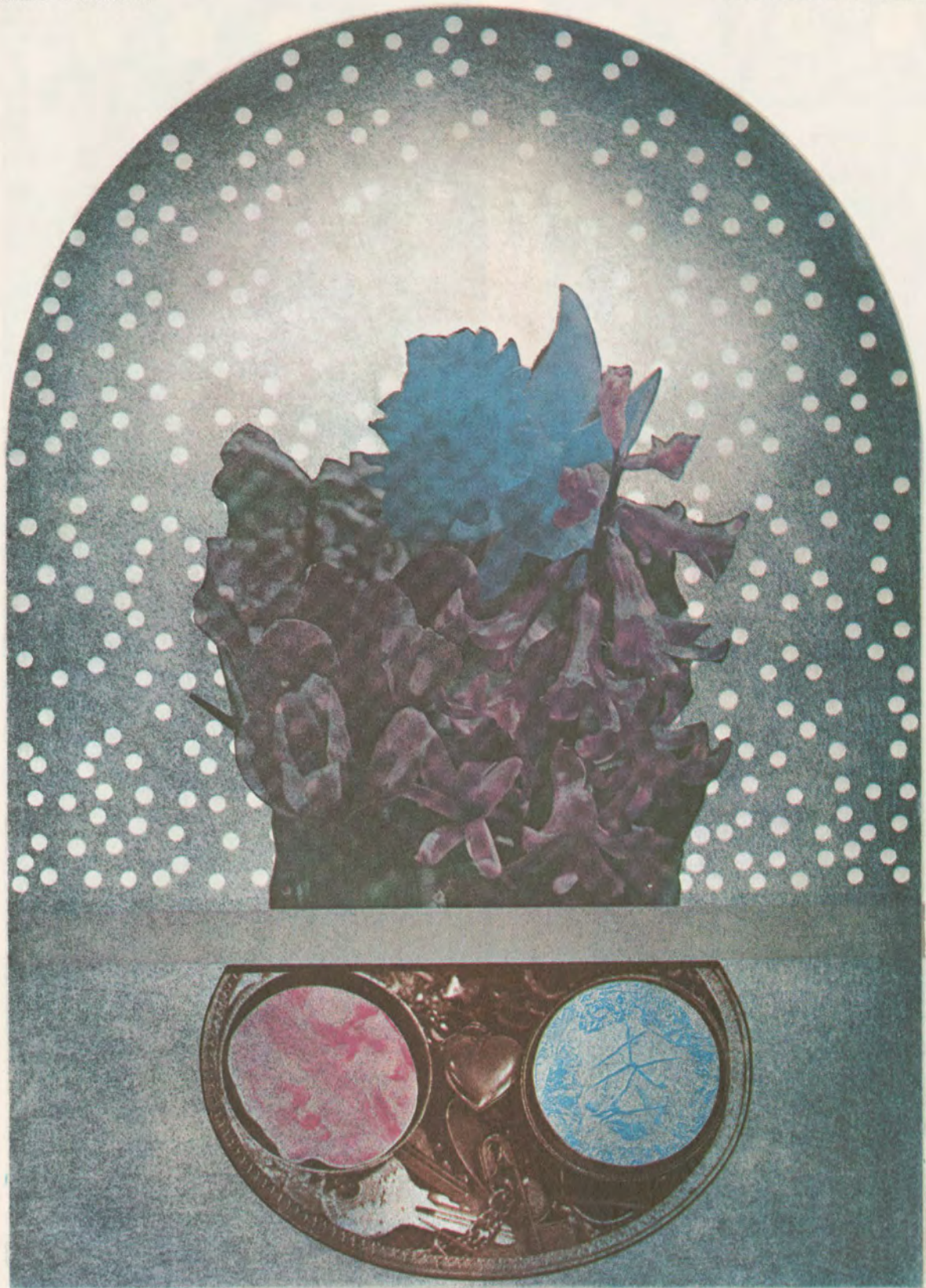


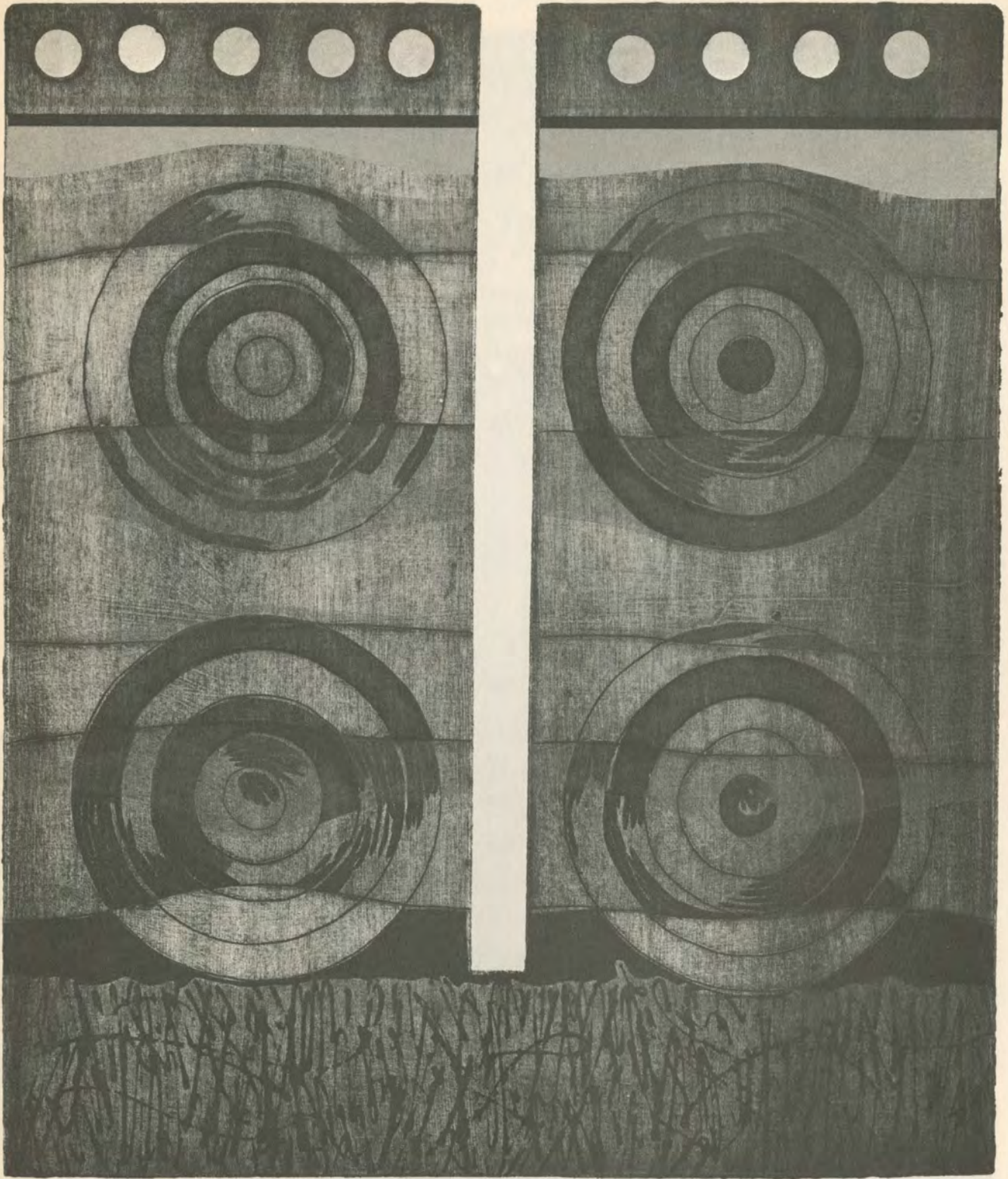


GUNARS STRAZDINS  
COLORADO UNIVERSITY

17 $\frac{3}{4}$ "x23 $\frac{3}{4}$ "

DOME  
PHOTOELECTRIC ENGRAVING





GEORGE NAMA  
COMPUTER LANDSCAPE #3  
SERIGRAPH, COLLOGRAPH: 17 $\frac{1}{8}$ "x19 $\frac{1}{4}$ "  
PROFESSOR: PITTSBURGH UNIVERSITY

A LAST LETTER TO MY BROTHER  
IN VIETNAM

They found you starved  
eating from a bowl  
of nuts and bolts  
that was your gun  
dismantled. Your full eyes  
stared the sun down.

