



Mainstream

THE LONELY WAR OF

J. D. SALINGER

Barbara Giles

Aubrey Pankey LEGEND

Martin Carter THE KNIFE OF DAWN

Ruth Steinberg THE WORLD MR. KELLY
MADE

William L. Patterson WHO THREATENS OUR
James E. Jackson COUNTRY?

Jack Beeching LONDON LETTER

February, 1959

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Editor

CHARLES HUMBOLDT

Associate Editor

PHILLIP BONOSKY

Contributing Editors

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SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

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TWO ITEMS OF INTEREST

With this issue of *Mainstream* we are pleased to announce the addition to its staff of Phillip Bonosky as associate editor. Mr. Bonosky is the author of the working-class novel, *Burning Valley*, and of *Brother Bill McKie*, a biography of one of the founders of the United Auto Workers Union. He has published numerous short stories and reportage in *Mainstream* and its predecessors, *New Masses* and *Masses and Mainstream*, as well as in other magazines.

Our second item is hardly news to you, but it concerns us all—readers, writers, and editors. *Friends, we operate on a deficit.* In this we resemble all other publications that have no commercial advertising to help them along. The difference is that our deficit must be made up by you, our readers, while their existence is assured by private grants, university backing, Funds and Foundations, and even that striped-pants recruiting sergeant of free-worldly intellectuals, the State Department.

All of which means that we must and hereby open our twelfth fund drive. We were born in the teeth of the Cold War wind and we survived. Twice we missed issues, which is like missing a heart beat. We went from four to three to two editors, and then to one, which was altogether impossible. But we gained on the wolf, we are back to two editors, and we intend to stay alive.

We estimate our deficit for the coming year at \$7,000. To meet it we need more than your good wishes. We must have what little and as much as you can afford. Remember, we are the only cultural monthly in this country of 180 million people which speaks for peace, for an end to the oppression of the many by the few, and for a world in which everyman will enjoy the fruits of the human intellect. This is surely worth your support!

The Editors

THE LONELY WAR OF J. D. SALINGER

BARBARA GILES

WE SHOULD like to think that J. D. Salinger's influence with college youth rests mostly upon *The Catcher in the Rye*, moderately upon the Glass-family series of stories in the *New Yorker*, and scarcely at all upon the selections in *Nine Stories*. In the last group of tales most of the characters are unpleasantly familiar and essentially unimportant. In the Glass-family series they are nearly incredible but not without significance. Sixteen-year-old Holden Caulfield of *The Catcher*, however, is at once very real and fictionally distinctive. The distinctiveness is a particular triumph, for Holden seems to represent so many things that have become too familiar in novels and stories—the suffering rich, the vociferous rebel whose real name is Samuel Hall, the neurotic who has gotten an author for an analyst, even the Booth Tarkington boy whose naivete and self-seriousness were items of entertainment—that to list them indicates how much thin ice Salinger has passed around and over in his ten years' work on the novel.

Holden is in fact well-to-do, anguished, rebellious, psychically ill, naive, and self-serious. But his anguish is desperate, his defiance a part of it, and his panicky doubts about himself save him from arrogance and spare the reader an angry young monologue delivered in the mood of a thwarted nursery tyrant. Paradoxically, Holden is too young for that. His indignation still runs more to scorn, expressed with the sweeping assertive vigor that seems inevitably to accompany the negative opinion of boys from, roughly, first grade through high school. ("If there's one thing I hate, it's the movies. Don't even mention them to me.") It is recognizable enough to make us smile, and the smile persists even when the fact becomes evident that his opinions are virtually all negative and it is hard to say which is bleaker, his inner world or the outer one of prep schools, night clubs, theaters, and comfortable Manhattan apartments.

rough which he seeks so frantically for a person or a belief, or simply a action, a word, that isn't, in his favorite adjective, "phony." The daydream he finds—the only thing he does find—may be taken as a measure of both his private predicament and the dismal returns of his search: "I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. . . . And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff. . . . That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye."

Holden knows the epithet for this vision: it is "crazy." But beyond that, and beyond the expected heroics of youthful daydreams, it is part of a saner though hardly less wistful aspiration which is not explicitly stated and may escape the reader altogether unless he gathers additional clues from the stories about the Glass progeny. Like the *Catcher's* hero, the brothers and sisters of this remarkable family want something they can never quite articulate—nothing less, indeed, than a world in which every deed is purely motivated. Older than Holden, they function more conventionally at school and work, and are described as extraordinarily talented, all seven of them having been stars on a nationally famous radio show called "The Wise Child." Yet they too torment themselves with a perfectionist dream of unselfishness and affection. One of them commits suicide, another becomes a priest, and the youngest, Franny, goes into a nervous collapse trying to drive out of herself that timeless demon, "ego, ego, ego," through the repetition of a "Jesus prayer."

IF THIS perspective of *Paradise Found* were presented as starkly as we have outlined it, there's no saying what its reception might be from young people. It is not, however. The reader first gets a more or less finite idea of it in the short story "Franny," published in the *New Yorker* of January 29, 1955, ten years after *The Catcher* appeared, and finds it elaborated in "Zooey" two years later. Rereading the novel at that point, we see more clearly the thread that emerges into the main design of the chronicles of the Glass family. The book should be read a second time in any case, for it involves some peculiarly delicate balances that require interpretation, even after study, sometimes less certain than one would like it. We are inclined to disagree, for example, with so perceptive a critic as Maxwell Geismar when he labels Holden "this sad, screwed-up little hero" whose rebellion represents "the differential revolt of the lonesome rich child"—because while there is truth in the description, it doesn't take into sufficient account an outward aspect of Holden's negative relationship to his environment, the realism of his observations, which are no less sharp for being tortured. While we are always

aware of the psychic factor, it is not allowed to play the sort of determinist part that robs a novel of its own role, substituting a narrative of cause and effect that is of primary interest only in other kinds of literature and of no interest there unless it is true. Holden's emotional frailty affects his responses to experience in two separate, related ways. It increases the disorder of his personal life to the point of impasse and breakdown, while it intensifies his apprehension of the fakery and callousness of what passes for "real" life. He is, to put it in simplest terms, a boy who refuses to grow up; but he is also a boy who refuses to grow up into a world that he consciously, and for good reasons, regards as phony and sterile. When we meet him at prep school he is already facing expulsion, having failed four out of five subjects, and has earlier been expelled from two other schools. He describes the institution that is parting with him:

Pencey Prep is this school that's in Agerstown, Pa. You've probably heard of it. You've probably seen the ads, anyway. They advertise in about a thousand magazines, always showing some hot-shot guy on a horse jumping over a fence. Like as if all you ever did at Pencey was play polo all the time. I never even once saw a horse anywhere *near* the place. And underneath the guy on the horse's picture, it always says: "Since 1888 we have been molding boys into splendid, clear-thinking young men." Strictly for the birds. They don't do any damn more *molding* at Pencey than they do at any other school. And I didn't know anybody there that was splendid and clear-thinking at all. Maybe two guys. If that many. And they probably *came* to Pencey that way.

Further on in the book he continues the description:

You ought to go to a boys' school sometime. It's full of phonies, and all you do is study so that you can learn enough to be smart enough to buy a Cadillac some day, and you have to keep making believe you give a damn if the football team loses, and all you do is talk about girls and liquor and sex all day, and everybody sticks together in these dirty little goddam cliques. The guys that are on the basketball team stick together, the guys that play bridge stick together. Even the guys that belong to the goddam Book-of-the-Month Club stick together.

As for the boys who do get smart enough to buy a Cadillac later in life, we are given a picture of one of them in Mr. Ossenburger, the man who established a chain of cheap undertaking parlors, made enough dough to give Pencey a large donation, and returns once a year to delive

speech in chapel exhorting the boys to regard Jesus as their buddy. He said he talked to Jesus all the time. Even when he was driving his car. That killed me. I can just see the big phony bastard shifting into first gear and asking Jesus to send him a few more stiffs."

To fail so drastically in three successive schools through simple refusal to study comes nearer to delinquency than revolt. Yet the element of revolt is not absent and its causes are real, as can be seen more clearly in the passages, too long to quote here, that relate particular incidents of Holden's life in the dormitory and also convey better than his generalized statements the alternating rhythms of flight and rebellion, escape and search, derision and fear.

A GOOD example of the nature of his impasse is his thinking about girls and sex, which is superficially pretty much what one would expect from any boy his age: a mixture of curiosity, longing, and anxiety, not unlike that of an F. Scott Fitzgerald youngster facing the question of to-kiss-or-not-to-kiss, which for Holden's generation has become that of to-sleep-or-not-to-sleep-with. Holden never has, and he admits that the one time he came near it, "It took me about an *hour* just to get her goddam brassiere off," and by then "she was about ready to spit in my eye." But in addition he has quite another kind of problem, which comes out in his conversation at a bar with a somewhat older, pompous young man who tells him that he is living with a Village sculptress from China and finds "Eastern philosophy more satisfactory than Western. . . . They simply happen to regard sex as both a physical and spiritual experience."

"So do I!" Holden replies excitedly. "So do I regard it as a wuddaya-call it—a physical and spiritual experience and all. I really do. But it depends on who the hell I'm doing it with. . . ." And he confesses his difficulty: "I can never get really sexy—I mean *really* sexy—with a girl I don't like a lot. . . . I sort of lose my goddam desire for her and all."

He has to like the girl—if any one attitude of Holden's were needed to prove his distinctiveness in the current "generation" literature, to say nothing of current society as he knows it, this might serve. When, deciding hardily that he needs some "practice" anyhow, he accepts a hotel elevator man's offer to send him a prostitute, he is unable to make use of her; basically he is afraid, but the impulse that might have conquered fear is killed by his realization that, despite her business-like rejection of his invitation to "talk a while first," she is a human being instead of an automaton for imparting techniques. There is a girl he likes, whom he played games with all one summer and found "terrific to hold hands with," but when she turns up in his life again it is as a one-night date

for his roommate, Stradlater, a charm-boy who "snows" the girls and then "gives them the time." As for Sally, whom he dates during his joyless spree in Manhattan before going home from school, she is "the queen of the phonies," a coquette full of empty little effusions and cultural pretenses. Sally is the type who would love to be "snowed" by Stradlater—a feminine counterpart of a charm-boy—and just thinking about Stradlater with the girl Holden does like sends him into a frenzy which is very much like the frenzy he later experiences at the sight of America's favorite four-letter word written on the wall of his little sister's school where all the kids can see it.

Puritanism and neurosis aside, what he suspects and resists in this particularly grown-up region of life is sex without affection, a phony product of obscenity, vanity, guile, and commerce. From this he retreats into family affection, holding on to memories of his dead brother Allie and to a relationship with his ten-year-old sister, "good old Phoebe," which provides the warmest and most amusing passages of the book. And as if to prove that anything more than this has been corrupted—made fake—the former teacher to whom he goes, the one who seems to like and understand him, turns out to be a "flit" whose fondness is the overt expression of his inversion.

INSISTENCE upon the deed done for the deed's sake, without self-seeking, pervades Holden's judgment in other areas of his experience. Explaining to Phoebe why he is reluctant to become a lawyer like his father, he says that even if it meant that "you could go around saving innocent guys' lives all the time" instead of drinking Martinis and looking like a hot-shot, "how would you know if you did it because you really *wanted* to save guys' lives, or because what you *really* wanted to do was to be a terrific lawyer with everybody slapping you on the back and congratulating you in court . . . the way it is in the dirty movies? How would you know you weren't being a phony?" And watching the patron of a night club applaud a really good piano player for the exhibitionist little tricks that help make him famous, he reflects that if *he* were a piano player he'd "play it in the goddam closet." In the same way his pleasure in the performance of a roller-skater at the Roxy is flawed because "I couldn't help picturing him *practicing* to be a guy that roller-skates on the stage." On the other hand he likes "people who get excited" and admires a drummer in an orchestra who rarely gets to play but never looks bored and bangs the drums "nice and sweet, with this nervous expression on his face."

Among the things he dislikes—the list is very long—are the men

and women with "snobby, weary" voices talking about a play during intermission, "so everybody could hear and know how sharp they were"; people who say of the Rockettes, "That's precision!" and of a Lunt drama that of course the *play's* no masterpiece but the Lunts are angels; the "Ivy League bastards [who] all look alike"; the type of intellectual who's always afraid somebody will say something smatter than he has"; thephony voices of ministers . . . in short, the humbugs, the players to the gallery, the unthinking, unmeaning echoers of smart opinion, the clingers to counterfeit. From these, too, he draws back into the relatively natural, spontaneous world of childhood and fashions his vision of the catcher in the rye, everlastingly saving the innocents from disaster.

In a vague sort of way he senses that the mannerisms and general make-believe he hates would not be worth hatred if they didn't proceed from a system in which the "dirty movies" and the Broadway productions that his father, the corporation lawyer, helps to finance, play a directly debasing role. In the helplessness of his hatreds he may even be said to sense, still more vaguely, the extent of a power and corruption he cannot name. But his rejection, stated in terms of people, is tooweeping. To wish for, and try to find, a world in which one can depend upon the self-effacing act, the word spoken without flattery or malice, the wholly honest gesture, is an impulse with which we can readily sympathize. But does a special circle in Hell have to be created for those whose every sentence is not prompted by the heart and refined by intelligence? Is it a superior virtue to dream of rescuing imaginary children from a mythical danger instead of saving "innocent guys"—real ones—from legalized death because the crusader can't be certain that his word is untarnished by a fleck of exhibitionism? True, the same kind of question regarding the motive involved in good deeds—are they done out of pure goodness or to enhance the doer's opinion of himself?—is an important preoccupation of Camus, France's Nobel Prize winner in literature, though it comes more naturally and excusably from a sixteen-year-old fresh from the discussions of a prep-school dormitory. Nevertheless, it represents the extremity of Holden's flight from a human condition he is not equipped to understand, the final turning back into an inner world that collapses under the strain of an illness which, no matter what its origins—and they are never revealed—is exacerbated by the illness without.

The soundest advice given him comes from the teacher who quotes the psychoanalyst Wilhelm Stekel: "The mark of the immature man is that he wants to die nobly for a cause, while the mark of the mature man is that he wants to live humbly for one." Holden is too sleepy at that

moment to listen, and any possible discussion of causes for which he might live humbly is averted when he discovers the teacher's homosexual tendency and runs away from him in the middle of the night. His discovery shocks the reader for another reason. It is an unexpected and gratuitous development, and one can't help but suspect it as a device—a curiously clumsy one in a work so painstakingly constructed otherwise—to avoid the danger of "weighting" the book with adult perspectives that Holden can't scorn so easily. And it is true (though this does not excuse the device) that in strictly craft terms of tone, mood, and over-all development, such a discussion would seem to be out of order. Holden is simply not that kind of boy and the book is not that kind of novel. It is a *tour de force* of characterization and condensation, an extraordinarily skillful blend of despair and comedy, the latter provided by an entirely credible adolescent vernacular used to caricature, not profoundly but with some deadly effects, the imposters of a class and time.

