



Mainstream

CULTURE IN TROUBLE

KENNETH TYNAN

SOCIOLOGY, U.S.A.

Herbert Aptheker

WHAT PRICE THE UN-AMERICANS?

Victor Rabinowitz

MY BUSINESS CAREER

Russell Davis

POEMS OF WAR AND WORK

Miguel Hernández

GUSTAVE COURBET, REALIST

Alice Dunham

Vol. 13, No. 3

Mainstream

MARCH, 1960

Culture in Trouble: *Kenneth Tynan* 1

Sociology, U.S.A.: *Herbert Aptheker* 5

My Business Career: *Russell Davis* 19

Poems of War and Work: *Miguel Hernandez* 30

What Price the Un-Americans?: *Victor Rabinowitz* 35

Gustave Courbet, Realist: *Alice Dunham* 46

Right Face: 53

Books in Review:

Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass: The First (1855) Edition, ed. Malcolm Cowley: *Philip Stevenson* 55

The Web of Conspiracy, by Theodore Roscoe: *Elizabeth Lawson* 59

Road to Revolution, by Avrahm Yarmolinsky: *Daniel Mason* 60

Books Received 62

Letters

Editor

CHARLES HUMBOLDT

Associate Editor

PHILLIP BONOSKY

Contributing Editors

HERBERT APTHEKER

JACK BEECHING

JESUS COLON

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

HUGO GELLERT

BARBARA GILES

SHIRLEY GRAHAM

MILTON HOWARD

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

MERIDEL LE SUEUR

WALTER LOWENFELS

THOMAS MCGRATH

ANNETTE T. RUBINSTEIN

PHILIP STEVENSON

CULTURE IN TROUBLE

KENNETH TYNAN

SINCE this year ends in a nought and is thus divisible by ten, nearly all the leading American magazines have lately been firing at their readers such stark, factitious questions as "What Trends Will Guide our Culture in the Coming Decade?" and "Have We a Viable Stance for the Sixties?"

A man from a national weekly telephoned me a few weeks ago to ask the former question. He caught me at a bad time. I had just seen a television programme in which Jacques Barzun, Lionel Trilling and W. H. Auden had discussed "The Crisis in our Culture" with such fussy innocence that they seemed to be not so much debating it as embodying it. Mr. Barzun sat bolt upright and smirked, while Mr. Trilling leaned far forward in cerebration that he appeared, in close shots, about level with the camera. Mr. Auden, looking like a rumpled, bulkier version of Somerset Maugham, slumped in his chair and squinted gaily at everyone, flicking ash at random, grinning mysteriously in the manner of Mr. Amis's Professor Welch, and displaying throughout the show the sartorial hallmark of the middle-aged English intellectual—a collar curling up over the lapel of his jacket.

From time to time he made eccentric interventions, as when he said he was ashamed to admit that he read newspapers, and when he suddenly asked Messrs. Trilling and Barzun how old they were. "Videowise," he emerged as a distinct individual with little to say; they, on the other hand, had plenty to say, but seemed devoid of individuality.

They spoke with the corporate drone of a house organ (Mr. Barzun's "House of Intellect," no doubt), beside which Mr. Auden sounded like a mouth organ—*i.e.*, a very human instrument, capable of expressing

great skittishness and great melancholy, but difficult to integrate into an orchestra. Together, they formed a triptych of official American culture, and their appeal, especially to intelligent viewers under forty, must have been almost nil.

What will happen to American culture at that level of punditry would not care to predict. Yet elsewhere, in the theatre and among the younger workers, I do discern a trend—or, to be more exact, a strong and growing preoccupation with two themes. The first of these, mainly noticeable on Broadway, has to do with biography. Popular shows are tending more and more to be based on the careers of people still living or fairly recently dead.