Robert, come home.  
Leave your tattered grave  
and iron worship  
to your betters.  
We will murder you  
decently beneath the trees.

By the moon I see  
you are dumb earth  
and I cram your mouth  
with berries and sick cream.  
Come home to your mad  
family. You are dead.

—JOHN L'HEUREUX

WAITING FOR THE MAIL

In his  
square painted truck, packages  
grow like brown mushrooms. Small  
packets, strung and wrapped, ride  
for days under his watchful eye,  
and he waits for the right moment  
to deliver the rotting basket  
of pears, cleverly rooted  
in cellophane, that are sent  
to our cross and aging neighbor  
down the hill. Magazines come,  
a month out of date. I suspect  
he reads them at lunch, behind  
the empty sacks, for they reek  
of mayonnaise and soft tomatoes.

He claims truce  
with our dog, who would devour him,  
truck and all, for his trespasses.  
And I hate him, for he brings me  
what is my due: circulars of forty  
gallon water heaters. Letters have  
turned a shriveled side to the sun  
as they lay, drying in his truck,  
brown in the folds, while the careful  
ink blurs its last known address,  
becomes illegible, like the remains  
of friends who move out of touch,  
or your promised package, the gift  
that has not come.

—ADRIANNE MARCUS



## TRIAL BY FIRE

By Daniel Berrigan, S.J.

**T**he issues of our recent trial in Baltimore were not encompassed in the fate of the nine of us who stood accused . . . nor in the charges set against us. Legally, that was the business of the court, but the real issues centered around decency, justice and community, not around charges rendered by the prosecution and decisions handed down by the jury.

These issues are neither new nor peculiar to the handful of us who faced sentencing in Federal Court in Baltimore on November 8. Rather, these are issues younger people have brooded about with far greater risk for a much longer time than we nine entered upon them, and they are serious issues, indeed.

The present impasse of the traditional structures of society makes these issues crucial to

whatever human future, whatever human hope we can claim. They are deeply embedded in American society itself and in the history of a continuing experience of revolution. Expressed as they were in a rather dramatic way at the trial, they possibly form paradigms upon which we might judge where we are and where we are going. It is on this very concrete basis that I want to focus.

The events leading up to the trial and the trial itself suggest a number of paradigmatic questions about our attitudes toward war and toward the law itself. Out of our Maryland actions—in Catonsville last May and in Baltimore in November—emerge the questions of how our posture toward Vietnam relates to a historical concept of war, and how this concept conditions and is con-

ditioned by our perception of all suffering and of death itself.

Inherent in the courtroom proceedings are several possible paradigms about the role of the judicial system in American life. How do attitudes toward human justice and the letter of the law, as exemplified in this particular trial, reveal the general relationship of law and order to a healthy society? Does this failure of the law to deal with the key question of what it means to be human indicate what we can expect from other institutions as they come to grips with the same problem?

At the outset, we nine saw our action in a common light, both from the historical viewpoint of a community of faith and our views of the needs of society and of international life. We hoped our experiences perhaps would urge others to discover alter-

natives to death, the imposition of death, the socializing of death, the technologizing of death. We saw our actions as a social method of achieving the future.

Many of us—myself from a European, African, Latin-American experience—were sick unto death of death as a definition of the American way of so-called “life.” We wanted to say, quite simply and clearly, at Catonsville, in the court, and in the prison that undoubtedly will follow, that something different—radically different—is still possible, and that we ourselves were interposing a kind of qualitative possibility of achieving that difference.

Also, from a background of many cultural and religious experiences ranging from Guatemala to North Vietnam to Africa to Eastern Europe to Russia to the American ghettos, we were trying to converge in a single judgment about our society and its conduct in the world—about our way of dealing with the living and, by implication, with the unborn and, certainly, with the dead.

This conviction and this intent arose at a time when Secretary of State Rusk was emphasizing that Vietnam is an “exemplary war among developing peoples”—a war “from which light upon many other wars” may come. This is his phrase, not mine, and it contains, it seems to me, two ominous predictions for us, one implied and the other spelled out by the eminent statesman himself in his article in *The Atlantic Monthly*.

The first implication is clear. Vietnam is a warning—a warning of the pace and direction, as well as the social and political structures, allowable in the developing world. It stands as an indication of the extent to which American determination, by every device of foreign policy, economic investment, and military perfection, will permit change to occur among people desperately in need of rapid and radical socialization. Vietnam is a warning is-

sued to the third world that those nations should not change paces or directions unless they are compatible with our vision of human history and human development.

Out of this “exemplary” nature of the war, there follows the practical tactics which Dean Rusk dwells on: it is allowable, in a controlled war situation such as Vietnam, that we ourselves experiment with new weaponry and turn the genius of technological improvement of weaponry largely upon civilian populations as a controlling, destructive factor.

So, as three of us could witness from the Latin American scene, it is entirely possible that after this war is settled, the same thing will break out elsewhere. Quite likely in Guatemala, perhaps within a year. As Dean Rusk has promised us, the American people may expect fifty years of “Vietnams” after this one.

In the discussions that went on for months in preparation for our trial, we concluded that if the principle of Dean Rusk were accepted and his implicit methodology allowed to follow, that we ourselves were obligated, by every canon known to civilized and Christian people, to interpose ourselves, our freedom, our good name, and our security. At this time, we felt we must enter not only into equivalent conditions of risk with the young, but also into equivalent situations of suffering, separation, disgrace, and possibly even death. All of these are requirements necessary to keep the war—not the peace—going. So, from two points of view, we wanted to find a kind of new spiritual geography out of which to operate.

We must enter, it seemed to us, into a situation of total peace with our total persons, since the nature of modern war is such that it is total in principle and totalizing in effect. Throughout our history of wars, beginning with our own revolution, a preliminary requirement for a generation’s being truly “American” seemed to be

the demand that many young people enter situations where death was the proximate expectation of risk.

And in the case of modern war, the word total had taken on even more ominous overtones. A second or third world war is no longer necessary in order for the war to be qualitatively total. Modern war also totalizes its claim upon the person. Its rhetoric constructs an atmosphere, a pollution, which to breathe is to die. That is the totalizing effect which must be transferred—in growth, purity, clarity, and modesty—to the peace scene.

We realized, before we entered into this social jeopardy, that there would be no opportunity for an open, undecided plea before the court. So we must enter with different ambitions, a different vocabulary, and even, I dare to say, different spiritual resources, into that scene of law and lawlessness. Since in principle, the courts, up to the Supreme Court itself, are congenitally unwilling, especially in wartime, to enter into the moral and legal questions of war itself, we felt that we as civilized men must use the courtroom to achieve some public audibility about who we were and what we were about. The issues of the war—those very issues of constitutionality, of free speech and morality—might thereby be separated from our personal or corporate fate. We had to attain some kind of personal freedom before ever acting at all, at least to the degree of achieving a certain spiritual detachment from the fact of prison. So, in a sense, the scenario of the trial was written before the action itself occurred.

At the outset, we decided tactically that the trial should be extremely brief . . . as brief as we could make it. We would have been satisfied and happy with a single day in court. We were trying to wave aside as irrelevant—as a kind of fatty excrescence

upon the bone and musculature of our cause—all those legal devices by which one equivocates about what he actually has done against the law.