IT IS when we come to the Glass family that the absence of genuine interest in any wider area of humanity than can be immediately perceived is felt in its full devastating effects upon the characters and stories alike. The Glasses also hate the pettiness and dullness of self-seeking fakes, and attempt to build character utopias against it; but if we have less sympathy with them than with *The Catcher's* hero, it is not merely because they are old enough to know better. Holden's problem was how to get rid of excessive dislike by finding objects for the affection he wants to give. That of the Glasses, stated curtly, is how to love themselves endlessly without feeling guilty about it.

There are five stories so far, including a sketchy one about the older of the two daughters and another that introduces Seymour on the day of his suicide, published in the collection, *Nine Stories*. Seymour is the oldest child. The next to appear (*New Yorker*, Jan. 29, 1955) is the youngest, Franny, a junior at a girls' college keeping a date with an Ivy League literary hopeful on the weekend of a big football game. The conversation of this young man, Lane Coutell, may give you an idea of how fashions in collegiate literary conversation have changed since the dead romantic days of Fitzgerald's heroes. Holding forth to Franny at lunch on how he has handled a critical essay, he says, "I think the emphasis I put on *why* he was so neurotically attached to the *mot juste* wasn't too bad," and at another point, "The thing he lacks is testicularity." Unable to eat or stop smoking, Franny tries to pretend a friendly interest while she becomes physically ill from a combination of revulsion and her private obsession with a "Jesus prayer" which, she later tells Lane, is supposed

to "purify your whole outlook" because "if you repeat the name of God incessantly, something happens." Near hysteria, she makes her denunciation of "ego, ego, ego" and elaborates upon it: "Everything everybody does is so—I don't know—not *wrong*, or even mean, or even stupid necessarily. But just so tiny and meaningless and sad-making. And the worst of it is, if you go bohemian or something crazy like that, you're conforming just as much as everybody else, only in a different way."

To a youth intent upon elevating his own ego with a display of conformist literary pomposity, this is too much to take and they quarrel bitterly. The story ends with Franny fainting on her third trip to the ladies' room and Lane assuring her as soon as she revives that he has secured a room for the afternoon where they won't be disturbed and that this should take care of her mood, which he attributes to the strain of "too long between drinks, to put it coarsely."

However, Franny's part of the story doesn't end there. It is continued in the *New Yorker* of May 4, 1957, in a tale called "Zooney," which occupies nearly the entire issue of the magazine. She is now in such a state of obsession with the prayer and revulsion against all egos, including her own, that instead of returning to college she can only lie on the sofa in the family living-room weeping and incessantly repeating, "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me." This time she has to contend with her youngest brother, Zooney, who undertakes a long philosophical argument about Jesus, Buddha and ego that drives her further into frenzy but who, nevertheless, finds the phrases that restore her to peace with the world. He advises her to go on with her ambition to be an actress but to quell the dread power of self-adulation by thinking of herself as "God's actress," one who does her best as Seymour used to advise them all to do in their radio appearances, not for their own sake but for "the fat lady" listening somewhere. On that tranquillizer she is able to sleep again.

THIS is a rather brutal simplification of a story that touches upon a number of problems, including that of the intellectual and artist in a commercial world of corn, and it is not without flashes of real wit and humor. However we may feel about the result of the Glass children's thinking, they do think and that is not an activity eagerly supplied to characters in fiction these days. Taken at their best, they can be respected for trying to discover a way of using their exceptional intellect and talents without yielding to the surrounding pressures of greed, pride, envy, and compromise. Their particular utopia, strongly resembling Holden's, is expressed in a quote written among various other quotes on a large screen in one of the bedrooms. It is from *Bhagavad Gita* and reads:

You have the right to work but for the work's sake only. You have no right to the fruits of work. Desire for the fruits of work must never be your motive in working. . . . Perform every action with your heart fixed on the Supreme Lord. . . . Be even-tempered in success and failure, for it is the evenness of temper which is meant by yoga.

It is not an easy injunction to follow, as Zooley attests when he accuses himself of being "furious in the morning . . . furious at night . . . I sit in judgment on every poor, ulcerous bastard I know . . . [but] judge straight from the colon when I judge. . . . [I] make everybody feel that he doesn't really want to do any good work but that he just wants to get work done that will be thought good by everyone he knows."

Some parts of the philosophy, or philosophies, that attract them are harder to decipher, for example the one that prompts a joyful reaction from Buddy, the second eldest, upon overhearing a tiny girl say that her boy friend's name is Mary—an incident which reminds him that Seymour had once said "that all legitimate religious study *must* lead to unlearning the difference, the illusory differences, between boys and girls, animals and stones, day and night, heat and cold." This too appears to be an excerpt from Oriental mysticism, but where it applies in the Glasses' struggle toward perfection is not clear—not so clear, anyway, as their passionate reasons for wanting to grasp the fine points of difference between St. Francis of Assisi and Christ and between Christ and Buddha.

There are people who prefer to maintain and discuss the differences between boys and girls, but they are obviously earthier than the Glasses, who cherish their innocent and loving childhood as much as Holden did and have replaced sibling rivalry with an affection that rarely strays from the family fold and then only in the direction of warm-hearted, charming little girls, who are the most admirable creations in Salinger's stories.

One of the Glass offspring, the older girl dreadfully nicknamed "Boo Boo," is shown as a mother ("Down At the Dinghy," in *Nine Stories*), but the only other one who has married is Seymour and the marriage is such a disaster that it is a major reason for his suicide. While he is referred to by his mother and the other children as the wisest, rarest, and kindest in the family, we are not given very clear portraits to distinguish him from his brothers and sisters. The story, "Raise High the Roof-beam, Carpenters!" (*New Yorker*, November 19, 1955), which is almost as long as "Zooley," revolves around his wedding day but it has to be told by Buddy Glass since the bridegroom fails to appear at the appointed time and place. Most of the narrative, moreover, is taken up by a mono-

logue on the part of the indignant maid-of-honor, a friend of the deserted bride-to-be, who chatters on with the assurance and rudeness of a self-righteous gossip handed a subject from which no one has the right to deter her; and when the wedding does take place we only hear about it as a fact.

Unfortunately the bride has a character not very different from the maid-of-honor's, judging from what we see of her in "A Perfect Day For Bananafish," the story of the suicide—a character so undeveloped in feeling, so lacking in concern with anything but snobbish trivia and narcissistic know-how, that one wonders how Seymour could ever have hoped to persuade her to give up her wedding-reception plans for an elopement. Why he fell in love with her seems plain enough: for the childishness, and apparent charms of childishness, which reveals itself too late as a lack of mature sensibility.

SALINGER has a particular skill at portraying such people, and the two described above, the wife and the maid-of-honor, are illustrations of what the Glasses are up against, especially since their milieu is shared by other persons from *Nine Stories* who are subjected to the same relentless process of self-exposure. Some of them, in fact, are among the least attractive human beings we have ever encountered on a printed page, with first place going to the trio in "Pretty Mouth and Green My Eyes"—a man, his wife, and her lover—and second to the two young women in "Uncle Wiggily in Connecticut." The self-exposure, effected through dialogue with a minimum of action, results in such a revelation of moral degeneracy and spineless misery that death would seem to be the most merciful solution, if not the only possible one.

Under the hard, detached brilliance of the writing in these tales runs a current of implacable hatred, of the sort that becomes evident under the surface of Ring Lardner's "funny" stories. Granted that the objects of the hatred deserve it—are they important enough to receive it? They never seem so, and because of this the hatred often becomes not only disproportionate but over-personal, directed at the *who* rather than the *what* of the detested phenomenon.

Interestingly, this is the very accusation that Zooey Glass makes to Franny, but the *what* is no more included in his considerations than in hers. The Glasses themselves seem to have been chosen to illustrate the extreme opposite of the mediocre and detestable, and perhaps Salinger has overdone it so that only the incredible becomes attractive. He has given them everything, including an Irish mother and Jewish father with vaudeville pasts, and endowed the children not only with creative talents,

colossal IQ's, sensitivity, wit, and imagination, but exceptional good looks too. Boo Boo is "stunning," Franny "lovely," and Zooey, a leading TV actor, is so handsome that every time he looks in a mirror he has to wage "a private war against narcissism that he has been fighting since he was seven or eight years old." Whether he realizes it or not, he is fighting in a lost cause. And how could it be otherwise when his own sister asks another brother to describe him in a story as a "blue-eyed Jewish-Irish Mohican scout who died in your arms at the roulette table at Monte Carlo"? But among the members of this family, Zooey is not exceptional. Essentially they are all so much alike and so appreciative of each other that their struggle against hatred and vanity becomes a collective battle in which narcissism can be vanquished only by giving it another name and appearance. What else, really, is the substance of the solution which Zooey proposes to save Franny's ambition and peace but that her love should fly from self to God and return with divine sanction?

This is a retreat from *The Catcher In the Rye*, in which the perspectives and insights were limited by the disturbed adolescence of the narrator yet remained meaningful enough to justify a hope that, given an adult framework and possibly a wider social terrain, they would provide a richer development of understanding. And Salinger does succeed in showing his readers, young or old, something of the conditions under which they live—showing them with a verisimilitude and convincingness that may shake them beyond our estimation. But he shows them heaven too, and it is not a heaven arrived at through the hard work of grasping and attempting to cope with problems of either a personal or social nature viewed in human situations and approached in human terms.

Nor, for that matter, is this the heaven that inevitably awaits *The Catcher's* youthful hero. Its attractions for him are easily imaginable, and yet—can't we almost as easily imagine his comment on the climax of Zooey's discussion with Franny ("So then he tells her to think of herself as God's actress. *God's* actress! That killed me.")? There is a significant phrase in Holden's explanation of why he would distrust his own motives for becoming a crusading lawyer, when he envisions the courtroom scene with reporters present and everyone applauding him: the way it is, he says, "in the dirty movies." From his own account it is obvious that the only experience he has had with crusaders is through such fictions, in which the principle and the action, as well as the acclaim at the end, are given their due of sentimental adulteration.

In life, Holden might have come to understand, things are not so simple and the question of motives is among the least simple of all. Which doesn't free anyone from the necessity of being concerned with

it in an effective and realistic way, testing as well as observing, for the sake of moral insights that have a value beyond the peace of one's own soul. We may learn fairly early, for example, that overwhelming vanity or an ulterior purpose of personal gain can in fact end by corrupting a good deed or fatally weakening its execution. And we learn, perhaps a little later, not to say, "Well, the intention was good, anyway," since it is precisely the intention that was wrong.

But that is only one lesson, and Salinger's young people are given no opportunity to comprehend even that one fully. Surrounded by corruption, unable to see it in any but personal terms, they reject it—as they should, and as only too many "protagonists" in today's novels do not—but with it they reject any further study of motive itself, demanding only certificates of purity from themselves. Holden has still to discover that to care nothing at all about the approbation of one's fellowmen is itself a form of vanity, if not of megalomania. Under the circumstances, he may never learn that a philosophy like Camus', for example, which concentrates upon "universal guilt" and fine-point moral conflicts in which the issues posed are essentially false, can lead only to the acceptance implicit in inaction. Such sublimity as the Glasses achieve, cut off from the living tissue of human relationships, is as suspect as the armor on any Hollywood knight. Removed from real battlefields, it becomes a refuge for natures too sensitive to bear imperfection or struggle to change it. And in the framework of the conflicts now shaking the world, is it not, to quote Franny from a very different context, "so tiny and meaningless and sad-making"?

* * *

THE song which we reproduce here is a composition of the American Negro singer, Aubrey Pankey, renowned for his concert performances in 47 countries of North and Latin America, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Australia. Mr. Pankey first came to the German Democratic Republic in 1955 on a concert tour, meeting with outstanding success. Later in the same year he was invited to the Chinese People's Republic—the first American artist to receive such an invitation. Since 1956, he has taught singing at the Berlin College of Music.

We have retained the German as well as English words of "Legend," which is included in a collection of Mr. Pankey's arrangements of Negro folksongs published in Leipzig.—The Editors.

Legend / Legende

(Aubrey Pankey)

Aubrey Pankey

Moderato *a tempo*

12.

Death! Death! John Hen-ry died_ with a ham-mer. Death! Death! John
 Tod!_ Tod!_ John Hen-ry starb_ mit dem Ham-mer. Tod! Tod!_ John

ff ff mf ff ff

mp d=63 a tempo

Hen-ry died_ with a ham-mer_ You talk a-bout John Hen-ry such a nat'-ral man, he
 Hen-ry starb_ mit dem Ham-mer_ Man spricht ü-ber John Hen-ry, er, der Hei-mat Mann; er

p

built this land with a pick in his hand; they prom-ised him free- dom just like
 baut' dies Land mit der Pick in der Hand; sie spra-chen von Frei-heit, doch wars

mf

you and me but free-dom to them was a rope and a tree. John Hen-ry died_ with a
 nur ein Traum, denn Frei-heit für ihn, war ein Strick und ein Baum. John Hen-ry starb_ mit dem

mf

ham-mer, John Hen-ry died with a ham-mer. John Hen-ry died with a
 Ham-mer, John Hen-ry starb mit dem Ham-mer. John Hen-ry starb mit dem

ham-mer, John Hen-ry died with a ham-mer. You talk a-bout free-dom t'aint
 Ham-mer, John Hen-ry starb mit dem Ham-mer. Man spricht ü-ber Frei-heit, 's ist

nothing but lies, you want it down South, is to ask just to die. They sent him to war just four
 Lü-ge und Not, du willst sie im Sü-den, das ist dann der Tod. Sie schick-ten ihn vier-mal in den

times, so they say, and now you will get it, just do as I say. John Hen-ry died with a
 Krieg, wie man sagt. Und nun wirst sie ha-ben, nur tu, was ich sag! John Hen-ry starb mit dem

ham-mer, John Hen-ry died with a ham-mer. John Hen-ry died with a
 Ham-mer, John Hen-ry starb mit dem Ham-mer. John Hen-ry starb mit dem

mp

ham-mer, — John Hen-ry died — with a ham-mer. — But when he got back it — was
 Ham-mer, — John Hen-ry starb — mit dem Ham-mer. — Doch kehrt er zu-rück, wär es

worse than be-fore the work that he had was-n't there an-y more — and
 schlecht'r als zu- vor: Die Ar-beit, das Brot und die Hoff-nung er ver-lor. — Be-

when he got so — he — could think, read and write they drummed up a charge and he
 gimt er so le - sen, zu schrei-ben und denkt, ver - leum - den sie ihn und wird

hung in the night. John Hen-ry died — with a ham-mer, — John Hen-ry died — with a
 nachts er ge-hängt. John Hen-ry starb — mit dem Ham-mer, — John Hen-ry starb — mit dem

ff

mf rubato *rall.*

hammer. — John Hen-ry died — with a hammer, — John Hen-ry died — with a hammer!
 Hammer. — John Hen-ry starb — mit dem Hammer, — John Hen-ry starb — mit dem Hammer!

p

THE KNIFE OF DAWN

MARTIN CARTER

THE KNIFE OF DAWN

I make my dance right here!
Right here on the wall of prison I dance.
This world's hope is a blade of fury
and we, who are sweepers of an ancient sky
discoverers of new planets, sudden stars
we are the world's hope.
And so therefore I rise again, I rise again
freedom in a white road with green grass like love.

Out of my time I carve a monument
out of a jagged block of convict years I carve it.
The sharp knife of dawn glitters in my hand
but now bare is everything—tall tall tree
infinite air, the unrelaxing tension of the world
and only hope, hope only, the kind eagle soars and wheels in flight!