Two years ago we had Dore Schary's "Sunrise at Campobello," which was concerned with Franklin Roosevelt's battle against polio; "Gypsy," last season's biggest musical hit, explained how the youthful Gypsy Rose Lee became a successful stripper; and the most prosperous shows of the new season—"Fiorello!," "The Miracle Worker" and "The Sound of Music"—deal respectively with the early triumphs of Fiorello LaGuardia, Helen Keller's childhood struggle against physical handicaps, and the adventures of an Austrian family called Trapp, who escaped from the Nazis and became famous in America for their singing. We have also had a play founded on the efforts of Harry Golden, a Jewish editor living in the South, to fight segregation through ridicule; and in the autumn Judy Holliday is to appear in a dramatized biography of Loretta Taylor, whose problem was the bottle.

I won't go into the quality of these shows, which, apart from "Gypsy" and "Fiorello!," has so far been pretty poor: what concerns us here is their prevalence and popularity. In no other country has the theatre ever devoted itself so zealously to biographical studies of the recent national past. The trend began in Hollywood with films like "The Jolson Story," "The Glenn Miller Story" and their numerous successors, all of which offered quasifactual proof that it was possible for anyone, given enough talent and energy, to rise from the utmost obscurity to the topmost celebrity.

Broadway has now followed suit, and American drama, which has hitherto given most of its serious attention to fictional characters defeated by circumstance, appears to be changing its course; the new emphasis is on real-life characters who triumph over circumstances. The individual, spurred on by courage, faith and good will, not only survives adversity but emerges from it an object of national admiration. And if we complain (as we might in the case of an ordinary play) that this picture of life is facile and wishfully optimistic, we are easily refuted, because

actually happened." American audiences, of course, have an unbounded faith in victorious individualism; all the same, it does their suspension of disbelief no harm to know that the victory in question can be historically verified.

Along with this interest in "upbeat" biography goes a second trend, which I hesitate to call religious or even spiritual, since in some of its manifestations it is neither. Less precisely, and therefore more accurately, concerns the belief that what happens inside a human being is more important than what happens outside.

This notion, of course, is usually expressed in Freudian terms; man is said to be ruled by the internal trinity of Ego, Superego and Id. Sometimes, stated in another form, it declares that the summit of human education and responsibility is achieved when one person learns to love another. The hero of "J.B.," the modern Job play with which Archibald Leish won a Pulitzer prize last year, sees no hope in politics, psychiatry or organized religion; discarding all three, he "finds fulfillment," they say, by loving his wife.

A similar conclusion is reached in "The Tenth Man," a heartily timed new play by Paddy Chayefsky. The central character, a suicidal Jewish ex-Communist in the throes of analysis, is cured of his nihilism by taking part in a ceremony held to exorcise a supposed demon from the soul of a young girl. "It is better to believe in dybbuks," an old rabbi tells him, "than in nothing." This eminently disputable statement weans the hero away from the couch to the church, and he achieves personal redemption by falling in love with the girl.

In plays like this it is never suggested that society's relationship with man might be among the causes of his distress, and the idea that man might have a constructive relationship with society has clearly been abandoned as impossibly Utopian. Happiness lies within, and nowhere in the world outside, brutal and immutable, is best ignored, since it can bruise you, and damage the inviolability of your soul. This doctrine of inner illumination crops up *passim* in contemporary American writing. J. D. Salinger's Glass family, for instance, is mainly composed of day-dreamers and self-slaughtered saints whose offers of disinterested love are constantly being slapped down by a society which their idealism forbids them to criticise.

The Beat extremists go much further, dedicating themselves to reaching enlightenment through lysergic acid or opium; and the most memorable theatrical experience at present accessible in New York is an Broadway play called "The Connection," which deals, somewhat in the manner of "Waiting for Godot," with the mystique and the

technique of dope addiction, including the lassitude that precedes "fix" and the illusion of spiritual insight, soaring and superhuman, follows it. (The author's name is Jack Gelber.)