So, on the first day, we consumed some hour and a half abstaining from the formalities of a selection of a jury, allowing that the first twelve (first fifteen including alternates), should be chosen among those who came forward. Whatever questioning of prospective jurors occurred was in the hands of the prosecution and the judge. As early as possible, we sought to dramatize that we ourselves, in a hopeful and not a despairing way, were indifferent to our own fate.

From the outset, we sought to identify with those in the streets and the ghettos, with those powerless youths who face at least equivalent risks, and, indeed, with all the poor and powerless, those at the outer end of our "merciful" activity in economics, politics, militarism, and diplomacy throughout the world. We tried to achieve a certain clarity about our own spirit and faith with which to manifest a visible unity between the events and statements in the courtroom and those thousands gathered in the city to support us and, by implication, to support that larger world of victims symbolized by the war.

Viewed in the long range of human existence, we took a minute step in the direction of humanization. We told our stories as simply and directly as we knew how. We related how, from many different points of the compass, different ages, different traditions, we had converged upon the one judgment that if the war were total, the peace also must be total in its claim upon the person. No longer can we place upon a certain age group the burden of our original sin—that sin which is the oldest in the book of Genesis and constantly reinvigorated, restated as original for each generation by the forg-

ing of a new language of hatred, division, and methodological death.

Out of this came, I think, on the last day of the trial, a rather extraordinary exchange with the judge. We were told it was something that had not occurred before, not merely in the political trials of this war, but within anyone's memory in that courtroom. That is, after the jury had retired with his charge, the judge invited us to speak in open court about our impressions of the trial, the issues, and the reception we had received. So, for some hour and a half, we engaged in a very heated, intense, and, I think at times, profound exchange with this old man who was finding perhaps that his old age was being renewed by those before him.

The verdict delivered within the hour was an entirely predictable one; all defendants found guilty on all counts. The trial itself perhaps may serve as one of those symbolic moments in the history of a people who increasingly are unsure of their capacity for movement. The judge's open declaration that the issues which affected him profoundly as a man could not be raised before him in his legal robes, stands as a paradigm of the basic relationship of the whole legal structure to the health of a society. And this, it seems to me, is another way of stating what in reality is the only question for us in times of social crisis—that is, who are we?

Throughout a history of social crises, from the Revolution through the nineteenth century and the bitter division of the War between the States, the abolitionists, the shining case and writings of Thoreau, the infinitely more vexing question of individuals' entrance or non-entrance into World War II, to the present and our own war, this has been the question. A society discovers itself mercilessly in the mirror of its hour of crisis. There is no point in any of us searching for identity merely in times of normalcy, for

we cannot really see ourselves in that clouded mirror of unexamined affluence.

No, we need to clear the mirror. We need to discover, at the actual point of human life and death, what our attitudes toward one another are, toward the continuing adventure of being human beings; or toward the end of that adventure, as we ourselves declare the adventure ended. So, now when the stench of the dying—the innocent, the children, the soldiers—is rising in our nostrils, it is particularly important in this least auspicious moment, when ordinary men have the least inclination, time, and depth available for reflection, that we raise the question "who are we?"

What is the temperature? What are our resources? How much dissidence can we bear as a sign of health? How many threats to how many pieces of paper can we endure? How much can we rely on our own skills in determining the weight of human life and the weight of paper? In times of great stress to good men, are we capable of judging the difference between property and human beings? Indeed, are we capable of admitting threats to the law as contributions to human life?

At one point in our exchange, the judge said, "Of course, you're good men. Of course, I honor you. Of course, the evidence of this day has been moving to all within the court. But these are not the questions."

I suggest that these are exactly the questions. Whatever the subtle means of inherited and unexamined jurisprudence, you cannot separate questions of life and death from questions of law. Whatever the means of unexamined traditional adherence to the law, you cannot transform the law court into a city morgue in which questions of passion, soul, and conscience are excluded in principle, and the bodies on the table undergo an autopsy.

The question of the Baltimore

Court was not a question of how sick we are—legally, medically, religiously, educationally, humanly. If we know our illnesses and realize they must grow worse in order to be healed, then how sick we are is not the question. The real question is—how much reality can we bear? How much human variety, how many voices, how much of life's reality pressing against the windows and walls of that court from the larger world of despair and alienation outside—how much of that can we endure?

So, I think the trial itself was a paradigm. To borrow Dean Rusk's phrase, it was exemplary. Even by such clumsy action as ours in these debates and punishments, the law itself is being subjected to the scrutiny of revolutionary times. The law is being declared less and less useful for the living, less and less the servant of peers for their peers, less and less expressive of that social passion

which in the early days of Greek and Roman jurisprudence brought the law into corporate being and set it into the biological line of man as a spiritual resource. As one of those important structures of tradition and civilization, the law's responsibility is not to its own rhetoric, its own salvation, its own privilege and power, but to man.

In every generation, the law must be answerable to its power of renewing itself in the guts of the living. Along with the church, medicine, education, and all the other structural means by which man declares himself man with his brethren, the law must rework itself into the imagination of those who purvey the law, those who violate the law, and those who suffer under the law in order that the law itself become what it says it is—*corpus humanum*—a human body.

This did not happen to us; it probably will not happen in our

lifetime. When we speak at such length and with such sternness of the failure of the law to be lawful (that is, to be favorable to human change and human hope) we are joining the law to many other elements of delayed revolution in our society—the stereotyped churches, less and less able to declare a living word of a living Lord; medical structures, especially in great cities, serving less and less human illness and human health; educational structures, less and less a function of the people, whose methods arise from and for them.

In confronting the law, we were able to reveal, at least to some thoughtful men, that Vietnam is not a question of the continuation or the end of one human outrage. It is a question which ricochets immediately and primarily upon this society and points up in one obscure courtroom the need for revolution on almost every front of American life. It points again

INK DRAWING



TOM LEWIS



INK DRAWING

TOM LEWIS

and again to the gathering storm resulting from the exclusion of more and more of our youth, our poor, and our black people from the law, hospitals, decent schools, and the church because these structures themselves have forgotten their servanthood—to be vehicles and imitators of inclusive human change.

Whatever the trial may have achieved or failed to achieve for other people, I think for us the experience was a great one—a passionate formation in a kind of human furnace. We never indulged in the romantic and unjust hope that, because of our action, others should come to agree with us. Such a hope, it seemed to me, would have only expressed an obsessiveness with ourselves and indicated a kind of closure upon our own method as a sole way. God knows, as many methods as men are required to break the impasse.

No, our hope was, quite simply and I hope modestly, that other men would grow more thoughtful where they live, that they would be able to discover, in patient revolution, all the possibilities inherent in their university campus, their church, their inner city, their work with the poor, their work with the white racist middle class, better methods than ours of saying roughly the same things.

When I was in Hanoi, one word came to me frequently and unexpectedly. That word was patience. "After all," the Vietnamese said in many ways and on many occasions, "revolution is a very long haul." They said the achievement of a decent society for them has been the work of a thousand years and is not yet finished. If we go back to the medieval invasion and occupation of their country by the Chinese and think of today's invasion, occupation, and division, we under-

stand how long the work is and how incomplete it remains after a millennium.

This, I think, was meant as a courteous correction of ourselves whose national history is but a day in comparison with their years; correction of our impatience and short-circuiting in favor of violence in response to violence; correction of our spasm of impatience that the good thing—the decent community, the structure of justice—be achieved today or tomorrow. No, they said, revolution is a patient venture.

And I thought upon my return and frequently since that we, in a very rigorous and contemplative way, must continue to juxtapose those two great notions of patience and revolution. Drawing on the heroic example of a poor and dauntless people, we believe not only that revolution is a patient project, but that patience itself is a revolutionary project.



# The Artist As Prophetic Activist

**G**oya and Picasso have expressed in their work—with terrible clarity—man's inhumanity to man. Goya's "Horrors of War" and Picasso's "Guernica" are typical examples. In a different vein, Jackson Pollack had no regrets over a 4-F classification during World War II, while Cezanne escaped conscription by fleeing to Marseilles.