I dance on the wall of prison.
It is not easy to be free and bold
It is not easy to be poised and bound
it is not easy to be poised and bound
it is not easy to endure the spike—
so river flood, drench not my pillar feet
so river flood collapse to estuary
only the heart's life the kind eagle soars and wheels in flight.

CARTMAN OF DAYCLEAN

Now to begin the road:
broken land ripped like a piece of cloth
iron cartwheel rumbling in the night

hidden man consistent in the dark
 sea of day clean washing on the shore
 heart of orphan seeking orphanage,

Now to begin the road:
 the bleeding music of appellant man
 starts like a song but fades into a groan.
 The cupric star will burn as blue as death
 his hopes are whitened starched with grief and pain
 yet questing man is heavy laden cart
 whose iron wheels will rumble in the night
 whose iron wheel will spark against the stone
 or granite burden of the universe.

Now to begin the road:
 hidden cartman fumbling for a star
 brooding city like a mound of coal
 till journey done, till prostrate coughing hour
 with sudden welcome take him to his dream
 with sudden farewell send him to his grave.

IN THE SHADOW OF A SOLDIER

Three long years
 in the shadow of a soldier.
 These long months have left me like a tree
 in naked growth above my buried roots.

I never cared when cold wind made me shudder
 and ocean was my road and days were dead
 in ships and fields where time was always black.
 But even that was cleaned sometimes with fire
 in other years by other men than me
 or you or you who see them marching now.

They march and leave a shadow on the land.
 Our life goes dark with stain as from a blight.
 I do not even shudder in the wind
 for all my flesh is burning into ash.
 I three long years in the shadow of a soldier.
 Those long months are buried underground
 with blackened leaves and grief's immortal roots!

TILL I COLLECT

Over the shining mud the moon in blood
falling on ocean at the fence of lights.
My mast of love will sail and come to port
leaving a trail beneath the world, a track
cut by my rudder tempered out of anguish.

The fisherman will set his tray of hooks
and ease them one by one into the flood.
His net of twine will strain the liquid billow
and take the silver fishes from the deep.
But my own hand I dare not plunge too far
lest only sand and shells I bring to air
lest only bones I resurrect to light.

Over the shining mud the moon is blood
falling on ocean at the fence of lights—
My course is set, I give my sail the wind
to navigate the islands of the stars
till I collect my scattered skeleton
till I collect . . .

YOU ARE INVOLVED

This I have learnt:
today a speck
tomorrow a hero
hero or monster
you are consumed!

Like a jig
shakes the loom.
Like a web
is spun the pattern.
All are involved!
All are consumed!

THE WORLD MR. KELLY MADE

RUTH STEINBERG.

I LOVE my junior high school. It didn't look ugly to me, as it stood there, a big, red hulk on Boston Road, across the street from a little stand where hot dogs with sauerkraut and mustard cost four cents apiece.

The first time I saw that school, it was for taking an intelligence test. They had about two hundred of us in the auditorium, all spread out, two seats apart, looking around, not whispering to each other.

A sign hung from the curtain on the platform. It said, each large letter on a separate piece of cardboard, S H A R O F F . SHAROFF.

I read it a few times. Finally, I poked the girl next to me. "What's that?" I asked. She jumped, as though she had been caught cheating in a strange school, and slapped me.

Even as the lonely tears sprang to my eyes, I realized that she was nervous about the intelligence test. I wasn't nervous. A cousin had told me just what to expect. "All you need to know," he had explained, "is that two and two makes four. You know that? Okay. You're in."

So it wasn't the test that frightened me. But the sign! S H A R O F F . I did know that two and two makes four. But it didn't occur to me that SHAROFF was a name. And that's what it was, a name.

Very soon I found out all about it, and also found out about politics and patronage, and many other things they do not teach you in grammar school.

The principal of our junior high school was a progressive educator. He was always experimenting with us, using new techniques and seeing to it that our school resembled, in no way, any other school. In fact, he experimented so much, that I, who had just come from under the long, striking arm of Miss Grady of my old school, had the painful impression that we weren't learning anything.

Sometimes our parents seemed to suffer from the same impression. As a member of the school orchestra I used to attend the Parents' meeting, and sometimes a father would take the floor, address the principal, and say: "Look here, Mr. Kelly. All I want to know is—Do these exper

ments teach them anything, or don't they?" There was a certain type of parent who always spoke like that.

"That's a good question," Mr. Kelly would say. He had a very large, spongy red nose and a thrilling, oratorical way of expressing himself. "I'm always asked that question, and I always answer it the same way. My answer is: Those who learn, do; and those who don't, don't." He would step to the orchestra and place his big hand on the head of the redheaded first violinist. "I defy any principal in this city—I go even further—in this country, to tell you different. We have a wonderful bunch of kids in this school. The best in the city. I'm proud of them. That's my answer to your question."

The applause from all the parents who didn't ask The Question was deafening.

Since every school in the country, maybe even in the world, had a school president, Mr. Kelly felt we should have a school mayor. We had a mayor and a board of aldermen and judges and a traffic commissioner and, I think, a lot more.

Each officer was elected for a term of six months, after campaigning for three months. Everyone was elected for a term of six months; everyone, that is except Hopperman. Hopperman was mayor for two years before I came to the school—and for almost the entire two years I spent there. Hopperman was a special case.

Hopperman was elected for term after term, for year after year. He always received such an overwhelming majority of the votes, that Miss O'Toole, who was in charge of our elections and always saw to it that everything was in the best of order, had to admit, after each polling—that Hopperman had won again. Hopperman was unbeatable. It was as though the entire six hundred of us voters could learn no other name—but Hopperman.

His was a compelling personality. In our school, where the ages ranged from eleven to sixteen, Hopperman was seventeen when I got there. He shaved!

Nobody really cared to run against him. But Miss O'Toole insisted. So every six months, some boy would reluctantly agree to run, pick himself a campaign manager, and go through the motions of contending for the honor of being school mayor. Hopperman was always very indulgent toward these fellows and invariably gave them a high appointive job after he defeated them. And here, I might say, that soon after I became a student at the school, I learned that SHAROFF was the name of one of those half-hearted opponents of Hopperman, who later became traffic commissioner and was pretty well-liked, too.

One of the secrets of Hopperman's success was that he was a real mayor! He walked around the school, seeing that things were in good shape. He patted teachers on the back, smacked the kids who broke rules, pinned medals on the boys who won at track and made speeches in Assembly from time to time which showed he really liked the school and all the kids in it—who voted for him year after year.

He used to make short, sweet speeches that were always to the point, and had a sort of punch to them. "Boys and goils," he would say, "or radder goils and boys, heh heh, all I godda say is, remember what I tol' ya. Always stick up fuh da school because da school sticks up fuh you." Stuff like that.

He rolled out those speeches at the rate of two a week, and they always came out so naturally and so thrillingly, that a shiver would hit us and we would tingle for a half-hour afterwards.

So for years Hopperman was mayor—and it gave us a sense of security to know that he was.

As anyone knows who has been to junior high school in New York City, there are two types of students in it: those who finish the course of studies in three years—and those who do it in two. The two-year ones in our school, were those who in politics solidly belonged to the Rapid Party, as opposed to the Lone Star Party, which was Hopperman's.

The Rapid Party was the minority party, of course, and the members more or less hated themselves. Secretly, most of them voted for Hopperman anyway, but there was something about the Rapid Party that went against Hopperman's grain. When he said "Vapid Party," he made us feel repulsive.

For a year and a half the Rapid Party went through the pretense of running candidates against Hopperman. Nobody had his heart in it. And for a year and a half, there was a little fellow in my class who watched the whole procedure—watched and waited.

He was the smallest boy in our class—and our class was undersized from studying so much. He was also very clean and wore knickers and socks that always stayed up. His ears were a little large and stuck out from his head and he wore snappy bow-ties. His name was Teppenfeld and he never said "Goils." He said "Grills."

You can imagine, then, how we felt when Teppenfeld made known that he wished to run for mayor on the Rapid Party ticket against Hopperman. First we laughed. We always laughed first. But when we saw that he was serious and when he assured us that not only would he run, but would also get elected, we got frightened. "My Gawd," said Lena Spitzer, who had the knack of sounding like her own grandmother

"what's gonna become of us now?"

But Miss O'Toole, who was now Mrs. O'Toole, having married a man with the same name, was delighted. She gave us a pep talk about democracy. "It's only honest," she said, "to stick up for your own candidate—even if you hate him." On another occasion she said, "Get behind Teppenfeld. He's your dark horse."

We were discouraged. We were ashamed of our dark horse. A depression hit us. Teppenfeld was serious. He came to school every morning, laden with the most splendid signs, which shouted his name in every type of print from old English to modern Chesterfield-type ads. "WE NEED A CHANGE!" "FALL IN STEP WITH TEPPENFELD!" "GET CORRUPTION OUT OF THE SCHOOLS." It was a crusade!

Some of us began to feel sorry for Teppenfeld. He was working too hard for his election—and we knew he was going to be defeated. But he was cheerful all the time. When, out of sympathy one or another of us promised him a vote, he nodded like a governor and said, "You won't regret it, I assure you." It was hard to love him.

For weeks before Election Day, speeches were made in the Assembly by friends of the candidates. Hopperman went around in his assured, charming way, patting the teachers and smacking the kids. His campaign managers hung up all his old signs and slogans, like "HOP ALONG WITH HOPPERMAN" "WIN AGAIN WITH HOPPY" and stuff like that. But after examining Teppenfeld's signs, Hopperman got a little dissatisfied with his old signs and had the whole art department of the school making new ones for him. These new signs bore not only printing, but also illustrations. They became larger and larger every day. On the last day before elections, we arrived at school to find the word "HOPPERMAN" painted on the side of the building in letters reaching two stories high.

None of us in the Rapid Party looked forward to the final Assembly when the candidates for office were scheduled to speak for themselves. We were embarrassed for our candidate.

I remember Jacobs who was running for judge. He made a good speech for himself. "If you vote for me," he said, "you will find me fair, impartial and—and kind." He blushed as he sat down.

The electric moment came when the candidates for mayor had to make their speeches. There was a little delay. Teppenfeld was to speak first and Mrs. O'Toole was to introduce him. But she was held up because Teppenfeld and Hopperman were whispering to each other. We all watched, as they finished their whispered conversation and we saw Hopperman laugh.

Finally Teppenfeld was introduced and, to make a long story short, Teppenfeld spoke. He talked so much and he talked so fancy, that I didn't hear a word he said. When he finished there was mild applause and laughter.

Then Hopperman got up to make his speech. The Assembly went wild. He was applauded and applauded, and he shook his hands over his head, and hitched up his pants and just waited for the noise to subside. We knew he was going to make a short and sweet speech the way he always did—and we wanted to vote and vote for Hopperman till the end of time.

Hopperman raised his hands for quiet. He smiled, then began to talk, and in a few moments we were gasping with shock, and stunned into complete unbelieving silence. This is what he said. And this is how he lost the election:

"One woid—about my woithy opponent. Last year, I had the stoppidity to make him a traffic commissioner. And so you want to know how he made out? I'll tell you. He was *no good!* That's how he made out. He was so rotten I had to fire him. And ya know what he did when I fired him? I'll tell you. Listen to this, my friends. You know what he did? He c-c-r-ried! That's what he did. Now I ask you. Is this the kind of a man you want to be your mayor?"

There was complete, stunned silence in the Assembly.

"Well, *answer!*" Hopperman screamed. "Is this the kind of man you want for your mayor?"

Then the place came down. Hopperman never knew what hit him. We all screamed back at him "Yes! Yea—s!" Hopperman turned pale. Unbelieving, he looked at us, his faithful followers for years and years and years. And there we were, all shouting up at him "Yes! Yeas! Yeas!" Then he turned red, threw a piece of paper he was holding onto the ground and shouted, "Then I resign!"

He never should have said those things about Teppenfeld. We didn't like it. It wasn't fair. That's all. It was like Mr. Kelly had taught us in one of those Assemblies when he wasn't teaching us anything. "The American people will take just so much. It'll never let the government become a big bully. Let the President make one false move and the next election he'll be out on his—you know what."

And for the next six months, it was quiet and proper in our junior high school, with a dignified mayor—who started to grow. And when we graduated, he was miraculously fifth on line instead of first, as he had always been before.

WHO THREATENS OUR COUNTRY?

WILLIAM L. PATTERSON

JAMES E. JACKSON

On Monday, December 15, 1958 two documents which will take their just place in the liberation struggle of the American Negro people were presented to the Internal Security Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee of the United States Senate. They are statements which were intended to be delivered to the members of the Subcommittee by William L. Patterson, a Communist and General Manager of *The Worker*; and by James E. Jackson, the Communist Party's Secretary for Negro and Southern Affairs. These two men had been subpoenaed by the Subcommittee, whose temporary chairman, Olin D. Johnston of South Carolina, refused to accept their statements for the record. Senator Johnston characterized Mr. Patterson's remarks as "scandalous" and suggested jeeringly that he see how far he would get with the press if he released them.—*The Editors*.

I

A MATTER OF PROCEDURE

Human Rights Day, December 10, a day set aside by the United Nations to honor signally the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, I was served by a United States Marshal with a subpoena. It was made returnable today, Dec. 15th, Bill of Rights Day. The subpoena issued by your Committee, the Internal Security Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee of the Senate was signed by Senator James O. Eastland of Mississippi, a gentleman notorious for his contempt for the constitutional rights of Negro citizens.

I am here. As you see, I am a Negro.

On Saturday, March 3, 1956 the *New York Herald Tribune* quoted the Senator from Mississippi as "taking credit for blocking civil rights bills up for consideration before the Civil Rights subcommittee of the Judiciary." I am now before you gentlemen who constitute the Internal

Security Subcommittee of the Judiciary. Senator Eastland is giving proof of the skill with which he can ride two horses going in opposite directions. But at the expense of constitutional government. Does he thus do honor to his oath of office or the integrity of our country? I think not.

The internal security of our country is threatened in the bombings of Jewish Temples and Negro churches and in the murder of Negroes who seek only their constitutional rights. A Civil Rights Commission of the U.S. is almost literally spat upon as it seeks to investigate the denial of Negro rights and the terror raging against them in the South.

Gentlemen, I cannot threaten the internal security of our country whether I travel abroad or stay at home. But I can demand respect for the constitutional rights of my people, of Puerto Ricans and of labor. This I must do to the best of my ability.

The same *Herald Tribune* quotes the honorable Mississippian as saying: "The C.I.O. and these organizations have been yapping that I was arrogant and high-handed with them, and so I was; and they say I broke the law, and so I did."

A Senate speech on May 27, 1954 finds the Senator condemning the Supreme Court's ruling against segregation in public schools. He predicted provocatively that "It will justly cause . . . evasion and violation of the law and . . . do this country great harm."

To his confessed crimes the "arrogant" Senator adds racism, that blot that holds our national morality up to censure, opprobrium and mockery before the civilized world.