And I must not omit Norman Mailer and the philosophy of *Hysterism* that he expounds in his controversial new book *Advertisements for Myself*, which is partly a Mailer anthology and partly an exercise in self-revelation. Soon after he wrote *The Naked and the Dead* Mr. Mailer became an active Socialist; now, symptomatically, he swung to the opposite extreme and embraced a religion of outright psychopathic (his own word) egocentricity. The Hipster, in brief, is a man who has divorced himself from history as well as from society; who lives exclusively in the present; who thinks of himself as a white Negro; and whose aim is self-discovery through sexual pleasure enhanced if need be by the aid of marijuana.

Christopher Caudwell, in his brilliant *Studies in a Dying Culture*, attributed the decline of bourgeois art to two forces:—

On the one hand there is production for the market—vulgarization, commercialization. On the other there is hypostatization of the art work as the goal of the art process, and the relation between art work and individual as paramount. This necessarily leads to a dissolution of those social values which make the art in question a social relation, and therefore ultimately results in the art work's ceasing to be an art work and becoming a mere private phantasy.

A hamfisted paragraph, but not without relevance. Mr. Caudwell, who died more than twenty years ago, could not have predicted that Broadway, the theatre market, would take to selling the life stories of famous contemporaries; and if he had, it would merely have confirmed his opinion of commercialism. Meanwhile, what he says about art developing into "private phantasy" is disturbingly borne out by the culture's inner fulfilment that I have just described.

This movement, according to some observers, represents nothing more serious than—to quote one of them—"a transient reaction against Soviet atheism and materialism." I hope they are right. In fact, it had better be; American culture is tilting far too heavily in one direction and it is becoming quite urgent that the balance should be restored.

Mr. Tynan is the theatre critic of the *New Yorker*.

CIOLOGY, U.S.A.

HERBERT APTHEKER

WRIGHT MILLS' latest volume, *The Sociological Imagination*,* represents another significant contribution to the cause of reason progress from the pen of America's most stimulating sociologist. Two main themes appear. The first holds that major social problems which may appear to each individual in the form of a personal problem—are not resolvable except by alterations which affect the sources of the structural forms of such problems; the second holds that dominant American sociological inquiry has failed to provide the analysis required for significant solutions but rather has taken directions which serve to sustain the status quo and to foster a sense of impotence in the face of these problems.

The first theme is stated most clearly in paragraphs near the beginning and toward the end of the volume. The former reads as follows (10):

Insofar as an economy is so arranged that slumps occur, the problem of unemployment becomes incapable of personal solution. Insofar as war is inherent in the nation-state system and in the uneven industrialization of the world, the ordinary individual in his restricted milieu will be powerless—with or without psychiatric aid—to solve the troubles this system or lack of system imposes upon him. Insofar as the family as an institution turns women into darling little slaves and men into their chief providers and unweaned dependents, the problem of a satisfactory marriage remains incapable of purely private solution. Insofar as the

overdeveloped megalopolis and the overdeveloped automobile are built-in features of the overdeveloped society, the issues of urban living will not be solved by personal ingenuity and private wealth.

The latter, occurring on page 187, reads:

Whether or not they are aware of them, men in a mass society are gripped by personal troubles which they are not able to turn into social issues. They do not understand the interplay of these personal troubles of their milieux with problems of social structure. The knowledgeable man in a genuine public, on the other hand, is able to do just that. He understands that what he thinks and feels to be personal troubles are very often also problems shared by others, and more importantly, not capable of solution by any one individual but only by modifications of the structure of the groups in which he lives and sometimes the structure of the entire society. Men in masses have troubles, but they are not usually aware of their true meaning and source; men in publics confront issues, and they usually come to be aware of their public terms.

It is the political task of the social scientist—as of any liberal educator—continually to translate personal troubles into public issues, and public issues into the terms of their human meaning for a variety of individuals. It is his task to display in his work—and, as an educator, in his life as well—this kind of sociological imagination.

It is, then, this capacity to see the social roots in the individual manifestations, to see the historical and the basically causal which the sociological imagination of Mills' title. His aim in this volume is to make a substantive critique of the status quo; it is, rather, to inquire upon the social roots of what appear to be and so often are labeled purely personal problems or difficulties.