As an artist, I reportedly stand alone as one who, despite immunity from the draft, took symbolic and positive action against the machinery of war—not once but twice. For these acts I have been promptly convicted, sentenced and jailed—to the abrupt interruption of career and personal life. As you might suspect, I mention this not for the sake of attention, but because I feel such a course is perfectly consistent with a defensible philosophy of art.

Therefore, why should an artist get so involved in protest that he lands in jail? In such a case, is protest an integral part of his art, or is it an expression of personal life which has no relation to his art? I prefer to think the first; I prefer to think that his art tests his view of life, and that in turn, his art is tested by his public life. Writers have always been fair game for totalitarian regimes; graphic artists far less so. But I believe that my actions ought to speak no less loudly than my art of man's inhumanity to man. And my country's crimes. And so I am in jail.

What of my view of life? I have always been privileged to know human people, to share a community, to labor with great men and women in the civil rights and peace movements. I have also experienced the richness of the poor and have felt at first hand a vast potential crushed by exploitation. Necessarily therefore, my art has been one of contrast—concern and fraternity on the one hand, and on the other, hatred and collective selfishness.

My view of life also includes the way in which my country creatively expresses its national life. Not in building a human society here at home; not in educating its people for a responsibility of world

service; not in freeing mankind from its age-old curses of war, racism and exploitation; not in sensitivity to the cries of hunger, fear and outrage around the world—but in the arrogant nonsense of world empire, of the new tribalism of the rich, of Gross National Product, dividends and profits, of sophistication of ordinance—better overkill, better germ cultures, better artillery, cluster bomb units, and napalm. Such delicious toys, such mass murder and crime are the price of empire; but another price is a nation rotting at its core, led by buffoons, its people bewildered, disillusioned or enraged, its institutions inflexible and insolent, its courts and police authoritarian and merciless. What else could possibly happen when America determines to have cake while most men starve?

I am grateful for so much these days—for friends, for the sensitivity and courage of people in love with human life and human rights! I am grateful too that the times have thrust upon me knowledge of my country, stripped of the massive pretensions and myths of the past. For I feel that without this knowledge I would resemble neither a Christian nor a human being, nor an artist worthy of his profession. For where would be the soil in which to plant the gospel, where would be the idea to be put on canvas? The times prove that we are still creatures of crisis, who are at our best—and worst—when catastrophe beckons.

But it will be the artist, I think, operating from the vantage point of his calling, who will point to the new crises which we must create for the future—crises of care and service and compassion, where competition is not for the almighty dollar, but for who can excel at serving the brother! In a word, prophecy, that essential prerogative of the Christian, and that ingredient of truly artistic work, will not warn of Armageddon, but will invite to mercy, justice and community.

—TOM LEWIS



Against the temple steps or was it  
a fender bent my nose. Was I seven?

In 1744 I was Colonial America  
memorizing names of days: in my week  
Crayola  
not yet invented, I was commanded  
carve in that same color as the rock  
and grew  
like moss, close to its stone.

I never flowered.  
Someone wasted me  
and he goes free.  
Or was his a car  
touched my face?

Martes Martes Martes Martes Martes  
all dead now.  
But I can smell a gate, a black  
:bound to this pillar, a flame  
a pinkish black: the stink  
Colonial White is burning Abraham: my name

is Abraham.  
Someone broke my nose.

Larence Shustak

# Juxtapo



# Poems

Simon Perchik

## sitions

To frame the school's last day  
kids understand how rubber  
can be trusted in the turn

they aim their sneakers  
for the wire crossing where  
there should be clouds

and build the clouds themselves.  
The cable bends, two voices  
slope inside, touch,

the height refusing every wish  
but love: these kids learn  
to build a totem by addition

their clouds too new  
to let the noose of laces snap  
and slam their raindrops down.



# The Church and Civil Disobedience

by James Groppi

The church's record on civil disobedience is blemished. Our skirts aren't clean and our admonitions are terribly inconsistent. The church laments those who advocate civil disobedience in the name of the church and in the context of the gospel, yet seldom wavers in offering tribute to saints like Joan of Arc.

It's impossible for the church not to be involved, one way or another. At times, it just sits back, as it did when it sanctioned the rape of the African continent. The established churches allowed the black man in this country to be subjected to slavery, and was slow to raise its voice in opposition. Religious silence helped Hitler in his rise to power. Even when the church is silent, it speaks.

How do churchmen have the gall to talk about civil disobedience when they are so silent, so supportive of the system? How does the church justify its presence in a state like Mississippi where ninety-seven percent of the vote in the last presidential election was white though forty percent of the population is black?

Many of us who have publicly protested the church's double standard of ethics, who have used nonviolent tactics for demonstrating our concern for humanity, have mostly met only hostility or suspicion. As we have marched and picketed and gone to jail, the same question gets repeated: "Why do you violate 'just' laws?" I remember one priest in particular. For thirteen years, he was in a parish which included a plant which employs 5,000 workers—99½% Anglo-Americans. The plant had a terrific record of discrimination. But the priest never said a word. Finally, we asked him after he had asked us about violating laws, "What about the law of God?"

Now in the black community of Milwaukee and at St. Boniface's Parish, we aren't talking about means and ends any longer. We agree completely with the Bishop of Panama who said: "When we talk about the use of violence in the struggle for equality, we're not talking so much about morality as we are talking about tactics." So if you want to discuss violence as a tactic—that's another question. But I'll have nothing to do with a discussion of the morality of violence. I've read just a little too much, seen a little too much.

And I don't like to talk about tactics without talking about specific issues, specific objectives, and effective means for obtaining ends. I still believe in the picket line, the demonstration. But its use has to be judged in accordance with an objective. If you are talking about the church and a justification for revolution, I say fine. Let's start talking. But every time the church remains silent about the injustices that are in society, she is guilty. And to talk about justifying little actions such as blocking school buses and violating a Mayor's proclamation is just sheer hypocrisy.