Gentlemen of the Internal Security Subcommittee, with great sincerity I ask: could a situation be more ironical? I believe that without fear of refutation I may express as my opinion that no committee of this legislative body ever found itself in so paradoxical a position. What a scene! A self-confessed violator of the law, a notorious racist, a man who by his own admission has violated his oath of office, commands one whose constitutional rights he has ignominiously flouted to stand before him for judgment. Today they must be laughing in hell.

I am protecting the honor of our country and its national integrity when I protest these proceedings. We have usurping the authority of people one who has and continues to subvert their Constitution. I face a man who is only here because by force, through terror or through guile the vote is denied black citizens in the state he pretends to represent.

I say gentlemen: The Senator from Mississippi must be impeached.

The subpoena commands me that I testify as to what I "may know relative to the subject matters under consideration by you."

I inquire of you:

Are we here to consider subversion, the denial of the constitutional rights of my people in the state from which your chairman comes, constitutional government and the menace it now confronts?

If that is your program, I believe that it is right that I should be here.

I have gone before the General Assembly of the United Nations petitioning against these grievances from which my people suffer. I believe that racism in our country is no less abhorrent and dangerous than is Apartheid in South Africa.

Let us if such inquiry be our course put the Senator from Mississippi on the stand. Let us prove to the world that in the Congress of the United States there is respect for human dignity, for constitutional rights regardless of creed or color.

Gentlemen, not for your benefit, because you know it too well, but for the benefit of millions of Americans who do not think deeply of these matters, let me quote the oath of office sworn to by the Mississippi Senator in 1956.

"I, James O. Eastland, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, that I will bear true and faithful allegiance to the same, that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter: so help me God."

If this gentleman had no "mental reservations" with regard to the rights of Negroes in Mississippi then he has undoubtedly lost his courage in the face of the murderous Ku Klux Klan and the terror of White Citizens Councils. In no other manner can we explain Senator Eastland's hostile and subversive attitude toward the decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court—unless the honorable Senator is inherently opposed to constitutional government in these United States.

I do not make this a charge. I offer it in possible explanation of the Eastland conduct. I offer it to substantiate my demand that this legislative body impeach the gentleman from Mississippi. You do not ask a Senator to uphold the law, you punish him for his failure to do so.

The wrongs of authority in and from Mississippi against Negro citizenry and the poor white masses of that state are so calculated, so vicious and so violently opposed to the Constitution of this country that they cannot be longer tolerated because constitutional government cannot survive them longer. We face a moral crisis that flows from the subversion of our constitution by evil men.

Common sense demands the punishment of those who are guilty of these crimes. Since they are men of power, the punishment must come

before they become all-powerful. I speak therefore not alone in the interests of Negro Americans, but in the interests of progressive and enlightened mankind. There is yet time to act.

Gentlemen, I close. I have spoken as a free man for Negroes are not free in this section of the "free world." But I have spoken as one who loves his country too well to see racists continue to despoil it. I have spoken as a Negro, as an American, as a human being and as a Communist. I believe I do honor to all four categories.

The irony of my presence here will be augmented by hypocrisy and fraud if you do not place the crimes of the gentleman from Mississippi before the light of day and order his impeachment. Gentlemen, I thank you.

Respectfully yours,
William L. Patterson

II

The date was June 29, 1945. I was somewhere north of Bhamo, manning a guard post in the Burma jungles. I was serving my country as a soldier in an all-Negro Battalion some 5,000 miles from home. Out there, one of my comrades and kinsmen died that day. It was this very day that James O. Eastland stood on the floor of the Senate, thousands of miles away from sounds of enemy bombers, to roar at the top of his lungs the terrible lies and defamations of the Negro soldier, that

The Negro soldier was an utter and abysmal failure in combat. He has disgraced the flag of his country. He will not fight. He will not work.

It is the signature of this very same James O. Eastland that is scrawled on the subpoena which commands my appearance before this body today. For what purpose? To be slandered and villified just as he sought to besmirch the loyalty to their country of my buddies who gave their young lives in its service on far-away battlefields. Am I—a Negro American—called upon to subject my patriotism to the inspection of a Committee under the direction of a James Eastland? This brazen advocate of the unrestricted rights of white men to deny all rights to Negroes? This darling of the Ku Klux Kross burners? This unblushing torch bearer for white supremacy? 'Tis the toleration of the power in the hands of an Eastland to order such a confrontation that is the shame of my countrymen and the gravest danger to its security.

If Eastland or this Committee were genuinely interested in solving the

subversion problem in our country they would investigate the White Citizens Councils and summon Faubus and Almond. But of course it is impossible for Eastland to solve the problem of subversion of our Constitutional liberties and democratic institutions because—in greater measure than any man alive—*he is the problem!*

Once again James O. Eastland of Mississippi uses his high office and the taxpayers' money to chop at the tree of the people's hard won liberties. While unrelentingly pushing his racist assault upon the human and civil rights of the Negro people, while dogging the steps of the foreign-born; while still clawing at the throat of the labor movement; he keeps up his hate campaign against the Justices of the Supreme Court. All of this is part of his conspiracy to emasculate the Constitution, to inspire defiance of, and nullification of, the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment.

Now Eastland opens yet another front against the authority of the Supreme Court to uphold the Constitutional rights of our citizens: he wants to destroy the Constitutional freedom of Americans to travel where and when they please. In doing so, he is acting in contempt of the Supreme Court which has ruled that

The right to travel is a part of the "liberty" of which the citizen cannot be deprived.

And further, that

Freedom of movement across frontiers in either direction, and inside frontiers as well, was a part of our heritage.

That,

Travel abroad . . . may be as close to the heart of an individual as the choice of what he eats, or wears, or reads. . . . Freedom to travel is, indeed, an important aspect of the citizens' "liberty."

Therefore, the Court declared that

. . . We deal here with a Constitutional right of the citizen, a right which we must assume Congress will be faithful to respect.

But quite naturally, Eastland—the man who has indicted the Supreme Court as "indoctrinated and brain-washed by left-wing pressure groups,"—has no more respect for its opinions in this matter than he has shown

for its rulings in defense of the rights of the Negro people to unsegregated education, to vote, or to be secure in the exercise of any of their Constitutional rights as American citizens. The fact of the matter is that neither Eastland nor his co-signers of the treasonable "Southern Manifesto" would now hold their seats in the Congress if the 14th Amendment of the Constitution were enforced and liberties and suffrage rights of the Negro people upheld by the President and the Department of Justice in conformity with their sworn obligation to do so. In Eastland's Mississippi, the half of the population which is Negro does not enjoy the protection for, or realization of, a single Constitutional right. And not one Negro or white child is in a non-segregated school situation.

James O. Eastland abominates the democratic principle of "equal justice to all." His status as chairman of this sub-committee and of the parent Judiciary Committee, derisively mocks the democratic professions of the Government. He is an affront to the justice-and-freedom sensibilities of the American people. He should be deprived of his committee chairmanships. If the incoming Senate would be truly responsive to the national interests and really respectful of the will of the people, it would vote against seating him. The Senate ought to direct that a full-scale investigation be held of his conspiratorial activities against law and order in the South, his role in the formation of the White Citizens Council movement, and his role in depriving Negro citizens of their Constitutional rights in violation of his oath of office.

Eastland should be unseated—as Bilbo was—and expelled from the Senate. He is the very symbol of all that is evil and hateful in the public life of our country. . . .

Eastland is a veritable political bolus from the lower bowel of Mississippi, a stench in the nostrils of the nation.

Eastland is a pre-civilization misanthrope at large in our highest legislative chamber of government.

Eastland is to my people (the 18 million Negro Americans) what Hitler's Joseph Goebbels was to the Jews.

Eastland is the King of the white supremacy loudmouths. He is the ideological inspiration for, if not the legal accessory to, heinous racist crimes against the lives and liberties of my people in Mississippi and elsewhere in the South and the country. Civilized people recall with horror such white supremacy murders which occurred in Mississippi—

—on May 17, 1955 of Rev. George W. Lee, Belzonia, Miss.

—on August 13, 1955 of Lamar Smith, Brookhaven, Miss.

—on August 28, 1955 of 14-year-old Emmett Till, Money, Miss.

Eastland—this political son of a Bilbo, a Jeff Davis, a Calhoun, is the

most despised man in America, the hated continuer of the slavers' cause.

It is fully in keeping with the un-American cause that he serves, that James Eastland has chosen *Bill of Rights Day* to commence his inquisition into the private affairs of citizens, for his new subversive attack upon the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

I will not be party to his design against cherished, hard-won rights of the people and will interpose against his interrogatories, those privileges granted under the 1st, 5th—yes, and the 14th Amendments of the Constitution.

JAMES E. JACKSON

LONDON LETTER

JACK BEECHING

HAVE you any idea what *Mainstream* tastes like? Eighteen months ago I incautiously offered to eat a page or two, should the Labor Party not revitalise itself to the point of winning the next General Election. Today I've been bet it won't, just like that, by a Labor MP pessimistic about his future career (and everything else, in consequence).

His gossip runs thus: the pundits of the party machine last time estimated they could win, if Labor campaigned against the H-Bomb. Patriotically Major Attlee would have none of it (he's Lord Attlee now) and the Tories got back with a working majority.

Is there anything besides the pressure of office-hungry back benchers to make them play it different next time?

Both Tories and Labor have been busy since Suez, perfecting new brand images of themselves. They have this time to cajole a different electorate, whose memories of mass unemployment and Munich have grown dim. The old, disabled or ill-equipped, whose votes can usually be bought with identical promises from Left and Right are the only chronically poor in Britain nowadays.

The Labor leaders have chosen not to look too much like Socialists (not a terribly hard decision, perhaps). They will of course when privately addressing the thousands of bona fide socialist devotees who knock on doors utter the usual pieties about their 'socialist faith'). But the public face is to be more decorous: actuarially sound reforms with a top dressing of humanitarian verbiage, and that's about all.

The Tory leaders too, in creating their brand image, have a problem with their own grass roots membership. Those fierce retired officers and DAR-type matrons are fonder of flogging and hanging than sweet

reasonableness. That won't quite do for a party that electorally wishes to seem only the tiniest bit right of centre.

Why this jostling for the dead centre position, this political Tweedledummary?

Owing to the oddities of our Constitution (unwritten, since in print it would read too much like a supplement to *Alice in Wonderland*) a shift in the vote as small as 5% may cause a tremendous turnover in seats. Our Governments are elected, in short, by the man who keeps changing his mind.

He used to be a Liberal (one of those confusing words which alters in crossing the Atlantic—signifying as little here as Radical does in France). The old Liberal Party split in the twenties. The business men went into the Tory party, and the intellectuals brought even more intellectual confusion into the Labor Party, leaving an aging rump of small traders, nonconformist academics and eccentrics. But they still had votes and each big party wooed them sedulously, for instance, in the days of the Popular Front.

In 1945 Labor's startling electoral victory was brought about principally by our huge armed forces voting Labor almost to a man—after a painful and violent six-year education in the facts of life and death. This majority instantly dwindled when Labor started calling up veterans to send them off to Korea.

Who are the floating voters now? They are young, of course, and by my old fashioned standards have a great deal of spending money and a terrifying (but not by US ideas terrifying) load of installment debt. A certain number have passed scholarships and become if not gentlemen at least managers. Many of the technically proletarian among them are buying suburban houses on mortgage, thereby acquiring the sort of non-peasant property that involves you even closer in the processes of the market and makes you more afraid than ever of losing your job. They've never known hard times, they're smug, they're in for a shock—thus mutter the old men of the Depression generation.

A few of these young faces are seen in and around the newly furnished Liberal Party, but many more have been at the Nuclear Disarmament meetings, which this year have represented the largest non-party political campaign in Britain since the Thirties. You might not think so from reading our press. However it has caught the imagination of the young, though like all non-proletarian movements it slightly lacks unremitting drive and the subordination of personalities. Nor has it yet made the necessary dent in the consciousness of the organized Labor movement. Even the new voters with no definite politics have heads,

not turnips on their shoulders and the stuff inside is not pudding but brains. Not all politicians realize this.

Macmillan's government has ostentatiously been doing its best for the new clientele, making cars and tellies and houses easier to buy (one car for every two families in ten years' time says Butler. (In this small island we shan't be able to *move*). They've even promised to end conscription. But all this is at the expense of deflation—a stagnant economy, production not expanding and new investment desperately inadequate.

To counter this policy of deliberate if cosy economic rift the Labor leadership hasn't offered much more than the correct Keynesian phrases so far. Pretending to build Socialism by systematically patching capitalism is of course bound to involve a certain degree of verbal ambiguity.

For these new floating voters the fear of unemployment is so far still hypothetical, though it's the logical outcome of deflation and could change minds faster than all the public relations in Mayfair. Unemployment creeps higher in the more vulnerable areas and by the end of the year had touched 9% in Northern Ireland. What about the H-bomb? A Labor campaign on that theme would admittedly win the election hands down. But think of the implications, Jack, as the Labor MP said to me, putting his hand fraternally on my shoulder and looking as glum as a saint who has just found out about Sin. So I thought of them. A socialist foreign policy, relaxing tensions in a split world, changing the inchoate fears of the muddle-minded into progressive optimism. But that word progressive is risky—once you start a demand for radical change, how can you be sure where it will end?

Or shall I have to eat these words, too?

THE hardest thing to buy in London this week is a ticket to Paul Robeson's concert in the Albert Hall, though normally it takes massed brass bands to fill that massive specimen of Victoriana. One finds that quite unpolitical people are going to this concert as if to see and hear not a celebrity but an old friend. Robeson has already sung in Saint Paul's Cathedral. A big television circuit shrewdly got thousands of dials turning their way simply by advertising his smiling face with the time underneath. When he eventually appears in *Othello*, Stratford-on-Avon simply won't be big enough.

Now the strangeness and indeed the political significance lies in this. Paul hasn't been allowed to make a public impression in Britain for a dozen years or more—his heyday here was prewar. For twenty years the public have seen virtually no films and heard very few records, not of course because there's a radio censorship—we're part of Western Civil-

zation too—but even disc jockeys have more natural delicacy than to upset the American Embassy. On the other hand *Time* magazine circulates here widely; for a decade we've had the smears instead of the songs.

Now take a young man born the year the Spanish War ended—there will be hundreds like him, queuing to hear Paul Robeson. Might he not be pardoned were he influenced only by the twisted, smeared, vindictive image of the great singer projected by the State Department and the *Time-Life* boys? But it seems there are voices and faces you can't so easily smear; a few syllables sung into a microphone with that extraordinary sincerity wipe the smear away. In fact, my old grandmother was evidently right when she used to warn me of the short run that liars get for their money.

That paladin of the slush fund, the Honorable Richard Nixon, has also visited these shores. For some odd reason they treated him like an elder statesman, which seems a bit premature. We've got television however and had seen American faces like that before, among the baddies in the B-pictures. But judging by the civility of his reception we are more loyal, so far, than the Latin Americans. Time will tell.

It shows something else significant, too. Television here can work both ways. Even for a politician with the aptitudes of a professional entertainer the humbug may far too easily show through. We are developing an interesting line in civil but incisive young interviewers who obviously don't like politicians and are adept at making them unconsciously betray their baser side—specifically, the vanity, power hunger and fear of ordinary people that are their occupational diseases.