Most of the book is taken up with demonstrating the validity of the second theme. In Mills' view the failure of professional American social scientists to manifest sociological imagination, has resulted in the ascendancy in the United States "of bureaucratic techniques which inhibit social inquiry by 'methodological' pretensions, which congest such work by obscurantist conceptions, or which trivialize it by concern with minor problems unconnected with publicly relevant issues." (p. 20) Subject to prolonged and devastating analysis are the Grand Theory schemes headed by Professor Talcott Parsons, and what Mills calls "abstract empiricism," by which he means the quantitative or arithmetic schemes in which counting replaces thinking and filing replaces analyzing. Mills' summary is apt: "They may be understood as insuring that we do not learn too much about men and society—the first by formal and closed obscurantism, the second by formal and empty ingenuity." (p. 75)

must be added, however, that Mills' victory over both schools is scored somewhat too easily. Not all of the Grand Theory School and all of the results of abstracted empiricism are quite as absurd or logical as Mills makes out—if they were their triumph in and hold a large part of the academic community would not have been possible. The concepts of apparent rhythm in social development, of insistence upon relativity in considering different societies, of avoidance of all value judgments in the name of objectivity, and of the essential similarity of social problems in highly developed societies more or less regardless of their forms of organization—all of which are present in dominant sociological outlooks today—are not analyzed fully by Mills. He is correct, I think, in showing that these are fundamentally all elaborately contrived apologies for the status quo and rationalizations for avoiding significant inquiry or controversy. But his critique would have been enhanced in value if he had more fully and carefully polemized against the content of these ideas and if he had indicated where, if at all, they offer some insights.

In the course of his critique of abstracted empiricism, Mills is especially effective in combatting the multiple factors theory, which, by expanding causative "factors" to the infinite, manages to eliminate causation. This is usually done in the name of attacking "dogmatism" which is supposed to reside, exclusively, in the domain of those who insist upon the validity of the idea of fundamental causation; and here, Mills' attack is effective. On the first point, he writes:

If we break society into tiny "factors," naturally we shall then need quite a few of them to account for something and we can never be sure that we have hold of them all. A merely formal emphasis upon "the organic whole," plus a failure to consider the adequate causes—which are usually structural—plus a compulsion to examine only one situation at a time—such ideas do make it difficult to understand the structure of the status quo.

As for the dogmatism allegedly inherent in the structural approach, Mills asks pertinently: "Is it not evident that "principled pluralism" may be as dogmatic as "principled monism"? And he goes on:

Is it not possible to study causes without becoming overwhelmed? In fact, is not this just what social scientists ought to be doing when they examine social structure? By such studies, surely we are trying to find out the adequate causes of something, and having found them out, to open up a view of those strategic factors which as objects of political and adminis-

trative action offer men a chance to make reason available in the shaping of human affairs.

While Mills, in attacking the "principled pluralists," sees so clearly the need for examining structural matters and fundamental causation, he was himself at fault, in his *Power Elite* and his *The Causes of World War Three*, insofar as he tended to a scattering of his analyses of causes; furthermore, while in his criticism, quoted above, he emphasizes the need to examine the living social process in terms of an organic whole and not to make error certain by examining "only one situation at a time," he, himself, in the aforementioned works failed to pursue the dialectical method. In the present work, the greatest weakness is a failure to apply rigorously his own sociological imagination to a full understanding of why this element is lacking on the whole in American intellectual work today. I shall return to this essential element in my dissatisfaction with his book—where there is dissatisfaction—at a later point.

TO a degree, Mills' attack upon the multiple-factor school misses the central aspect of its nature and its origin. He asks if, in studying social structure, social scientists ought not to be studying causes; this to him is a rhetorical question, for he goes on to affirm that "by such studies, surely we are trying to find out the adequate causes of something. . . ." But for twentieth-century science, in bourgeois societies, the question posed by Mills is far from rhetorical. In fact, a central feature of philosophical "development" in such societies is the denial of causation; this has become the dominant view in the physical sciences and a very widespread view among social scientists—it was, for example, the view insisted upon by the late Charles A. Beard during the decade preceding his death.