PHOTOGRAPH

FRANK LODGE

## *Violence*



PHOTOGRAPH

FRANK LODGE

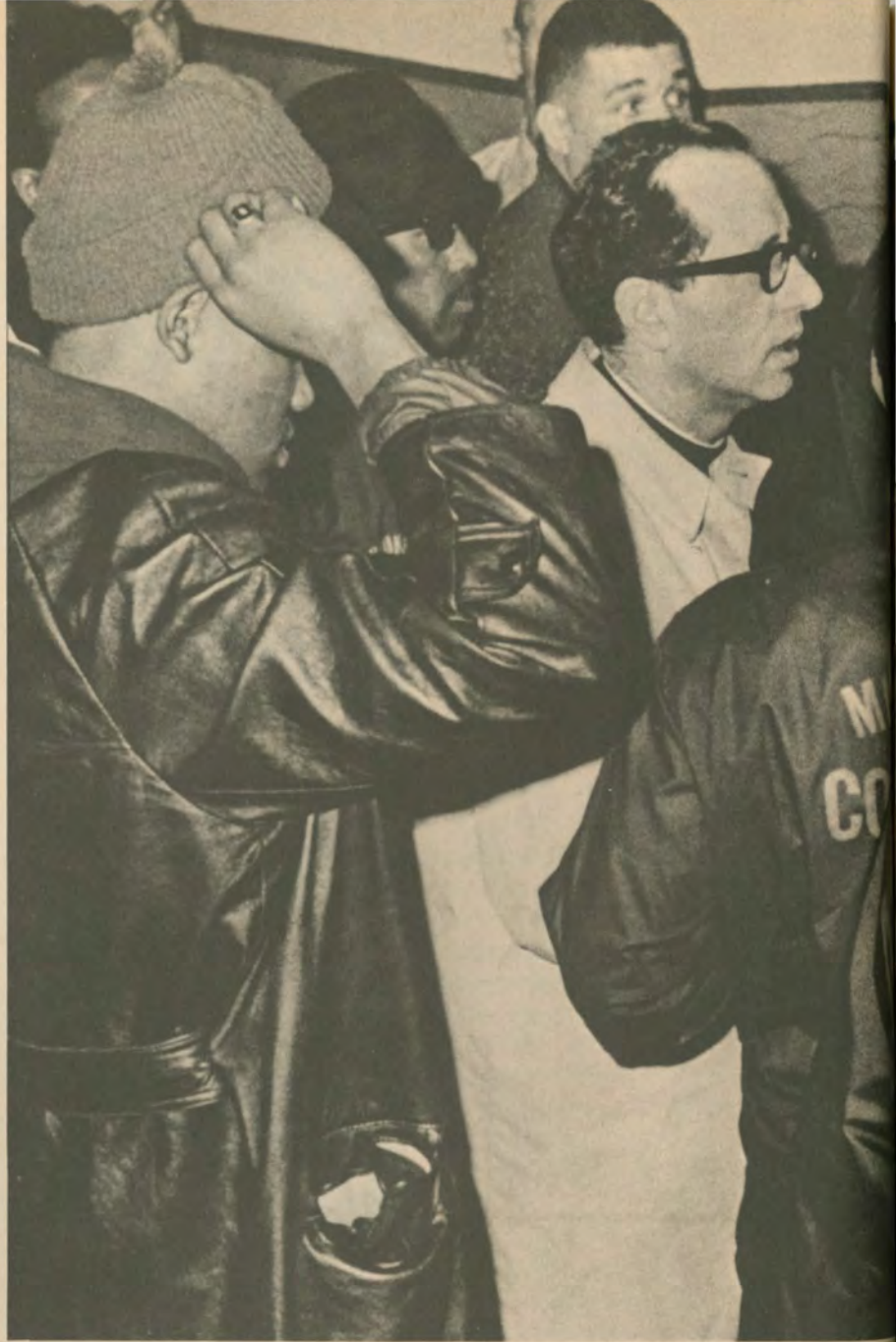
*V*iolence is many things.

*It's watching little black children go to bed at night wondering whether or not the rats will come through the wall and bite them.  
It's sitting in the house for two weeks with overcoats on and wrapped in blankets trying to keep warm.*

*Violence is watching the kids across the street walk out of the house without any shoes on.*

*It's knowing they're wondering whether they'll get a next meal.*

## *Courts*

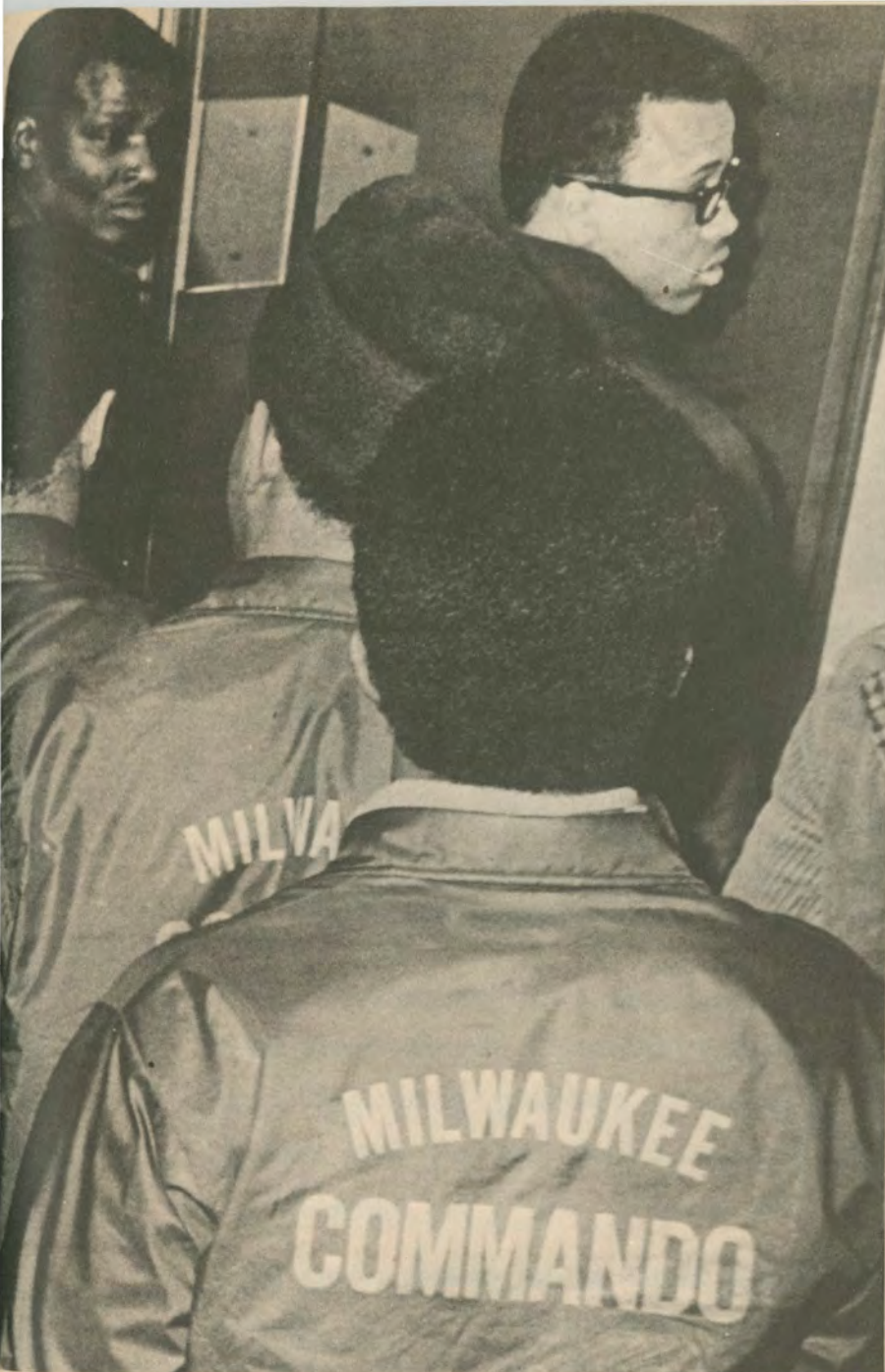


PHOTOGRAPH

*I went to court. The two D.A.'s were both white. The judge was white. There were eleven white jurors, and one black man who had a habit of nodding his head. I knew where I stood.*

*And this is how a black man feels.*

*The same judge who gave me a six months stay of sentence, two years probation and a \$500 fine, had previously sentenced a landlord who owns 16 slum houses. One house had 27 building code violations; another had 34. That same judge gave the landlord a stay of sentence and fined him \$1 each on 12 of the properties.*



FRANK LODGE

*The average fine paid in Milwaukee on building code violations is \$35, including court costs. Draft protestors were recently placed under \$25,000 bond. But two white men recently went before the same judge and were released on \$2,500 bond. They had ridden through the black community, stuck a .22 rifle out of the window, and killed a black woman. A black Vietnam veteran was arrested as a suspect in a burglary---\$25,000 bond. Two clansmen bombed the Milwaukee NAACP office and were out on \$2,500 bond.*

*This is the kind of judicial system we live under. This is the one the black man sees.*

## The Poor Pay More



PHOTOGRAPH

FRANK LODGE

*I was sitting on the rectory steps. Some of the brothers and sisters came from Third Street carrying clothing, furniture, and a few small items. "Hi, Father Groppi. Black Power!" they called, pointing to their loot. I said, "Be careful. Don't get caught."*

*That surprises you. But maybe you don't know much about gyp merchants. You go in a store and there are no prices on the merchandise. Or old stuff is sold for new. Or they sell you a \$3 pair of shoes for \$25.*

*Go read The Poor Pay More. The author sent a white man into a Harlem store to buy a TV set. The charge was \$129. A Puerto Rican woman who followed paid \$139. The black woman who came next paid \$200.*

*That's stealing. And there's no difference between that kind of thievery and the man who busts the window and grabs the loot. Maybe he figures he's got it coming. He's probably paid for it five times over already.*

*Robbery? I call it restitution.*



## *Fair Housing*



PHOTOGRAPH

ROHN ENGH

*We* marched for fair housing. They asked, "Why are you working on a fair housing bill? Do black people want to live with white people?" I said, "I don't know." We'll never know until white people's intransigent attitude toward integration, and toward equality, is changed.