I WAS out of England when the race riots occurred at Notting Hill but came back to find friends of all political shades, there is no other expression for it, deeply ashamed. The fascists of course, those mobilisers of the evil in ourselves of which we are not entirely conscious, have been systematically Negro-baiting ever since our West Indian fellow citizens began to arrive. But we can't justly blame this sudden dreadful outburst on fascists or juvenile delinquents without first taking a hard look at ourselves as products of, among other things, imperialism.

Until the war, outside a seaport or a university town, a darkskinned person was seldom seen in England. This was the green and pleasant land where veterans of the Black-and-Tans and the Amritsar Massacre retired to grow roses. In southern England, it must be remembered, almost every man you meet is likely to be a veteran of some war somewhere. We live now in Daydream Country and our memories of quelling riots or bombing innocent civilians have become private nightmares. (In

the many factoryed North where the solid Labor vote is piled up and no tourist ever goes, the difference is this: in wartime they work in factories making the guns. Maybe that is why no peace movement here has so far had solid working class support).

Our West Indian visitors—there are 200,000 of them now—broke harshly into this daydream (often, admittedly, a benevolent daydream where words like Education, Brotherhood, Self Government bob up and down reassuringly). It was really of less consequence that they were invariably more religious than we are, sometimes harder workers and all too often better cricketers—they were reminding the average Englishman of facts he would rather forget. Those were the facts that provide the cash surplus whereby the daydream is financed, reminders of the harsh farflung world where black faces outnumber white faces to such an extent we are driven into protective fantasies.

Notting Hill may have shocked some of us to our senses. The more intelligent Tory imperialists, numbering to themselves the colonies where they must now walk delicately and talk liberally have evidently begun to take steps: the state controlled radio has miraculously blossomed into liberal programmes on racial issues, and the Queen's Christmas speech this year would have given some of her predecessors apoplexy. Maybe for the rest of us it is necessary to do more than dream about the brotherhood of man. Your brother is over there having a petrol bomb thrown in his doorway. I can't see from here whether he is a West Indian or a South African, a Cypriot, an Arab or a Jew. Maybe I ought to walk across and make sure.

I HAD the glum experience a few years back of sitting with an American theatrical visitor checking the Entertainments column of *The Times*. We discovered he might as well have flown straight on to Paris. The reason is no doubt similar on Broadway—after all, the Way of Life's the same. The business men bought themselves so effectively into theatrical bricks and mortar in our West End that as the rents go up experiment goes out and runs stretch on for ever. My American could that night have had a choice of three musicals he'd already seen in New York, a veritable variorum of murder mysteries and several leg shows for sales managers. But no art, not any, except that at the Old Vic there was *His Andronicus* which I count as Grand Guignol.

There are now usually two plays anyway worth seeing, and a chance of more breaking through. Dramatists of talent are springing up like dandelions, though in due course most of them will no doubt get trodden flat under the businessmen's heavy feet. Several have had their chance

in the Theatre Royal, Stratford (Chaucer's, this time, not Shakespeare's). It's in the heart of London's East End and the Labor borough council there help it with a little money; more than can be said for the government-financed Arts Council which likes neither the Left nor the Arts when as so often happens they occur together.

The Theatre Royal is run with passionate enthusiasm by a technically brilliant producer whose overwhelming desire is for the working class to come and see her show. (In England the live theatre caters almost exclusively for the carriage trade, hence its customary dullness). She has already found two eloquently powerful young Irish dramatists in Brendan Behan and Sheila Delaney. Only there's this: all but a handful of those who buy seats come not from the working class streets around but from all the nicer suburbs, intellectuals almost to a man. The long trek East through the mean streets has become part of the price they pay. However, each house nearby has its aerial for use with an electronic theatre called television. They'll get around to the pre-scientific theatre in time, and this is not a smear, either. Thanks to the competition between commercial and Government sponsored programmes here, TV can be a liberal education, by fits and starts, anyway.

The other theatre is doggedly intellectual and even faintly fashionable: the Royal Court at the Belgravian end of artistic Chelsea. (Artistic here usually means work for a high price in an advertising agency all week; dress and live like a Bohemian at the weekend). In this theatre the Angries like John Osborne appeared; they've also put on a play by a writer as excellent and openly left wing (the current catch phrase for that being *committed*) as Doris Lessing. The man who fought the necessary battles in the London press for these two theatres and for Brecht too is called Kenneth Tynan; over there, now with you, to write for the *New Yorker*.

IT'S twenty years since Bernal proved so lucidly that unless we trained many more scientists our industrial society would begin to sag dangerously. It took the sputnik, here as in the States, to make the politicians grasp the point. In a piecemeal, inadequate and halfhearted fashion the administrative results are already beginning to trickle into our educational system. It has afforded us one miracle—the sight of Tories proposing to spend actual money on the Secondary Modern schools, those heartbreak houses of the British educational system, hopelessly large classes often housed in slums, where three quarters of our population are educated until fifteen. If they are sometimes taught more than they need as hewers of wood and drawers of water, it's only

because among teachers you will invariably find a vital minority heroic in calibre.

The remaining quarter escape the fifty-in-a-class regimen by being siphoned off. Most are chosen (by competitive examination at the age of eleven. No, eleven is not a misprint) to become the functionaries and managers and schoolmasters of a society which lets anyone rise as high as his powers allow, providing only he conforms to the manners and views of the elite. Then there are the veritable elite, trained in schools called Public since like the Ritz they are open to all who can afford them. Thence come the samurai of our civil and armed services; the open conspirators who fagged for each other at school and now face each other from the Labor as well as the Tory parliamentary benches.

Science too has here an elite tradition, though for slightly different reasons. First rate scientific ability may of course crop up anywhere in society—in a millionaire like Cavendish, a workman like Faraday or a rentier like Darwin. But until recent times the English scientist unless he had uncommon social graces was neither fashionable nor well financed, so brains had to take the place of costly equipment and integrity compensated for the more blatant forms of social encouragement. The European tradition in science thus gave prominence to a first rate man, usually with a handful of brilliant pupils, who could assemble all his essential equipment on a kitchen table.

Not unlike the poets obliged to write copy on weekdays and verse on Sundays, fundamental science here was long suspended on the shoestring provided after the more extravagant needs of war and profit had been met. How little the position has changed, scientifically, in Day-dream Country, sputniks notwithstanding, one can judge from the derisory amount of money raised from industry by a recent public appeal. It was for the Jodrell Bank radio telescope, and came at a time when it was poulting national pride and making daily headlines by tracking your satellite for you. Our crash program for producing scientists already sounds more like a tinkle.

But something else is happening too. Though in capitalist countries the number of men with scientific qualification increases even more rapidly than the number with a literary training, a greater and greater proportion of both spend their lives in uncreative or repetitive activities or even ones with a merely symbolic function. For us, journalism, copy-writing, teaching teachers to teach teachers. For the chaps in the white coats, quality control, the brutal engineering of bombs and projectiles or the eyewash science of the factory lab.

Scientists who look at first sight as though they might conceivably

dedicate their lives to their function with the artistic severity of a Cavendish or a Faraday seem in England anyway to be content with a reputation just large enough to get on the most influential committee available and thence into the nearest queue for a knighthood. The laboratory—or is this cynicism?—seems more and more a mere springboard to the higher reaches of a society which regards paper shuffling as a social activity only slightly less important than coupon clipping. Of course there must be modest inconspicuous exceptions, though from the outside the mere literary man can't always see where. Our tinkle program won't of course liberate the scientific ability imprisoned in the 75% who now hew wood and draw water though it may well finally stifle science here as an elite activity in the better sense. Shall we then see science become a wholly mimic activity, laboratory rituals but no actual cerebration, experiments but never any hypotheses? Or would the scientists like to take space in *Mainstream* to defend themselves?

THE Whitewash Boys here have lately been trying to prove that but for Eden's illness, Suez would never have happened. (Didn't someone say the same about Napoleon's cold in the head at Borodino?) Remembering how even a couple of sneezes affect one's own judgment, one can sympathise. But it calls to mind this ominous thought: how many statesmen taking life and death decisions are too sick to think? Ike and Dulles we know about, but what of the dozens whose old-men's ailments may be less well publicized? The Air Force General, bowed down by a lifetime of professionally planning mass murder, whose brain drifts towards deathwish while his finger rests lightly on The Button. Even the Revolutionary who after a lifetime on the run finds his conceptions of political power strangely mixed with paranoia. What about a public examination of all politicians, to certify them free from Chamberlain's Gout, Eden's Gall Bladder and Forrestall's Disease?

A literary straw in the wind is the succession this year of novels and even plays about working class life that aren't "committed" in the slightest. They show sex life in the back streets or the humours of wage slavery with an uncommon degree of ability and versimilitude, but no politics whatever. Not slumming or muckraking, but a sincere romanticisation of working class life, usually by writers who have passed over to the other side.

IN England of course, as one can never reiterate too often, class is *real*; it's not a reactionary survival one feels faintly ashamed of because it flouts the Rights of Man, but an expression of the way our

wagearners fought to save their souls alive in the world's first Industrial Revolution. England is still two nations; the many clever boys who have educated themselves across the frontier in the past decade now find themselves in a more insecure, less friendly world where values as well as accents differ. More social amenity, maybe, but less human solidarity. The people on that side of the tracks aren't so nice after all. Whether this romanticism turns to sentimentality or digs deeper into what one might have called socialist realism if the expression hadn't been preempted is as hard to predict as the voting in our next General Election, and for almost exactly the same reasons.

Each time the New York Stock Exchange trembles it makes black headlines over here. City Editors complain of what the Russians have done to our carefully propped tin and aluminum prices, but softly, because sales here of Russian gold give vital help to Bank of England reserves. And that's pleasant hearing, in its own ironic way, to one who in his soapbox days was not infrequently accused of living off Red Gold.

How can you make your standard of living rise faster than your national product, and finance a succession of colonial wars too? Won't something split somewhere at the seams, and soon? Few ask that question openly yet, but it's at the back of many reflective minds.

I think I hear a stitch beginning to go.

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

ANONYMOUS

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

"Love thy neighbor" they said to me
When I was a child of two or three.

"Catch a nigger by the toe"
Then I learned of Ole Jim Crow.

"Colored section and T B Blues,"
Black man's children don't get good food.

"Black is Black and White is White"
Servants' entrance to the right.

Crowded Harlem and Poll Tax South——
No steam heat in a Negro's house.

"Free, white and twenty-one"
The Negro lynched was slavery's son.

"Love thy neighbor" they said to me
When I was a child of two or three.

* The author of this poem is a sixteen-year old schoolgirl.

Right Face

Never Caught Napping

Vice President Richard M. Nixon had a tooth pulled today and while under sedation talked about the American way of life to the two dental surgeons and three nurses. . . . The dentists said the Vice President had spoken on general topics such as the American way of life but did not mention partisan politics. He also praised his wife, Pat, for her behavior when they were stoned by a mob in Venezuela.—*The New York Times*.

The Church Militant

Two British Army captains—one a padre—who were attacked by a gang of Cypriote youths while at a beach party were convicted by a court-martial of having lost their revolvers.—*The New York Times*.

The Fur Ladder

A woman should work her way up to a mink coat just as her husband works his way up to a position that will pay for it.

It is the theory of one fur designer that a woman should get the fur habit early in life. Thus when she finally does step out in a full-length mink, she can do so without feeling as though she were carrying a sandwich board marking her husband's salary increase.—*The New York Times* woman's page.

An Affair of Savoir Faire

A dignified English hunt club has accepted the resignation of the Duke of Roxburghe as chairman of its hunt committee. The Duke did a fox in several weeks ago with a rifle. He explained that he had received complaints from neighbors that some of their lambs had been killed. But the deed took place on territory used by another hunt club. In England, one doesn't finish off a fox with a gun; hounds do it with teeth.—The *New York Times*.

Dog Show Religion

LOS ANGELES—When the Rev. Nelson B. Higgins Jr. was appointed pastor of a Los Angeles Methodist Church, there was a circumstance that made it more than a routine announcement.

Mr. Higgins is a Negro. The Normandie Avenue Church he was called on to guide had all-white membership. . . .

In one way the experiment is a success: the church is growing. In another, it failed: only a handful of white members stuck by the church.

When the step was first announced, there were forty-three white members of the church, remnants of a dwindling congregation. Two-thirds of them resigned immediately. Others quit later. But more than 100 persons have joined the church. Two are whites who had quit. There are now about a dozen whites.

John H. Seal, chairman of the resigning church board, said in a press release:

"We do not believe in the materialistic brotherhood of man and in the social intermixing of races, which we hold to be a Marxian theory of the 'one race' of 'classless society.' God made us black, white, red and yellow and we do not agree with those who propose to improve on God's handiwork by creating a mongrelized race in a 'new world social order.'"—The *New York Times*.

Exploited

CIUDAD TRUJILLO, Dominican Republic.—There are definite indications here that Generalissimo Rafael Leonidas Trujillo is cutting

down on the amount of work he puts into his job as the Dominican Republic's strong man. . . .

He appears to be in excellent health and probably works harder than any one of his ministers. It is this extraordinary work load that has worried his closer advisers in recent years. He has been advised to slacken off and it appears now that he is gradually doing so.

For instance, he has entered negotiations leading toward returning the nationalized light and power monopoly to United States investors. Further, he is in negotiations to place on the market the huge sugar holdings of his family. This is one of the largest industries on the island of Hispaniola, which the Dominican Republic shares with Haiti.—*The New York Times*.

Achieving a Balance

DEMOCRATS TOLD TO STRESS WEST, MINIMIZE SOUTH—*The New York Times*.

Soft Sell English

Advertisers in these buses have contact with many thousands of passengers who travel daily through the shopping areas, and literally deposit them at the point of purchase.—New York City Transportation poster.

books in review

More Than Just Folks

THE BOOK OF NEGRO FOLKLORE, edited by Langston Hughes and Arna Bontemps. Dodd, Mead and Company. \$6.50.

THIS collection will not please those who think that folklore must be old and quaint, and folk music made up of songs that sound alike except that some are punctuated with hey-noonies and derry-downs while others are spiced with whoopti-yi-o's, heaveho's and praise-de-Lawds.

Folklore is almost invariably called spontaneous, untutored, artless—that is, childlike. Whether charming, comical, or tragic, it is rarely thought to be a concern of intelligent adults. Or else it is soaked in the watery romanticism of "The American Past," which has become one of the mawkish features of our culture. We have been conditioned to feel great nostalgia for colonial days and antiques, for rural life, the frontier and the open range. Our only heroes remain simple men of action whether wearing coonskin caps, ten-gallon hats, steel helmets or space helmets. This nostalgia permeates our culture from colonial-type and ranch-type homes to western movies and Nor-

man Rockwell's *Post* covers. Our corporations insist that they are big families and just folks.

It is a seeming paradox that our love of a secure rural past goes right along with a passion for novelty, the latest thing, mechanical gadgets, and a restless search for the exoric in the arts. Love for an Anglo-Saxon past accompanies a liking for allegedly wild and primitive qualities in jazz and other Negro arts. The American who displays an African carving above the cobbler's bench used for a coffee table does the same thing in two ways: he escapes from present reality.