This denial of the concept of causation is an aspect of the entire assault upon reason and denial of science which have been basic ideological developments in bourgeois societies during the past fifty years—i.e., during the rise of imperialism and the trend towards fascism.

Mills himself seems to believe that scientific methodology and scientific laws are the result of purely pragmatic experiments, and that the laws and methodology are not fundamental determinants of the experimentation. Thus, he believes "the epistemology of science is parasitic upon the methods that scientists, theoretical and experimental, come to use."

In substantiation of this he offers quotations from three eminent

ntists, Polykarp Kusch, Percy Bridgman and William S. Beck, to the effect that "there is no scientific method" and that "the vital feature of a scientist's procedure has been merely to do his utmost with his mind, *holds barred*." (p. 58) While these are the views of distinguished Western scientists, there are others in the same part of the world, and many others in the Eastern part of the world, who take quite a different point of view and affirm the existence in fact of a scientific method and therefore hold firmly to the concept of causation, with both mirroring objective reality. Mills, himself, however, quotes the three scientists named above in apparent agreement with them. But surely if they are right, this would tend to make rather paradoxical Mills' regret that so many of his fellow social scientists have abandoned the concept of causation and are concentrating on Grand Conceptual Theories, marked by extraordinary verbosity and maximum fogginess or are concentrating on a purely descriptive "abstract empirical" sociology, where the list-of innumerable "factors" replaces the inquiry into fundamental cause.

THE sharpness of Mills' attack upon his fellow academicians is extraordinary; it partakes, however, of a bitter aroma that would have been lessened had his analysis of *why* they have, in the majority, behaved as they thought the way they have, been more profound. We shall return to this central point. Still the sharpness reflects considerable courage on Mills' part and is merited on the whole. It is encouraging to have a Columbia professor write, in a chapter called "Bureaucratic Ethos":

As it is practiced in business—especially in the communication adjuncts of advertising—in the armed forces, and increasingly in universities as well, "the new social science" has come to serve whatever ends its bureaucratic clients may have in view. Those who promote and practice this style of research readily assume the political perspective of their bureaucratic clients and chieftains. To assume the perspective is often in due course to accept it. (p. 101)

Professional backscratching is denounced without mercy and with effectiveness: "The function of the academic clique is not only to stifle the competition, but to set the terms of the competition and assign rewards for work done in accordance with these terms at any moment." (p. 107) These attacks would have been more perceptive if they had duly and fully noted the exceptions who have concurred with the production of very significant work in all the social sciences, and I have in mind now only those who remain in more or less good standing in the university world, not seditious ones and other vicious characters. Mills mentions two—Neal Houghton and Arnold

Rogow—but there are many more in sociology, history, education, philosophy, economics, and psychology; in fact some have made appeals essentially similar to that made by Mills, as for example, Henry Steele Commager and Howard K. Beale in history, Lewis Mumford and the Lynds in sociology, Morton White in philosophy, Kenneth Winetrobe in education, Douglas Morgan in ethics, Paul Baran in economics; other names could easily be added. Indeed, among those using the techniques of the “abstract empiricists” some penetrating studies have been forthcoming, with the sharpest kind of value judgments and commitments, and searching inquiries into structural causes, as for example, in Herman W. Lantz’ *People of Coal Town* (N. Y., 1958).

Had the work of scholars of this calibre been considered, more weight, not less, would have been given to a paragraph such as the one, which, unfortunately, has much truth in it:

In the United States today, intellectuals, artists, ministers, scholars, and scientists are fighting a cold war in which they echo and elaborate the confusions of officialdom. They neither raise demands on the powerful for alternative policies, nor set forth such alternatives before publics. They do not try to put responsible content into the politics of the United States; they helped to empty politics and keep it empty. (p. 183)

This paragraph needs major revision because of its excessively sweeping condemnation of the entire intellectual, scientific and scholarly communities of the United States. Generally speaking, it is certainly true that the major policies of the ruling class—such as the Cold War—gain the support of dominant ideological instruments; that is natural for a ruling class, and it has to be in a very bad way indeed when it cannot command the allegiance of most of the ideologues. But it seriously overestimates the strength of that ruling class to state that its policies have not evoked significant opposition in some scientific and scholarly circles. This kind of “Leftism” colors all of Mills’ writing and it plays a considerable part in his programmatic approach which is one of sharp individualism and Utopianism.