*But the black man needs territorial expansion. If all the white people want to move to the suburbs, fine. But we want to live in fine communities too.*

*We* marched twice on the south side in Milwaukee and nearly got killed by whites. I asked for the protection of the National Guard, but the Mayor said he couldn't call them out. "Good hard-working people live out there," he said.

*I* don't know how good they were, but they were certainly hard-working. They hit us with everything they could throw. They called us black bastards. And then violence broke out on the north side. The Mayor called out the National Guard and put the entire city under a curfew... and issued a proclamation. He didn't want us to demonstrate, he didn't want us to march, he didn't want us to use civil disobedience. He said it led to violence.

*What are we supposed to do? Submit to this kind of system?*

David Eberhardt

On Sundays  
If  
There were  
A high crease in the air  
(As ambulances may  
Slow to a drift, their  
Red blurbs just  
A stare)  
Then could mere chain  
Saws or boat props  
Fill the rift?  
"We'll fix  
The  
Pope since  
That's the way you want  
It," by our wor-  
ry squint through  
His beany (as in  
A bore),  
Lift its seams back  
A scope, settle  
Them—crosshairs.

Now as at  
An  
Inner slap  
His one face loosens  
And comes off like  
Fleece. Slowed as  
If on film,  
What  
Gathers from behind?  
The face peels back  
Around it by degrees.

(You've seen  
A  
Soft nose  
Slug)—it is a yell  
That plugs the hole  
That forms a word  
Just past the teeth;  
And yet  
Over the satin  
Clots that word is  
Simply—"peace."



STONE RUBBING

RONALD EDWARDS

What does  
One thing have to

Do with  
Another? Stoney Run

For examp-  
le and Norman Mor-  
rison or  
Roger Laporte with

Games af-  
ter supper? Bruises

Are of  
Grass—just stains:

"I can't  
See the can to

Kick it  
Or the flag to

Take it,  
Your folks want

You, run!"  
Is it that I lose

But am  
Not angry—their

Bodies in  
A coma—turning

Black—has  
That to do with

Dusk, the  
Dusk of children's

Games? For  
Each violence has

The future  
Not retribution but

Justice, the  
Assassin given the

Purpose of  
A saint? Before we

Go to  
Bed, can our

Strife be  
A mental one?

Never do bodies repel us enough: indig-  
nant we've killed more for peace. Was-  
n't there a huge example before us?

I'm reminded of that by my screen, his  
wife (O surely this should not offend her)  
That was not meant either to offend her.

A sniper pantomimes, he asks that his  
Victim, besides giving him history, gives  
Theatre, be, whoever, his own persecutor.

This transferral is my terror, this gauche  
Mime—this wrong substitution—as if  
The pope were a parent. But where

Will all the injured express their re-  
venge? From a dias, with sheer  
Words? There's no pleasure in words

Like that of tattoos, the floral bruises,  
Or barrels with hatching, eagled helmets.  
Type may be raised but not as scars

(The charter is painful, it'd score these  
Walls—as we're confined to suits.) No—  
Words are a pain, we relax into blood.  
Yet this is what non-violence means:  
Withdrawal as courage—a new honor—  
And if you must be hurt, believe, it hurts.

As woman would she see this, grant it  
Her peace? Men have been stupidly  
Loud—women stupidly tacit. No joke

Of "country" and by generals. Consider  
This wife: she is someone's daughter.  
what can we pass on if it is not peace?

If an idea could kill, would it be  
Peace? This should not be humorless.  
Our work is in an exhaustion for lovers.



ETCHING

FRANK STACK

# Ocean Hill-Brownsville: augury for the nation

By Nat Hentoff

For most of last fall, more than a million New York City children were out of school. The vast majority of their teachers were on strike. The issue, according to the teachers' union—the United Federation of Teachers—was “due process” and “freedom to teach.” One of three experimental school districts set up to examine the possibilities of direct community involvement in schools had decided to try to find out how much power it actually had. The largely black local governing board in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, a Brooklyn ghetto, attempted to transfer out of its district 19 union teachers whom it felt were detrimental to creating the kind and quality of learning atmosphere the board wanted for the eight schools under its control.

There were much deeper issues involved, however, than “due process”; and the ramifications of what is happening in Ocean Hill-Brownsville will be ineluctably felt in ghetto neighborhoods throughout the country—and eventually in largely white schools, as well. The thrust for community control of schools is the most important development so far in the transmutation of Black Power (or Puerto Rican Power or Mexican-American Power) from rhetoric into a palpable force for real social change.

If any one single factor most assures that the children of the poor remain poor, it is the cul-de-sac education they get. In New York City, for example, of the 30,000 academic diplomas accorded to high school graduates in 1967, only 700 went to black students. Put another way, less than five per cent of pupils in predominantly black and Puerto Rican schools in New York go on to college by contrast with some sixty per cent in white districts. Similar encapsulation of the poor takes place in other large cities, as well. It is one thing to indict the educational “processing” of the middle-class white young, who nonetheless have options; but this is “processing” of a much more delimiting order. Those with only “general” diplomas (and the many who drop

out without any degree) usually slide into limbo—factory or low-level service jobs, diverse hustles, or welfare. The dissection by white radicals of middle-class values has no relevance to this underclass which has to focus all its energies on survival.

One parent at an East Harlem demonstration for community control of schools last year distilled what so many black and Puerto Rican families increasingly feel. “If a business were run the way schools here are operated,” he shouted, “it would have gone bankrupt a long time ago. You know why? Because a business has to show results. Because a business is accountable.” At another meeting, a Puerto Rican woman, her arms around a nine-year-old, chanted, tears on her face, “He can’t read! He can’t read!”

The essence of Ocean Hill-Brownsville is that there, schools are finally accountable to the community they serve. The local governing board and its unit administrator, Rhody McCoy, have recruited 350 new teachers who, along with others who do not fear being responsible to the community, are affecting a basic change in the schools in that district. They don’t use self-protective jargon like “culturally disadvantaged.” They believe any child can learn if teachers expect him to, if they do not bring with them self-fulfilling prophecies about the limited potential of the children of the poor. And despite the pressures on Ocean Hill-Brownsville, those children are learning. There is a spirit in most of the classrooms I have found exceedingly rare in ghetto schools: a sense of trust and cooperation between teachers and children, among the children themselves, between the school and the community.

Teachers are also learning. One woman, white, has been in the New York Public School system for nine years. She regards this year at Ocean Hill-Brownsville as the most fulfilling of her career. Her function is to train new teachers. “For the first time in my experience,” she told me, “teachers come to

see me after a class hasn't gone well and say, 'Let's review what happened so I can find out where I failed.'"