The editors of *The Book of Negro Folklore*, on the other hand, are veteran experts in dealing with the realities of Negro life. They offer fantasy and humor enough, but this is repeatedly the packaging of bitter truth, and the core of their book is the real relations of white and colored Americans from the plantation to Chicago's Bronzeville and New York's Harlem. The modern, living, urban lore is relatively little known—city blues, jokes and anecdotes about discrimination, jive-talk, descriptions of city folkways—churches, rent parties, burying leagues, bopster stories, lodges and dance halls.

"Folklore" has always been an un-

satisfactory, too narrow term for what might be called "people's culture" and "the common arts." For example, Americans of all classes tell off-color or "subversive" stories that seldom or never get into print or on the air—about Little Rock, Dulles, Nixon, or Cape Canaveral. This is nothing if not "folklore." So also is something so trivial and ephemeral as a parody on a great old Scots-English border ballad:

Where have you been, Lord Randall
my son?

Out.

And what did you do, Lord Randall
my son?

Nothing.

This bit of foolery, in its irreverence for what is conventional and "official," has the typical folk spirit.

Folklore lives underground, evades censorship, and is essentially rebellious and critical. Lawrence Gellert has heard Southern Negroes making the point in song:

Got one mind for the white man
to see,

'Nother for what I know is me . . .

And Alan Lomax heard blues singers agreeing that the blues are "mostly revenge."

In our popular culture slaves were people who accepted their lot, happily or sadly, and their spirituals are usually sung in a slow, wistful, pathetic manner—not in anger, fire, and hope—even when they are commanding Pharaoh to let the people go and rejoicing because Pharaoh's army got drowned. Hughes and Bontemps

make a valid, unusual point when they say that the lore coming from the slaves' religion was "always fundamentally optimistic." Their book has a strong beating heart. They do not take part in "The emasculation of folk music" which Peter Seeger touches on in the Winter issue of *Sing Out!*

Of course emasculation means, literally, castrating—making eunuchs. But poetically and broadly it means depriving anyone or anything of force. And all depends on human power: first, mastery of nature; then strength as the basis of respect and respect as the basis of love. Hughes' and Bontemps' anthology says, in a way that the best political and economic histories cannot say it, that American Negroes have been intelligent and brave. It demands respect for colored people and so helps to make love possible. And really, we should not let clergymen and psychiatrists—much less Hollywood—have a monopoly on this great tortured word. Nor should people of active good will remain dupes of that propaganda which makes folk songs and stories seem remote, weak, dying or dead. This book tells much, for example, about the great, still-continuing migration of Negroes from South to North:

Dere's a big red headline in Chicago
Defender News,

Says my gal down South got dem
Up de Country Blues.

And Sterling Brown here quotes a young Negro author: "I have often thought that the Negro farmhand would lose heart once for all, were it not for the daily encouragement he takes from the whistle of his favorite locomotives." Not only the North-

South differential in freight rates, but what railroad trains mean symbolically in the poetry of working people, especially in the blues, is vital knowledge for any democratic politicians.

It is a peculiar fact that Negro history and culture have been given an enormous amount of attention and, at the same time, have been neglected. There is a wealth of Negro lore in thousands and thousands of books and articles, but most of this is buried in our larger libraries and is known mainly to specialists. The materials have been industriously collected but not much thought about, and then badly thought about for the most part. Recording companies have long tapped the rich vein of folk music and given us its lead and silver and gold, for vitality as well as sleepy opium is profitable in popular music and poetry. Still, the music and the words have not been listened to with real seriousness. Most obviously, the rising flood of writing about jazz music has been singularly inaccurate, superficial, careless.

Certainly there is a bright side to this picture. The best, best-selling, most influential and prolific editors of books of American folklore, like B. A. Botkin and Alan Lomax, have given much space and sympathetic understanding to Negro art. Without their pioneering work this country would hardly know that it has a rich popular culture. They went beyond the pattern of local and highly specialized anthologies to national and more interpretative books. Still, there has been a need—one could call it an unmet need—for a broad book of Negro materials. Negro culture cannot be seen—to us a Madison-Avenueish argon which is in itself genuine folklore—in the round till it's given its

own showcase. There have been treasuries of Jewish lore but not of Negro. Now we have one. No doubt it has many weaknesses, some sins of omission and commission, but these are tertiary. The main point is that Hughes and Bontemps have gone to good and various sources, have selected very well and with a strong purpose. Here scattered materials join and multiply their forces, and essentially the editors have opposed certain undemocratic and anti-democratic trends among folklorists.

Scholarship in folklore, like that in politics, history, industry, education and religion, is a battleground even when the warriors don't know it. In folklore as, for example, in the far more immediate and raw-nerved world of television, there is pressure to avoid what is "controversial." Here it is safer to leave "the folk" uncorrupted by thought, to have them quaint and spontaneous, and especially free of any notions of protest. And Negroes, of course are peculiarly "controversial."

We all know—or should know—that "the battle for the mind of America" is not carried on solely in factories and union halls, that victories are won in libraries and their effects then filter down into the minds of journalists and then into the minds of that influential seventeen percent of Americans who read a book during a year. Therefore it matters that the leading article in the *New York Folklore Quarterly* for the Spring of 1958 was "Folksong of Social Protest: a Musical Mirage." John Greenway protested this ignorance of protest, but his valuable book, *American Folksongs of Protest* (1953) was nevertheless one that solemnly debated the question of whether or not Negro slaves were mentally capable of real

protest. He finally decided that they were bright enough to dislike slavery actively. Nevertheless, he limited his discussion, for the most part, to songs of overt protest. He did not deal with the bulk of the best folksong in which protest is concealed, indirect, or ironic.

We must note, again, that this is an Age of Conformity, Anxiety, Toad-Eating, and Timidity. And perhaps this is why the inexpensive paper-back books on American folklore tend to shy away from those controversial Negroes. *The Burl Ives Song Book*, for all its virtues, contains only one or two songs of definite Negro origin and, as an historical collection, it stops at about 1850. Perhaps history gets more controversial thereafter. *American Folk Tales and Songs* by Richard Chase, published by Signet, 1956, is frankly an "English-American" collection. There is an honorable exception, Sylvia and John Kolb's Bantam *Treasury of Folk Songs* and, non-paperback but inexpensive, Russell Ames' *The Story of American Folksong*.

But unfortunately typical is James N. Tidwell's very good but almost Jim Crow *Treasury of American Folk Humor*, 1956, which contains very little Negro lore. And till now there has been no general book of Negro culture except the fine *Negro Caravan*, edited by Sterling Brown, Arthur Davis, and Ulysses Lee in 1941. This gives only seventy-seven fine pages to folklore out of more than a thousand pages.

The Book of Negro Folklore, then, has bulk and scope and a firm approach. In the Introduction the editors say about Brer Rabbit: "To the slave in his condition the theme of weakness overcoming strength through cunning proved endlessly fascinating." Such a

statement would be of no great moment if it were not a fashion among folklorists to rebuke those who find social meaning in such material. Again and again one can find dark hints about people who bend Brer Rabbit and John Henry to their partisan purposes. It is not too fanciful to imagine an F.B.I. man asking, "Do you think that Brer Rabbit symbolizes the rebellious slave?" Unfortunately there are few, or none, to point out that it is thoroughly partisan and political to argue that folklore is not at all political.

In this book there is much evidence of the cleverness and perception of slaves—qualities which were necessarily developed in the endless warfare between owner and chattel. There is an indication that slaves understood the policy of "divide and conquer" long before Hitler:

The rooster and the chicken had
a fight,
The chicken knocked the rooster
out of sight,
The rooster told the chicken, that's
all right,
I'll meet you in the gumbo to-
morrow night.

It is pleasing to find an influential folklorist like Richard Dorson, in *Negro Folk Tales from Michigan*, seeing that Uncle Remus was somewhat too happy in his plantation Utopia. Yet he rebukes those who emphasize the discontent of slaves and points to the large and enduring body of Old John tales to indicate how much amiable rivalry there was between slave and master. Well, one may emphasize the amiability, or the rivalry.

Hughes and Bontemps find less in the contented slave and more of the trickster-hero in all the stories about

Jack or John, old John, and High John de Conquer. Here they accord more, not with Dorson, but with Zora Neale Hurston, the brilliant folklorist-novelist, and with Botkin as he edits *Lay My Burden Down*, a collection of ex-slaves' memories out of the Federal Writers' Project of the Thirties.

All this is background. *The Book of Negro Folklore* is too large and various to describe and evaluate except at great length. A listing must do. There are the rabbit, fox, and goose tales, animal rhymes, and "Memories of Slavery." There is fine poetry in prose form: "The swamps . . . where the trees sweat like a man." There are aphorisms and proverbs: "Watch out w'en you'er gettin' all you want. Fattenin' hogs ain't in luck." Or, "De price of your hat ain't de measure of your brain." Or, a gem for politicians and pugilists: "De billy-goat gets in his hardest licks when he looks like he's going to back out of de fight."

In this book there is heaven and hell, preachers who are moral on stage and fallible when off, ghosts and black magic and gambling, sermons and prayers, spirituals and gospel rhymes, love in many forms, ballads of outlaw and noble heroes, blues and work songs, the chants of street vendors, children's game songs, the memoirs of jazz players and blues singers, Harlem jive talk, stories about "The Problem," and non-literary poetry and prose that comes quite directly out of folk culture, including Langston Hughes' own Simple, the best people's satirist since Mr. Wooley, and another who makes Will Rogers seem rather mild and milky.

This anthology makes us see that Negro art is unique. At the same time it is of a piece with all the world's

folk art in its classical virtues of economy, spareness, realism, and irony. White children would not sing a "Did-you Game" about lynching. Perhaps they would not sing a "nonsense" song about cooperation among animals:

Raccoon shake dem 'simmons down,
Possum pass 'em round.

Good art is no monopoly of the Negro folk. But they deserve a book like this—and more books like it—even better books that not only collect their art but explain it more fully.

RUSSELL AMES

Man Without a People

THE LONG DREAM, by Richard Wright. Doubleday. \$3.95.

THERE are books which rightly can be considered not so much the bearers of evidence as the evidence themselves, not so much the analysts of the disease as themselves the symptoms. Some books lay bare the problem. Others are merely an aspect of it.

I cannot see this latest book of Wright's, as indeed it was impossible to see his earlier book, *The Outsider*, as a work of art. It lacks objectivity; it is immature—but even worse than that there seems to be such a profound absence of sympathy for his people, of the kind of commitment to his subject without which no serious work of art is possible. It is one of those books that draw the reader's attention away from the subject to the writer himself; and one learns not so much what is true about the

locale, Mississippi, in this case, as what happens to a Negro writer who has abandoned his people.

The Long Dream (which the publishers hopefully compare to *Native Son*) is a failure as fiction not because, as some critics have claimed, Wright has been too long away from Mississippi, or any part of the United States, and so has missed the great changes that have presumably taken place. No, there have been exiles before who have known their native land more keenly than the philistines who never left it for a moment.

Wright believes that the Negro people are caught in the tragedy of the "human condition" just as their white oppressors are also helplessly caught; that the ailment goes deep into our unknown bloods, where we are hopelessly poisoned at the source. The Negro is sick because he is an oppressed Negro; the white man is sick, too, and the Negro whom he perversely loves is simultaneously his burden of guilt, which he will hug to him though he perish.

Wright's theories turn their back on social causes, indeed on history itself; he seeks for understanding in psychoanalytical concepts (themselves misunderstood), and in concepts of dark irrational instincts, from which there is really no escape. The white man hates the Negro but loves him, too; and the Negro hates and fears the white man, but since he cannot explain why the white man hates him so irrationally except that he is black—i.e., different—he ends up hating being black, thus finally accepting the white man's judgment on himself. And so from this blackness, this mark of Cain, there is no escape except in

flight—not a flight that envisages a later return, better armed, but a flight to the enemy, though now to a "kind er" enemy—the French. That is the solution of Wright's hero, that is his thinking: "Above all, he was ashamed of his world, for the world about him had branded his world as bad and inferior. Moreover, he felt no moral strength or compulsion to defend his world. . . ."

Nor does Wright feel any "moral strength" to defend the world he describes—the world of the American Negro caught in the daily hell of life in a Mississippi town. The terror he describes vividly enough. But as each instance is extended into the abnormal the reader discovers, with some horror, that he has been led innocently enough into scenes of torture not to arouse his protest or hatred of cruelty but to engage perversely in its pleasures. Wright's sickness is to love what consumes him. This book therefore is not art; it is a case history.

Wright shows in this book a people whom he apparently believes aren't worth saving, for they possess no characteristics superior to their oppressors, and in actual fact, are inferior if for no other reason than that they're not on top. Their only aim is to escape somehow from the accident of birth in order to be free to live like the white—on no higher moral level, with no greater perspectives. "He sensed in them (the Negro people), a profound lassitude, a sort of lackadaisical aimlessness, a terribly pathetically narrow range of emotional activity veering from sex to religion, from religion to alcohol. He found them too ready to explode over matters devoid of real content and meaning. . . . Grudgingly accepting being

passed with his people, he was, deep
him, somewhat afraid of them; there
as in him some element that stood
side as though in shame. . . ."

This cannot be taken as the point
view of the character alone, and
us privileged; it is Wright's point of
ew, which has not changed in almost
enty years. In his autobiography,
Black Boy, which was published in 1945,
wrote, in the first person:

"After I had outlived the shocks of
childhood, after the habit of reflection
d been born in me, I used to mull
er the strange absence of real kindness
Negroes, how unstable was our ten-
erness, how lacking in genuine passion
e were, how void of great hopes, how
mid our joy, how bare our traditions,
w hollow our memories, how lacking
were in those intangible sentiments
at bind man to man, and how shal-
w was even our despair. . . ."

Having abandoned all respect for his
n people, Wright, of course, could
t believe in a philosophy which saw
the oppressed Negro people, as in all
e oppressed, great horizons of struggle
d achievement, great transformations
national character based upon exactly
ose qualities which Wright cannot find
himself nor in anyone else.

Fish, who is the main character in the
ok, would like to live "free" like
whites whom he fears and envies.
t since he is not white, the pain of
pression does fall on him, and forces
reaction. But how? As a rebel, con-
ous of the aims and sources of his
ellion? No: he rebels through his
nds; through his belly, his sex; by
ism, neuroticism; finally by flight.

Fish is brought up by a man who
learned how to make a go of it in

the white world. His father owns an
undertaker's establishment, but he also
collects rents and has an interest in
whore houses. He lives by paying off
graft to the white law-enforcers, and be-
cause he can't trust them he also sees
to it that he keeps some material for
blackmail safely in reserve against the
day they turn on him. And that day
inevitably comes. He loses his life, and
Fish almost loses his. But even so, Fish
has no real objection to the kind of life
his father has handed down to him—
blackmail material and whore houses—
and leaves it only when the white world
catches up with him and threatens to
put him underground. Then he runs
away, not only out of the state, but out
of the country. Sitting in the plane
winging over the Atlantic he observes
his black hand resting beside the white
hand of his fellow passenger, and "un-
consciously, stealthily, Fishbelly drew his
hand in, covering his right hand with
his left black hand, trying vainly to blot
out the shameful blackness on him."

What can we understand, then, from
such a life? Only that, as he escapes
to a "free world," he decides that this
flight is a "free gesture of faith welling
up out of a yearning to be at last some-
where at home; it was his abject offer of
a truce. . . . He was now voluntarily
longing to pledge allegiance to a world
whose brutal might could never compel
him to love it with threats of death."