The general nature of Mills’ appeal is certainly healthy; in a society increasingly disdainful of democratic values, it reaffirms support for them; in a society stained by apathy and cynicism, it castigates them; in a society marked, as Mills writes, by “official definitions” as well as “myths and lies and crackbrained notions,” (p. 191) he labors for reality.

In particular, he is all for the rebel and non-conformist, and in

society such as that of the United States today, the rebel and non-conformist, especially if he consciously seeks to base himself upon reality and reason, is a desperately needed person.

THERE are, however, certain substantial differences that I have with Mills' position, in addition to those touched on in the above pages. Mills here—and this can be said of his other writings—finds nothing but a liberal content to previous ideological expression in the United States. He writes, for example, that, "In the last half of the 19th century, social science in the United States was directly linked with reform movements and betterment activities. . . . Its members, in brief, sought to turn the troubles of lower-class people into issues for middle-class politics." (p. 84) And, at another point, he adds:

In the United States, liberalism has been the political common denominator of virtually all social study as well as the source of virtually all public rhetoric and ideology. This is widely recognized as due to well-known historical conditions, perhaps above all to the absence of feudalism and thus of an aristocratic basis for anti-capitalist elites and intellectuals. (p. 85)

This approach reflects the quite common ignoring of the reality of both a conservative-reactionary tradition and a radical-Marxist tradition in United States intellectual and political history. It is by no means true that the liberal-moderationist approach has had a monopoly throughout American history. This is of great consequences when one seeks to understand, as Mills does, something of the antecedents of the present craze of Grand Theory and abstracted empiricism, as well as the actual nature of the liberal approach.

It is true that much of the sociological writings and thinking of the late 19th century in the United States was linked with rather middle-class reform and so-called betterment movements, but by no means all of it was so characterized. Thus, during that period William Graham Sumner, of Yale, was producing works like *What Social Classes Owe to Each Other*, and was insisting that they owed each other exactly nothing. His theme was that capitalism was a natural and superb system; that the rich were rich because they were better and more capable than the poor, and that any kind of reformism or even charity was unjust, longheaded, and could be nothing but disastrous.

Such works, as that by Sumner (a best-seller, in its day, incidentally) and continues to have great influence upon the intellectual climate

of the United States; it is, after all, in the United States, as James Bert Loewenberg in particular has shown, that Social Darwinism had very great currency and influence.

In the same period, sociology-minded divines, like Russell H. Conwell and Josiah Strong were producing works (*Acres of Diamonds* and *Our Country*, respectively) which tried to present the arguments of Sumner in additional and somewhat popularized forms, and both men wrote best-sellers and exerted great influence. In both there was the insistence that the status quo was not to be meddled with in any way; while Strong added a forceful plea for imperialist expansion and the pursuit of colonialism. During this same period, also, throughout the early years of this century and even, to a degree, continuing on into the present, the elaboration of the "scientific" justification of racism was a central undertaking of academicians in this country, and they, working from the psychological, sociological, anthropological and anatomical points of view, produced elaborate apologies for the jim-crow system. On this last point, it is reflective of Mills' complete blindness on the Negro question, that in picturing past American social science as overwhelmingly if not completely of the liberal cast, he ignored the notorious body of such literature which promulgates the fiercest kind of racism.

During the same period, on the other hand, that is, in the latter part of the 19th century, or the very first years of the 20th, a very considerable body of radical writing, reaching an enormous readership, was being produced. In those years, for example, Henry George, Edward Bellamy, and Henry Demarest Lloyd had written *Progress and Poverty*, *Looking Backward* and *Wealth Against Commonwealth*, whose readers were numbered in the millions. While the rigor of their critique of the status quo varied—most incisive, I think, was Lloyd's—all were, nevertheless, of the radical rather than of the liberal persuasion. Again, the period saw the appearance of a great body of Marxist and socialist writings, and some of this, popularized in journals and books and novels, reached millions of readers also.