Yet, to many hasty readers of news accounts throughout the country, Ocean Hill-Brownsville is a bastion of black "extremism." (Seventy per cent of the 350 new teachers, by the way, are white.) Those who have actually been in the schools—and there have been many observers—return with a distinctly contrary impression. A characteristic report is that of I. F. Stone: "I have never met a more devoted group of people. All of them are harassed and overworked, but sustained by a combination of desperation and joy: desperation because they fear the experiment may soon be wiped out under union pressure, joy in a chance to demonstrate . . . what community control could accomplish. They are enlightened men; one forgets all the nonsense of black and white in talking with them; color vanishes. They fear black extremists as much as white misunderstanding. *And their focus is on the child.*"

Meanwhile, in almost thirty communities elsewhere in the country, there are beginnings toward various degrees of community control of the schools. There will be confrontations of various kinds in most of those areas too, but this is a battle in which the poor will persist until they have won. That is the first national lesson of Ocean Hill-Brownsville. The parents of the poor are not going to waste another generation of their children. No longer will they accept the conventional educational wisdom that it is *their* fault their children fail because *they* don't have many books at home and their neighborhoods are bad. The news from Ocean Hill-Brownsville is spreading. So is the news about such projects as the Urban League Street Academies in Harlem which have taken high school dropouts (years behind in reading levels) and turned them into successful college undergraduates. If it can happen in New York, why not in Boston, San Francisco, Chicago?

Once the concept takes root that a community can save its children, the idea cannot be dislodged



ETCHING: FIVE PEOPLE ON THE SUBWAY

FRANK STACK

no matter what obstacles are pyramided by unions, the educational bureaucracy, or local and state legislatures. As a woman in Ocean Hill-Brownsville puts it, "I don't think these people will ever go back to the old apathy that was there before the school thing started. You know, we got over 1,000 people to vote in the school board election—that's three times as many as usually vote in a regular election." And that's the second national lesson of Ocean Hill-Brownsville.

A further dimension of community control of the schools, as revealed by the battle of Ocean Hill-Brownsville, is the additional decision-making power involved beyond education. As Jason Epstein pointed out in *The New York Review of Books*, community control would give blacks and Puerto Ricans control of "millions of dollars with which to hire not only the teachers but the contractors and the architects, the plumbers and electricians, to say nothing of the custodians and teamsters who have, up to now, been able to make their favored arrangements with the central bureaucracy." Consider the implications of such power. Local governing boards could—and would—insist that the unions they deal with not discriminate in their admission policies and that community residents be among those to work on local school jobs while being trained by the unions for admittance. Ghetto workers have learned that if you wait for federal, state or city enforcement of anti-discrimination clauses, you wait. But now, finally, local people would have the power to implement those laws. Is there any doubt that they would?

Yet another result of local control of schools is that it does begin to build a real sense of community. One of the besieged Ocean Hill-Brownsville parents active in the school struggle said: "More than anything else, what this has done is to give us an understanding of how the city works—and the necessity of unity—of responding as a community."

In a second New York experimental school district, the I. S. 201 Complex in East Harlem, there has also been conflict, with the local board arrayed against the union and the educational bureaucracy. But the local board stays firmly in control because it so obviously has the support of the black and Puerto Rican residents of that district. Having an organic base around which to organize, that part of East Harlem is becoming a community. "From Halloween parties to conferences on black culture to political rallies," the I. S. 201 board reported last December, "the community now looks to the schools in our Complex as centers of social, cultural, and political activity."

Ghetto neighborhoods in different cities will move at different rates of speed, but with the schools as a catalyst for organizing, it would seem inevitable that there will also be a rising incidence of direct community involvement in decision-making con-

cerning health services, welfare, and the personnel and practices of police assigned to those neighborhoods.

There are those who consider this direction toward community control a critical mistake. It will divert the energies of the poor, these critics maintain, and take the pressures off the rest of society to reallocate its resources so that massive expenditures can be made on housing, job training and health care. The blacks and Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans will rest content with local control even if budgets are limited for schools and health, and even if nothing much gets done in housing.

Interestingly, this criticism of community control comes mainly from white liberals. And it is based on an extraordinarily paternalistic assumption. Blacks and others in the underclass are dumb, if you follow this thesis to its logical conclusion. They can be pacified by illusions, just like the natives in the old Tarzan movies. Make them all chiefs, and they'll stay in the bush and not cause any more trouble.

The poor, however, aren't playing natives any more. In those areas in which community control has begun, parents and other local people have learned from direct knowledge of the schools how inadequate their funding is. And they are forming a large, determined constituency to politicize these discoveries. The same process will take place as the poor become knowledgeable—from the inside—about health services and welfare. Once they feel that local institutions are *theirs*, the impact of their collective demands on the rest of the society will be unprecedented in scope and insistence. For years, the lament has been that the poor, in sizeable proportion, have been apathetic about voting. They have been apathetic, not out of stupidity, but in recognition of the fact that so long as all levers of power were outside the community, nothing changed. But as the poor sit on local school boards with hiring and contracting power, and as they help administer local health services, they will have very precise reasons for voting and very definite criteria for the selection of candidates.

Another national lesson from the Ocean Hill-Brownsville experience, then, is that from community control can emerge a politically sophisticated, intensely motivated constituency that will make more rather than less demands on state and federal legislators. And in view of the demographic present and future of the large cities, the poor are so strategically situated that if they do come together as a voting bloc with specific proposals and budgets, they cannot be ignored or "pacified." Those whom they elect to office cannot ride on charisma; they'll have to deliver. But will the majority of legislators—city, state and national—still be white? Of course. But legislators in a bloc, even though they're in a minority and elected by a minority of the population at large, can be a persistently successful counter-

force, making sure their constituents get what they need before agreeing to support the bills of other groups of legislators. For decades, the white South proved the efficacy of this approach in Congress. The same procedure takes place continually in state legislatures and on city councils.

Community control, therefore, is not only a way of developing neighborhood power. In the New York school struggle, all three experimental districts joined in support of each other. And the often divided political representatives from Harlem and East Harlem quickly discovered that on this issue they had to be united or abandon any chance of re-election. The same pattern can develop regionally and then nationally. In three or four years, for instance, it seems quite likely that regional and national conferences of local school governing boards will be held and that politics will be as vital a part of their agenda as an exchange of information as to what's been happening in their schools.

But what effect will community control, and its corollary movements, have on whites? During the teachers' strike in New York, a sizeable number of white parents became involved in the opening and running of struck schools in *their* neighborhoods. Like blacks and Puerto Ricans, they then began to understand in detail the deficiencies in the education their own children were getting; and since the strike, they have been organizing to bring about community control where they are. They are not likely to be deflected either. Politically, they are going to see the need for political alliances with blacks and Puerto Ricans so that finally these whites, too, can have some decision-making power over the institutions in their neighborhoods. Alienation from distant, rigid, city-wide, state-wide and national centers of power is not only a black and Puerto Rican experience. Those whites who are not poor do not feel this kind of impotence as keenly; but once they get a sense of involvement in making local schools responsive to them, there is an accompanying rise in their expectations and in their own feelings of personal legitimacy.

It will take more organizing and much struggle against the recalcitrant United Federation of Teachers and state legislators; but in five years or less, community control of schools will have been established throughout the city of New York. Coming from that achievement, whites as well as blacks are going to be considerably more concerned with other ways of creating communities instead of the present cells of isolation that are characteristic of big cities. In Greenwich Village, for example, I saw middle-class white parents "liberate" a local elementary school. Ignoring teachers' union pickets, they opened the school and staffed it. Now, with the strike over, they have formed a permanent group engaged in humanizing the school and in reaching out to form alliances with similar groups throughout

the city. These people had lived in the same neighborhood for years in their own insular social circles, and their coming together on the school issue was a revelation to them of how many other people in the area shared concerns and commitments like their own. One additional result is that no city councilman or state legislator can now be elected from Greenwich Village unless he takes a clear stand in favor of community control of schools.