But the white flag of truce and sur-
render is not the flag that we have al-
ready seen rising on the tall poles in
Ghana, Guinea, nor indeed anywhere in
the whole colonial world. Nor in Ala-
bama, nor Harlem..

PHILLIP BONOSKY

At Home in the World

OF STARS AND MEN, by Harlow Shapley. The Beacon Press. \$3.50.

IN his new book, Shapley pauses to discuss the human implications of the summary of his work which appeared last year as *The Inner Metagalaxy*.* The compressed and highly technical nature of that work makes it difficult for the lay reader to glean more than a hint of the really fantastic developments which have taken place in our knowledge of the universe in the past thirty years. Shapley's concept—not of stars—but of galaxies numbering in the billions, is staggering to the point of incredulity.

. . . the Hale telescope on Mount Palomar . . . could photograph more than a million galaxies through the bowl of the [Big] Dipper . . . The Dipper's Bowl covers less than a thousandth of the sky . . . we compute that a billion galaxies are within reach of our present telescopic power. (*The Inner Metagalaxy*, p. 114)

As Shapley candidly observes in *Of Stars and Men*, we no longer have need of the lame cosmogonies of superstition to inspire reverence. The realities of our situation are capable of inspiring a more meaningful awe than any based on the metaphysical speculation of theology. Humanity now partakes of a vaster and far more impressive existence than was ever before conceived, and not in a static, "preordained" universe, but an evolving, expanding, growing metagalaxy whose complex development has been paralleled by

**The Inner Metagalaxy*; Harlow Shapley; Yale University Press. \$6.75.

that of life, not only on earth, but without doubt, on millions of other planets as well. It is not only the immensity of the universe that is important, it is this universality of movement, of growth and change:

Comets, for example, dissolve; open star clusters are slowly dismembered by gravitational shearing; molecules are forced by radiation to dissociate; organic bodies rot, and nations decay. Also, organizations of all sorts, physical and biological, have emerged in the course of time. . . . Most of them grow slowly in complexity and volume, sometimes speedily by mutations. (pp. 33-4).

One of the significant conclusions to be drawn from our "being incidental," as Shapley puts it, is the strong likelihood that there are many other suns and other planetary systems similar to ours. We living beings are not alone in the universe. The conditions which brought forth life on the earth must be repeated many times over throughout our galaxy and the many other star systems around it. For the statistical-minded Shapley points out that if there were only a one-in-a-billion chance for the duplication of our situation, there would still be "a hundred million planetary systems suitable for organic life." (p. 74) This leads naturally to the question of the origin of life itself.

Shapley's discussion of this problem is in many ways the most exciting chapter in his excellent book. Those who read Bernal's report in *Mainstream* (4/58) will profit by a perusal of Shapley who fills in a little more detail than Bernal could compress into a brief article. Basing himself on extensive quotations from the works of Haldane and Oparin and upon citations of

nt experimental evidence of the essential validity of their ideas, he presents picture which suggests to the imaginative reader not merely that life *could* arise in a barren world, but that given certain conditions likely to occur on a new planet, it is practically an *inevitable* outcome of natural phenomena. It is one of Shapley's many startling suggestions that we living beings are, in a much more thorough sense than is usually indicated, at one not only with all forms of organic existence, but with the totality of physical existence:

With our confreres on distant planets; with fellow animals and plants of the land, air, and sea; with the rocks and waters of all planetary crusts, and the protons and atoms that make up the stars—with all these we are associated in an existence and an evolution. . . . (p. 149).

Shapley, of course, eschews political economy in his discussion, but he is unmindful of the oppressive restrictions under which humanity has had to labor to grow:

Fancy how far we might now have come if we had not been shackled by mythology and by certain conventions and national policies; what intellectual progress we might have made by this time if we had, for example, emphasized psyche rather than property. (p. 5)

He is sure that growing, rational humanity has the forces of darkness on its run:

. . . thanks to man's reasoning, never more has hampering superstition been retreated on so wide a front. . . . Rationalism has captured many outposts of our necessarily continuous conflict with the tyranny of the Unknown. We no longer need appeal to anything beyond nature when we are confronted

by such problems as the origin of life or the binding forces of nucleons, or the orbits of a star cluster, or the electrochemical dynamics of a thought. . . . (p. 157)

In this brief span of 157 pages Harlow Shapley presents a comprehensive picture of man, the earth and the stars as a knowable dynamic unity of evolutionary growth and development, a concept which stands out in sharp relief against the conventional attitudes with which we are all-too familiar. To us on the Left it offers a heartening glimpse into the intellectual ilfe of the future America toward which we are all working, and as such it becomes a revelation and a promise to mankind of things to come when One World is at last ready and worthy to take its place in the metagalaxy.

DAVID AVERY

Farewell to Arms

THE STORY OF AN AMERICAN COMMUNIST, by John Gates. Thomas Nelson & Sons. (\$3.95)

THE title of this book is misleading. It is not the story of an American Communist but of a man who thought he was one, for the years he was engaged in struggle. But when he sat down to think about it in prison, he began to realize he was not. The blurb on the jacket is correct, "*Gates is typical of a whole generation who were shocked by the Depression of 1929-1933 into Left Wing activities.*" The book is an enlarged re-write of a series he signed at the time of his resignation

from the Party. There is doubt as to whether Gates is actually the author. The style and language are not his but indicate some more competent and experienced writer, like Alan Max or Joseph Starobin, whose aid in editing the book he acknowledges.

This dressed up rehash of the *New York Post* series has an introduction by Earl Browder bestowing his blessing on Gates. Here the strange theme is advanced that "the Great Economic Depression" of the 30's was a unique catastrophe, like an earthquake or "the night of the big wind" in Ireland, not likely to happen again. He refers to it as "a trauma or break in the national consciousness," whatever that means. To this he attributes the rise of Communism as a national political influence, which he declares will never happen again either, and he hails Gates' "self liberation from Communist dogma" and his recognition that the spirit of youth today will "find a more reliable channel." We are left to surmise what this may be as neither Browder nor Gates furnishes an answer.

The period covered in Gates' book and many of its highlights are identical with those of Joseph North's *No Man is a Stranger*, but, with what a difference! Joe North subordinates his personal story to the stirring historical events of the depression years, the civil war in Spain and the world-wide struggle against fascism. North writes with human sympathy and understanding. Gates used the same period and struggles as a back drop for himself. He is always at the center of the stage. His rank in each new situation is stressed. Even in his account of Spain one does not feel a comradeship with his fellow volunteers. But the period cannot be

too greatly distorted nor the accomplishments of the Communist Party denied, in spite of petty potshots taken from the present viewpoint.

One thing stands out in Gates' book—he was not much of a reader. He speaks of reading the Marxist classics in college and collaborating on a synopsis of the first volume of Marx's *Capital*. His next bout of extensive reading was in 1951 to 1955 during imprisonment at Atlanta, nineteen years later. General reading, not organized study, is possible from a prison library. But on page 141, he states that to have read in prison was "a period of intense re-examination of ideas." He admits that he sought out and read George Orwell's book 1984 and thought that much of what he said was true in his "savagely accurate picture of the danger of totalitarianism." Gates states that his self-probing carried him beyond a mere questioning of the tactics and policy "into an examination of fundamental propositions." It is obvious that before he lost his faith in the Communist movement and its principles and was contented to see only evil in all subsequent developments in the stormy period ahead, here and abroad. Why did he then resume his post as editor of the *Daily Worker*? Was this honest?

The last two chapters up to his resignation in January, 1958, deal with his new role which was primarily aimed at the dissolution of the Communist Party. Since then he has been lecturing at colleges from which the rest of us who are Smith Act prisoners are barred. He calls himself a democratic Socialist. Speaking of himself as a possible successor to North

Thomas, he is no longer objectionable to college authorities. Thus he spoke in Texas on the same platform with the former Philbrick, on the ground of free speech."

But to me the most offensive and despicable line in the entire book is this: "I have been trying to rejoin the American people." What a slander on everyone with whom he had been associated for 27 years. Were not the unemployed and the members of the American Lincoln Brigade in Spain in the 30's part of the American people? Were not the men in the American Army in the 40's and his co-defendants in trial at Foley Square, part of the American people? Were not the members of the Communist Party from the eastern industrial cities to the Pacific Coast, from the deep South to Chicago—part of the American people? Were not the Negroes, whites, and Puerto Ricans in prison also part of the American people? As one of his former friends, a Spanish Vet, said: "What was to prevent him from taking a bundle of *Workers* to the waterfront or railroad yard and joining the American people every day?"

ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN

Generous Spirit

AMERICAN VOICES, by Walter Lowenfels. The Roving Eye Press. \$2.50.

WALTER Lowenfels' new book, according to the front papers of the volume, is Part I of a projected poem in four parts to be called *The Poem That Can't Be Stopped*. Readers

will recognize the title and a section of the poetry in the present book as a repeat of work published in 1953. In the present book many new poems have been added.

The second volume of *The Poem* is to be titled *Some Deaths*, and one may assume that it will have the same structure: part a reprint of older work already published under this title, part new poems.

There are two points about this bibliographical entry: first there is a significant effort to bring back into the canon work which preceded the poet's most political phase: secondly, this four-volume program is highly ambitious, an indication of Lowenfels' continuing infatuation with the Goddess.

The poems in *American Voices* are traditional in that they are for the most part made out of loves and deaths, the permanent subjects of poetry. I think they are most successful where they are most lyrical and personal—I can't see, for example, some of the first part of the title poem:

Spring held open hearings on the
Potomac,
broadcast from the treetops:
"Peace is being born."

Plain Dealer, Cleveland, Ohio:
"I can't help but shudder when the
word cobalt
no longer describes the shade of
blue. . . ."

Various poets (Pound, Williams, Rukeyser and others) have used prose passages in poems, sometimes successfully. The prose provides "documentation" and gives a nappy kind of texture etc. etc. But the prose *has* to advance the argument of the poem. Here, in a lyric built on repetitive form, I

feel that the prose is simply in the way: it gives a kind of amplitude without real development.

Similarly I'm not fond of the occasional vatic stances from which some of these poems take off:

There is one crime only a poet can
commit:

This crime humanity does not forgive
. . . not to be a poet.

I *wish* it were true; or perhaps I have excitable ideas about crime. But when, a few lines later, he writes:

To the wolf we are all Siberians . . .

Then I know I'm at home.

While I'm putting the man down (gently, gently,): it seems to me that another strophe of the same poem is somewhat agley:

I am in love with the Goddess of History—even as she drives her triumphant chariot over heaps of us. . . . The slightest sibilance of her breath makes the tinsel mountains crumple—as we move on.

It's hard to love this bitch in her Juggernaut; but hardest of all to figure out how to "move on" after she has rolled over us. Both contradiction and crudity in this.

Finally, for the poems that are in the red, the first part of "Autobiography" seems to me to goof in the same way. It begins with a parallel to "John Henry" in the powerful rhythms of the song:

A poet said to his Maker
"well a man ain't nothing but a
man . . ."

But toward the end the rhythms have all gone completely haywire:

A poet said to his Maker
"A poem's a machine
made of words
So smooth
nobody suspects
it trims . . .

This is the art of sinking. But the faults are those of a generous spirit in the moments when the muse slumbers. Their appearance suggests haste or carelessness or perhaps the lack of the comrade poet who might have caught them before they froze into print.

On the other hand there are in the book fine poems and a couple of remarkable ones. The first is like a surrealist "found object"—it is made up of terms for machine parts and begins

Open float inspirator and injector
super simplex pulverizer
gyrating cruster
armature spider . . .

It is all made out of names for things, and it ends fantastically and cryptically:

short die hobs
long die hobs for the man who
makes his own dies.

This is a true invention discovered and there is more poetry in it than in the total contents of most books of poems.

Another poem which I particularly liked is "At Bemidjo Falls," where, seems to me, the qualities of wit and lyricism come into an excellent harmony, and where the verse is always quite right for what the poem is trying to do. It would seem to be a good direction for the poet to take, the one most likely to recapture the past in his own style and weld it to his present work.

THOMAS MCGRATH

Poetry West

POETRY LOS ANGELES I—Anthology chosen by the authors and edited by James Boyer May, Thomas McGrath and Peter Yates. Villiers Publications, Ltd. \$1.25.

SEVENTEEN poets, raw, medium and well done, are represented in a handsome, paper-bound edition—the result of a year's readings in various halls and to sizeable audiences. *Poetry Los Angeles* here realizes in print what has achieved aurally in an unprecedented year: the bringing out of local poetic talent under auspices which are free from partisanship and bias. This great virtue has necessarily invited its own drawback, that is, a certain greenness and insufficient merit in spots. Only old greys and sentimental balladeers have been kept out.

Whatever else this anthology suffers from is purely typical for, in telescopic fashion, the general American poetic scene is reproduced intact. We find an over-riding concern for uniqueness at all costs and this achieved through exuberant landscapes of the mind, rough emotions bandied about in full armor's armor. The over-use of color and image, with no real base to tie them together, produces an industrial greyness which is the poetry's only claim to contemporaneity. A poet or two is too fragile and metaphysical to survive while others are young and have no voice of their own as yet; they have to emerge from the welter of influences that made them what they are up the pen.

Poets with the medium well under control are Guy Daniels, James Boyer May, William Pillin (who from time to time, however, falls into stuff like: ". . .

make a memo to whisper an ardent arietta . . .") and Ann Stanford. (By the way, only three women in the entire group. . . .) Individual poems by Stanley Kiesel, Edmund Teske, Mel Weisburd, Curtis Zahn and Peter Yates are successful while Melissa Blake, abusing the Haiku form, strings out an intellectual web a thousand miles from the fly of reality which is Haiku.

Thomas McGrath, with part IV of his gigantic "Letter To An Imaginary Friend," strikes a note of freshness and wild adolescent lust. Bert Meyers, with four small poems, has a great deal to say beneath the simple surface of his lyrics. His poems are *about* something, *are* something. There is a remarkable control of the line for its over-all effect. We can learn here a lesson in circumferential humility.

It is in the purpose, direction and future of *Poetry Los Angeles* that we see hope for poets responsible to a larger and larger public as well as for a public responsible to the vision and audacity of its singers. No critical dissatisfaction can diminish the importance of this enterprise in bridging the vacuum, let alone the gap, between the world's voice and the world's tympanum.

ALVARO CARDONA-HINE

Signifying Little

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S, by Truman Capote. Random House. \$3.50.

IN the lead story of his book, Mr. Capote has scored an artistic triumph in reverse, so that we are left to ask: how did he make such a short story seem so long?