WHERE Mills places this moderationist-liberal approach as spanning the entire history of the United States, and encompassing public rhetoric as well as the products of social study, he is very seriously in error. First of all, what may be liberalism in the twentieth century, often was radicalism in the 18th century. Secondly, conservatism, and even Toryism, was no insignificant element in American thought and politics during the 18th and early 19th centuries. Thirdly, the develop-

ment of a concerted defense of the institution of slavery by such ideologues and politicians as George Fitzhugh, Thomas R. Dew, Edmund Ruffin, John C. Calhoun and their Northern supporters, such as Caleb Cushing and Clement Vallandigham, represented a deliberate attack upon liberalism and all its postulates and values, to say nothing of radicalism. Conversely, in the same era, the thinking of Garrison, Thoreau, Douglass, John Brown, Wendell Phillips, Joshua Giddings—the list could be extended by the hundreds—certainly represented radicalism in social and political theory. In a later period, we have the antagonistic views of Thorstein Veblen and the conservative Yale economist, Irving Fisher, or of William Z. Foster and William Buckley, editor of the reactionary *National Review*—surely such polar opposites do not bear out Mills' depiction of an overwhelming liberalism in thought. Actually, they represent the sharpest differences, from Right to Left, and indicate major strains in the history of American social and political thinking.

Happily, Mills himself represents a continuation of the radical current in American thinking, and in this he is a very welcome addition to the growing number of progressive scholars in contemporary America. Perhaps, if he were more keenly and fully aware of the rootedness and solidity of this tradition, he would not project programmatic tactics that are marked by an underestimation of the degree of keen dissatisfaction with the status quo in the United States today.

Related to Mills' undifferentiated critique of the American scene, is an exaggerated sense of the strength of *The Power Elite* and, conversely, of the success that this Elite has allegedly had in smashing the will, organizations and political capacity of the masses of people.

As a result, Mills finds the most serious challenge to freedom to come from what he holds to be mass incapacity or unwillingness to enjoy it. He writes:

The ultimate problem of freedom is the problem of the cheerful robot, and it arises in this form because today it has become evident to us—that *all* men do *not* naturally *want* to be free; that all men are not willing or not able, as the case may be, to exert themselves to acquire the reason that freedom requires. (p. 175)

What is Mills' definition of this freedom that is so elusive for so many people? It is:

Freedom is not merely the chance to do as one pleases; neither is it

merely the opportunity to choose between set alternatives. Freedom is, first of all, the chance to formulate the available choices, to argue over them—and then, the opportunity to choose. (p. 174)

Mills' freedom is an individualized thing set adrift in a social order; it lacks the dialectical unity of the individual and the social. It is, moreover, disembodied, insofar as it is something to be argued about and something to be resolved through choice, and does not appear to involve the need to do something, after the debate and the consensus. It has too much of the intellectual and too little of the actual; too much of the debate and too little of why the debate was held and what was to be done—and how, and by whom—after the debate had terminated.

IF freedom does not permit and enhance effectuation, and the effectuation of things is not held to be important and/or necessary and/or ennobling, it is a puny thing, merely the ghost of its real self. Here the social, and class character and history of freedom are of decisive consequence; they are not taken account of in Mills' definition.

Mills' decision that the big problem, so far as human freedom is concerned, is that so many people do not want it or are not capable of exercising it, would surely seem to postulate that they had it in their grasps at some time somewhere and had then shown indifference or hostility or incapacity. Else, how can he know that it is indifference and hostility and incapacity on the part of considerable elements among the people that constitutes "the ultimate problem of freedom"?