The effect of the school conflict in New York on students has also been marked, and that development, too, has its lessons for the rest of the country. Black and Puerto Rican students in the three experimental districts clearly feel part of the alliance between the local governing board, the teachers responsible and responsive to that board, and the awakening community as a whole. Significantly, in all three districts, behavior problems have diminished strikingly since community control began. For the first time, the students, too, feel the schools are *theirs*. And throughout the city, white and black students who are still part of the old system have moved to democratize their own schools. There has been a sharp growth of student organizations demanding participation in decision-making in the schools, demanding courses in black and Puerto Rican history and culture, trying to make all their courses relevant to *their* needs and interests. This

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struggle is going to be a long one, but it's instructive to discover how many in junior high schools as well as high schools are beginning to resist the traditional "learning environment." I mean the kind of stifling ambience that has been described by one of the growing numbers of young teachers who are also in resistance: "The kids are used. They have no rights. They haven't got the right to say to the teacher, 'Look, you're boring the whole class.' And of course, they haven't got the rights of freedom of speech, of freedom to organize politically, or freedom to even pass out a leaflet. You go out to lunch with a teacher who's been in this school twenty years and she calls the kids animals."

More and more of the white young, as well as the black young, are in rebellion against this repression of spontaneity, individuality, and basic freedoms. The extent and degree of their rebellion is not only evident on college campuses, but even more pervasively this year in high schools.

A group of young white students in New York went to visit Rhody McCoy, unit administrator of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district, during the teachers' strike. These students expressed an identity with Ocean Hill-Brownsville's fight for self-determination. McCoy understood and reciprocated that feeling. "If you believe," he told them, "that what they are teaching in your schools is irrelevant, then you have to get the students to organize. It's going to be tough. You may find meeting time after meeting time where you're sitting there by yourselves. The same thing happened here. That's the way we got started. But as you begin to strike home, people are going to begin to rally around you. And let me tell you something. Despite all these headaches and fights I'm going through, it ain't worth a damn if you people don't get into the fight and pick it up. By the time you get to college I may be in a box somewhere, and I can say to you now that if my kids have to start back where I started and do this all over again, then it isn't worth it, and I might as well go out and lie in the sun somewhere."

McCoy obviously is not going out to lie in the sun somewhere. He has already won in Ocean Hill-Brownsville. Despite the United Federation of Teachers, despite an obdurate state legislature, McCoy is not going to be deterred, nor will the local governing board. Community control of schools will remain in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, and it will spread. The influence of Ocean Hill-Brownsville is affecting middle-class as well as ghetto parents, white as well as black and Puerto Rican students. And it is also beginning to get through to teachers' unions around the country. A further lesson of Ocean Hill-Brownsville has been that if a union, such as the United Federation of Teachers, tries to destroy community control—and that was the basic intent of the strike—that union will only succeed in uniting blacks and Puerto Ricans against it, along with a rising number

motive



of students, black and white. As this happens, how long can it survive in any big city in the years ahead?

And so, other affiliates of the American Federation of Teachers (the parent union of the UFT) are taking different approaches to community control. In Detroit, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, among other cities, they are working with local parent groups to create ways in which due process for teachers and the schools' accountability to the community need not be incompatible. In Washington, D. C., the American Federation of Teachers local there has already found this to be possible and has been in constant cooperation with the first school there—the Morgan school—to be run by the community.

William Simons, President of the Washington Teachers Union, explains: "The parents are demanding and are going to have a greater say in the operation of the schools, whether the teachers are with them or against them. We want to be with the parents." The union's executive board has adopted a resolution underlining its belief "that the uniting of teacher power and community power shall create such a significant force" as to "accomplish essential changes that will benefit all students."

Alexander Brown, a teacher at the Morgan School, adds: "I see my role as representing the community interest first, then the teacher interests, but there are very few conflicts between the two . . . Teachers here enjoy a great deal of freedom, as do the students. The kids learn at their own pace. A student who becomes uninterested in science or music for the moment can pursue history or art, or whatever does interest him. Children don't learn chronologically, necessarily, and this freedom has led to the tremendous improvement our children have shown."

Ocean Hill-Brownsville, the Morgan school in Washington, and other starts at community control throughout the country are auguries for the future. The national press has often played the battle of Ocean Hill-Brownsville as a struggle of personalities—between Rhody McCoy, black, and Albert Shanker, white, head of the United Federation of Teachers. But the core of that confrontation is the chronic conflict between those who would break through into possibility and those with vested interests in the failures of the past, particularly their own. The latter, as Thoreau wrote, "will continually thrust their own low roof, with its narrow skylight, between you and the sky, when it is the unobstructed heavens you would view."

The low roofs are coming down. During the New York teachers' strike, one UFT member, after having viciously attacked Rhody McCoy and the new teachers in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, tried to rally his colleagues by shouting: "Our whole way of life is at stake."

You got it! That's exactly right.

*"I take the risk that 'hearing, (the reader) will not understand.' But I also encounter the possibility that he may come up with a truth that is truer than my truth."*

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# Contributors

**THOMAS MERTON** is dead. His sudden and untimely death has silenced a sensitive and powerful voice, but his vision of a more human world will persist as long as the burning questions concerning war and peace and the future shape of American society press hard upon our consciences. This essay on nonviolence, commissioned by *motive* about a year ago, reflects Father Merton's vision and his humanity.

**DANIEL BERRIGAN's** voice is being muffled in a more profane and insidious way. Father Berrigan is one of the "Cantonsville Nine" (nine Catholic clergymen and laymen, convicted of burning the files of a Baltimore suburban draft board last May) who has been sentenced to three years in prison for his symbolic protest against the Vietnam war. Father Berrigan, noted author and Jesuit poet affiliated with Cornell University, is free on \$2,500 bail on condition that he make no speeches or preach during this period (his essay, *Trial by Fire*, is an adaptation of a speech he gave prior to sentencing).

**TOM LEWIS** also is one of the Cantonsville Nine. A Baltimore artist, he was sentenced to 3½ years.

**JAMES GROPPI**, Milwaukee's controversial battler for racial justice, is pastor of St. Boniface Church, located in the heart of the city's black ghetto. Father Groppi is adviser to the Milwaukee NAACP Youth Council—sometimes known as the "Commandos."

**NAT HENTOFF** is a prolific writer who works and lives in New York City. An occasional *motive* contributor, his essays appear regularly in the *village voice*, *The New Yorker* and *Evergreen Review*. He is author of numerous nonfiction books and three novels—the latest, *Onwards*, published last year by Simon and Schuster.

**ARTISTS:** The willingness of Tom Lewis to risk imprisonment for an act resulting from moral outrage is an indication of the intense commitment of many young artists to a life that is worth living. The celebrants whose work sings in this issue are: **BRUCE CODY**, Wisconsin; **LENNIE KESL**, Florida; **BEN SAKOGUCHI**, California; **LOIS KOJOLA CAMPBELL**, California; **JERRY HATCH**, Nebraska; **RODNEY FREW**, Missouri; **TOM LEWIS**, Maryland; **RONALD EDWARDS**, Connecticut; **FRANK STACK**, Missouri; and **BETTY LA DUKE**, Oregon.

**POETS:** **TODD GITLIN** was the only poet present at the Port Huron founding of SDS—a distinction outweighed only by the quality of his poems. He now works on the staff of the San Francisco *Express-Times*. **BOB SHAW** is ensconced at the University of Chicago. **JOHN L'HEUREUX**, Jesuit poet and teacher in Boston, had his "The Problem of God" (Dec. '67) included (in the good company of several other *motive* poems) in the Borestone Mountain *Best Poems of 1968* collection. **ADRIANNE MARCUS** continues to send her fine work from San Rafael, California. Poet **SIMON PERCHICK** and photographer **LARENCE SHUSTAK** have been at work on these juxtapositions for several years; the photo, they say, provides the structure of the poem. Other selections from their startling work have appeared in *Chelsea*. **DAVID EBERHARDT**—with Tom Lewis, one of the original Baltimore Four—harrows our consciousness as well as our politics with his vision of elegance commingled with terror.

## SPECIAL ISSUE

The next issue of *motive* will be a double issue devoted entirely to an emphasis on woman. This March/April issue will be published in early April.

Our apologies for the late release of the January and February issues. There are explanations, but it's too late to trouble you with those now.



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