It is so tedious, so full of empty conceits, so vain of itself and its poses, so self-conscious in trying to palm off an appearance of significance where none exists! There is no use in recapitulating the "action"; the point doesn't lie in the "action." But on the other hand, Capote is completely incapable of drawing a real person—hand-painted puppets, eccentric little dolls, perhaps; but people have been successfully eliminated. His stories are populated with queer left-footed creatures, lost halves of broken pairs, children who are off, and adults who are children and more likely than not living in trees or caves or abandoned houses, or wandering into whore houses kept by zany but harmless madams. All these queer, lost, teched people are served up in a prose patterned on a small boy's talk, too candid for company, but in its way artlessly true. Like this passage from one of the shorter stories, *A Christmas Memory*, which, as usual, has a child joined up with an offish creature. Together they go about their secret, childish labors, the style echoing the child mind, but subtly corrupted:

Silently, wallowing in the pleasures of conspiracy, we take the bead purse from its secret place and spill its contents on the scrap quilt. Dollar bills, tightly rolled and green as May buds. Somber fifty-cent pieces, heavy enough to weight a dead man's eyes. Lovely dimes, the liveliest coin, the one that really jingles. Nickels and quarters, worn smooth as creek pebbles. But mostly a hateful heap of bitter-odored pennies. Last summer others in the house contracted to pay us a penny for every twenty-five flies we killed. Oh, the carnage of August: the flies that flew to heaven!

Oh, indeed, the carnage. Idiots and

children have been used before in literature to contrast against their purity and innocence the wickedness or corruption of the times. Great works have resulted. But Capote takes them as ends-in-themselves. He offers them up to us as a sort of side-show carnival act, which there is no meaning only "effect."

P.

Books Received

THE SURVIVOR, by Carl Marzari
Cameron Associates. \$5.95.

This note is in lieu of the book review which we had hoped to have for this issue, but which was still in the writing at deadline time. We urge readers to get hold of Mr. Marzari's absorbing novel of the American post-war political scene, and assure them that it will provide them with as much and more rewarding material for discussion than the Pasternak episode.

SAFE CONDUCT, AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND OTHER WRITINGS
by Boris Pasternak. New Directions
Paperbook. \$1.35.

This is the volume which was published by New Directions in 1949, under the title, *Selected Writings*. There has been added a short autobiographical and critical introduction by Irmengard Deutch, some of whose translations appear in the book. Pasternak's own cast of mind is interestingly reflected in *Safe Conduct* in the course of his sketch of Mayakovsky.

MARK TWAIN: Two Communications

ditor, *Mainstream*:

In the January issue of *Mainstream*, Carol Remes begins her review of my book *Mark Twain: Social Critic* by commenting that I have "written a book which proves Mark Twain the outstanding social critic in our literary history," and that I have, among other things, "gone to great lengths to uncover heretofore unknown, partially known or unpublished material." One could assume that the reviewer would comment on what is new about a book which, she admits, presents for the first time between covers an analysis of all of Marx Twain's social criticism. But the rest of her review is devoted to differences between the reviewer and the author over the way in which the book could have been written. While I do not deny the right of reviewers to do precisely this, it seems to me that readers are entitled to know something of the contents of the book under discussion, especially since much of the book consists of hitherto unpublished writings.

Mrs. Remes states that it is unfortunate that I merely doff my hat to contemporary critics in my second chapter which is devoted to the history of Twain criticism as it revolved about the question, "Jester or Social Satirist?" Apart from the fact that the chapter is nearly thirty pages long, there is little that the contemporary critics have added to our understanding of Twain as a social critic. Most of them, if they concern themselves with the problem at all, merely repeat what has been said again and

again throughout the entire history of this criticism.

Mrs. Remes makes much of Lionel Trilling's discussion of Huck Finn, mentions T. S. Eliot's interpretation, and refers to the possibility that Joyce might have been influenced by Twain's novel in his own work. She feels that it is unfortunate that I did not lay stress on these points. But all this, I submit, has little relation to the main problem with which I concerned myself in evaluating *Huckleberry Finn*, namely, the place of the novel in the literary history of the struggle against slavery and for the dignity of the Negro people. With this central problem, neither Trilling nor Eliot nor Joyce concerned themselves. Moreover, in her own article, "The Heart of Huckleberry Finn" (*Masses and Mainstream*, November, 1955, 8-16), Mrs. Remes seemingly recognizes that most of the academic discussion of the novel, on which she places such emphasis in her review, avoids this central problem.

Mrs. Remes thinks I should have made more of Van Wyck Brooks' admission in *The Days of the Phoenix* that, as she writes, "he had been wrong (partially, if not fundamentally) in his analysis of Twain." But I did discuss it (see p. 315) and quoted Mr. Brooks' statement that he was still convinced that Twain "had made the great refusal and that *The Ordeal of Mark Twain* was substantially just." I see nothing to be gained from further discussion of this comment; Mr. Brooks has not fundamentally altered his position, and in analyzing *The Ordeal of Mark Twain* at length, I was presenting what Mr. Brooks acknowledges is, with slight modification, his present-day viewpoint.

Mrs. Remes thinks that it is unfortunate that I overlooked the book, *American Humor: A Study of the National Character* by Constance Rourke "since it discusses so provocatively the nature of Twain's humor, inherent in so much of his social criticism." Mrs. Remes is entitled to her opinion of the merits of Miss Rourke's discussion of Twain's humor, but I found very little in it that showed she had any understanding of its relation to Twain's social criticism. Indeed, I simply class Miss Rourke with other critics who recognized Twain as a mere humorist, and rejected the idea that he could be regarded as a social critic. ("It is a mistake," Miss Rourke writes in her book, "to look for the social critic—even *manque*—in Mark Twain.") I fail to see in Miss Rourke's work very much of value in an analysis of Mark Twain as a social critic.

I do not know what Mrs. Remes means when she writes that she questions my evaluation of Carl Van Doren's approach to Mark Twain. I quoted Mr. Van Doren's comment on Twain's posthumous writings which states that Twain is being regarded less and less as a humorist and more and more as an important commentator. But Mr. Van Doren never develops this theme, and, in general, I failed to find anything in his estimate of Twain that was basically different from that presented by most of the other critics.

The rest of Mrs. Remes' review is devoted to her thesis that the importance of Twain's social criticism "lies in the fact that he accurately reflected the national character of his times," and that "the key to Twain's status" is that he "is the expression of that feature unique in the development of American capi-

talism, the main shaping force in American history, the Frontier." I do not deny that Twain "accurately reflected the national character of his time," and I am convinced that my book makes that clear. But it seems to me that Mrs. Remes completely ignores the fact that the major body of Mark Twain's social criticism was written at a time when the frontier was already closing and when new forces were arising, especially in the industrial sections of the country, to challenge the power of monopoly capitalism and restore, in Mr. Rames' words, "the lofty tenets expressed in our Declaration of Independence." Mrs. Remes refers to "the yet unjelled working class," but this so-called "unjelled working class" was already organizing a powerful labor movement bringing close to a million workers into the Knights of Labor and several hundreds of thousands into the early A. F. of L. Mrs. Remes' apparent unawareness of this development in American history, it seems to me, affects her entire analysis of the influences on Twain's social criticism. In his "Knights of Labor—The New Dynasty," a speech delivered in 1886 and published in book form for the first time in my work, Twain regarded the rise of the labor movement as the most important development in our entire history. He expressed here (and was to repeat it again and again) the belief that it was through the labor movement that the promise of American democracy, embodied in the Declaration of Independence, would be realized.

It is true, as Mrs. Remes notes, that Twain was "no proletarian in outlook" but how anyone can read the discussion in my book of Twain's attitude toward the labor movement and not see how

give an influence the forces of organized labor played in his thinking is something I cannot understand. Twain goes as far in advance of other literary figures in viewing the working class as the great hope for the future of American democracy. And the fact that he was not himself a member of the working class at this time in no way negates the significance of his stand.

The truth is that most American historians in recent years have tended to de-emphasize the influence of the frontier in shaping the American character. (See G. W. Pierson, "American Historians and the Frontier Hypothesis," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, vol. XVI and Morris Zaslow, "The Frontier Hypothesis in Recent Historiography," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, vol. XIX.) The influence of the frontier is present in Twain's social criticism, and to the degree that I viewed it as important, I discussed it in my book. But more decisive in its influence, in my opinion, was Twain's awareness of the destructive force of rampant monopoly capitalism, particularly as it moved into the era of imperialism, and his understanding, arising from his acquaintance with American life in the industrial West, that a new power was arising in the mines, mills and factories which would shape America into the truly democratic land it deserved to be. "He" Twain said in speaking of the worker [organized in the trade unions] "has before him the most righteous work that has ever been given in the hand of man to do, and he will do it." The power of the organized working class would revolutionize American society and create a new society in which the workers, not the capitalist minority, would be the ruling class: "For a greater (power) than

any king, has arisen (the organized worker) . . . (and) he will mount his throne; and he will stretch out his sceptre, and there will be bread for the hungry, clothing for the naked, and hope in the eyes unused to hoping."

How could Mrs. Remes read this and then write in her review: "For even though 'he lived too soon to make it possible for him to rest his faith in the creative power of proletarian revolution' (as T. A. Jackson remarked of Swift)"? The key fact is that, unlike Swift, Twain lived in an era when the working class forces were moving as a whole, and he was keen enough to recognize it, and to reflect it in his writings on American life and society.

May I state in conclusion that I never claimed to present "the whole Twain." There are many aspects of Twain's life and works with which I did not deal. My purpose was to fill a gap in the American literary tradition by presenting a full-length discussion of Mark Twain as a Social Critic. I am pleased to note that while she does not agree with much of what I have to say, Mrs. Remes believes that I have basically succeeded in my objective.

PHILIP S. FONER

Editor, Mainstream:

I have no quarrel with what Dr. Foner says about Mark Twain. In my review article I wrote that he "has filled an important gap" in the existent literature on Twain "by placing as paramount the social criticism in Twain's works." I said that he "has written a book which proves Mark Twain the outstanding social critic in our literary history" and that "he has

gone to great lengths to uncover heretofore unknown, partially known or unpublished material."

My greater concern, however, is with what Dr. Foner does not say in the development of his theme and what yet must be said in a profound Marxist social or literary study of Twain. Of course, it is an author's prerogative to select his subject and approach. Yet what is needed is more than a compilation of extensive researches asserting Twain's stature as a social critic, and more than a summary view of the history of Twain criticism, comprising thirty pages out of three hundred and sixty and a three-page conclusion of the author's independent evaluation.

What is wanting in Marxist criticism is the working out of criteria by which to evaluate our literary figures. I say evaluate, not assert. For too long have we made declaratory assertions without engaging in the type of incisive polemics necessary to *convince* and *persuade*. How can a scholar of Dr. Foner's stature deal so lightly with contemporary critics because "there is little that the contemporary critics have added to our understanding of Twain as a social critic," because "most of them . . . merely repeat what has been said again and again. . . ."? As an historian he must know that every generation or new stage of social development brings its own form of attack on basic truths. How many times, for example, has Marxism been "routed"—and hasn't history proven the need to carry on the struggle anew? That the attack on basic verities takes on new form and new language makes it even more imperative that we reckon with it in

order to demolish it. This is especially true in Twain criticism where the current critics are the opinion moulders of the present generation in the schools and in the literary world at large. That Trilling and others couch their psychoanalytical approach to Twain in more subtle terms than Brooks did in the Twenties indeed makes it all the more challenging to grapple with. If Dr. Foner had engaged in such a polemic I feel that he would have deepened our understanding of Twain and his thesis would have been immeasurably enriched.

Dr. Foner and I share the view that Twain was "our greatest social critic" and that underlying this was his ability to accurately reflect the national character of his time. But the analysis in Dr. Foner's book of this national reality and what went into the making of Mark Twain as a great social critic as far as I am concerned, leaves much to be desired.

It remains my conviction that the influence of the Frontier was the predominant one in Twain's writings, was the chief contributing element in moulding his social criticism, and the one which helped his later pro-labor and anti-imperialist position. His social criticism did not arise out of the great labor movements for, as I said in my review article, he was a social critic from the *start*. His social criticism stemmed from the Frontier. His rough-hewn and sceptical Americans in *The Innocents Abroad*, his Colonel Sellers in *The Gilded Age*, his Huck Finn and even his Joan of Arc (in whom he saw, to cite Captain Van Doren, a "symbol of innocence undone by malice and corruption") are but a few of the characters repr-

ting the kind of thought through which Twain reflected aspects of the frontier composite—illusion and disillusion, faith and cynicism; this was permeate his writings to the end. A thoughtful appraisal of these contradictions would show us a great deal not only about our literature and our times, but about ourselves as well. Twain's lifespan transcended two eras and it was this peculiarly American course of historical development that made Twain's writing and thought so distinguishing and distinctive in character. He may have written his fiercest attacks at the development of American imperialism, but his social criticism was not incubated by imperialism; the social critic was there already, was formed in the main by his contact and intimate tie with the Frontier and its refurbishing of the revolutionary and democratic traditions of the country. It is this essence of our national reality which still finds its echo among the people, an echo that the sloganeers of imperialism use to their hilt, that Madison Avenue conceals and exploits.

As to other matters: I acknowledge that I exaggerated the importance of the distance Rourke's *American Humor: A Study of the National Character*; in earlier readings I had found it a provocative study in the development of the theme, but in re-reading feel that my point of view misses the mark so far as Dr. Foner's theme is concerned. For Carl Van Doren, while not agreeing with him at every turn, his study of Twain in *The American Novel* is among the earliest to delve into the intricacies and complexities of Twain's personality, writings and think-

I hold to my thinking that Van Wyck Brooks' admission of inadequate treatment of Twain in his *Ordeal* deserves more than the footnote that Dr. Foner gives it, for the reasons stated in my review.

Finally, I am glad that Dr. Foner agrees with me that Twain was no proletarian in outlook. To be sure, the labor movement had a tremendous impact on Twain's thinking, but this is not synonymous with saying that he rested his faith in the proletarian revolution. His Knights of Labor speech was one of the most powerful of its day, but one could quote at length evidences of his despair of mankind's ability to overcome the power of capitalism, of his cynicism as to the virtues of man, his frequent references to the corrupting influences of power no matter in whose hands. None of this detracts one whit from Twain's stature as a social critic; it serves to point up the complexity of the man, his work and his times.

As an addendum to my review article, I suggest that if the material in the book had been arranged historically rather than by subject matter, Twain's development as a thinker and a social critic might have emerged more clearly and certainly more dialectically.

CAROL REMES

CORRECTION: In Mrs. Remes' article, published in the January issue, page 45 contains an error of fact. The year 1886 is given for the year of the annexation of Hawaii. This should read "1866."—*The Editors.*

Letter

Editors, *Mainstream*:

I read your review of *Lolita* with interest. I think the following summary is more just and to the point.

Lolita is not, as it has been called, obscene. It is a corrupt book and there is a difference. The book is self-consciously written to read like poetic prose but the subject matter and the writer's attitude towards its theme destroys such a possibility. The aging man who marries a widow so that he may be in a better position to seduce her pre-adolescent daughter is a corrupt person as indeed is the subject of his insane passion. We are persuaded that *Lolita*, the title heroine, is receptive to his seduction but we are not convinced. The little minx submits

for reasons of her own, not the love of which is the power over her seduction which the relationship grants her. If you are looking for obvious obscenities, they are lacking; but the entire affair is sordid, repulsive and corrupt. It is the story of a psychopath pure and simple and as such may have some valid claim to one's attention. Certainly there are many instances of covetousness towards the infant in many cases of such seductions. Perhaps it is well to know how the perpetrator of these feels and what his progressive symptoms are.

The book is readable, in fact it holds one in a strange fascination and incredulity throughout. I for one would really put the author under observation as the plot places him.

FRANCES HAN

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