The United Nations informs us that about six out of ten human beings in the world are habitually hungry and that over five out of every ten adults are illiterate; it adds that the problem of the exploited and the underdeveloped peoples is intensifying in the present era. In the face of this, can we agree that it is popular incapacity and hostility that challenges freedom? Is it not necessary, rather, to inquire into what chance people have had? Into why such conditions as those mentioned by the UN exist?

If Mills would confine his observations to the peoples of the "rich" countries, would he not again have to define what he means by incapacity? How has he arrived at the conclusion that this incapacity—however he may define it—has come to exist? If one defines freedom in terms of the capacity to effectuate socially progressive and desirable aims—and these, in turn, are defined in terms of making it possible for the vast majority of the people to control their own ends and to achieve their satisfaction, materially, aesthetically, intellectually and psy-

chologically—is it not clear that “the ultimate problem of freedom” is the existence of class-divided and exploitatives social orders whose rulers deliberately prevent the establishment of rational and just societies?

Since he has made a faulty diagnosis, it is no wonder that Mills must admit that he knows no effective therapy: “I do not know the answer to the question of political irresponsibility in our time or to the cultural and political question of the Cheerful Robot.”

He goes on, then, to ask:

But is it not clear that no answers will be found unless these problems are at least confronted? Is it not obvious, that the ones to confront them, above all others, are the social scientists of the rich societies? That many of them do not is surely the greatest human default being committed by privileged men in our times. (p. 176)

Here the utopianism that marks Mills' tactical approach becomes quite clear; it is related to his idea of the powerlessness of the masses in the face of an omnipotent elite. He goes on to insist that, “In such a world as ours, to practice social science is, first of all, to practice the politics of truth”; that today “any statement of facts is of political and moral significance” and that “all social scientists, by the fact of their existence, are involved in the struggle between enlightenment and obscurantism.” (p. 178)

But the main task of his work is to demonstrate that most social scientists in the United States, subscribing to the Grand Theory school or to the abstract empirical school, serve the ends of obscurantism rather than enlightenment—this is the point of Mills' appeal for “sociological imagination.”

Mills also writes:

There is no necessity for working social scientists to allow the political meaning of their work to be shaped by the “accidents” of its setting, or its use to be determined by the purposes of other men. It is quite within their powers to discuss its meanings and decide upon its uses as matters of their own policy. (p. 177)

All this represents, we think, a singular failure on Mills' part to show some “sociological imagination” in seeking to understand why social science in the United States is dominated by obscurantist, petty, a-causal, and excessively compartmentalized methods. He has shown,

elsewhere in his work, that all the forces of prestige, of "good reviews" in "important publications," stellar and secure appointments, grants from foundations, etc., go towards supporting these dominant trends. Surely all this is closely related to similar anti-humanistic and obscurantist trends in other areas of human life in "Western civilization" and to the profound political and moral crisis which besets that civilization.

MILLS tends to exaggerate the universality of the defeat of reason in the social sciences in the United States and simultaneously, with extreme naiveté, he urges the social scientists themselves to rescue their own disciplines, single-handed, from its misuse. If Mills sees, as he does, that matters of divorce rate, crime, depression, and war are not subject to individualized or psychologized solutions, since their roots are societal, why should he not see the same roots in the present crisis in social science practice, and understand that its solution is part of a generalized political and social attack upon the ruling class which maintains and benefits from such crisis?

This does not mean that there must not be attacks upon the obscurantism in the social sciences delivered within the limits and values of social science itself; there must be such attacks and Mills' is a great service. But the effectiveness of the attack is lessened if the foe is seen as a matter of "human default" by a group of villains or fools.

Even so staunch a defender of the "free world" as Henry A. Kissinger, who tends to ascribe the intellectual failures of dominant Western social science to the more or less immutable demands of huge bureaucratic machines, notes: "The fact remains that the entire free world suffers not only from administrative myopia but also from self-righteousness and the lack of a sense of direction." (*The Reporter*, March 5, 1959). Perhaps one should not expect deep-rooted—that is, radical—analysis from Mr. Kissinger, and we pardon him for failing to ask why the condition he describes particularly afflicts the "free world."

Similarly, Saul K. Padover, cries out that the essential role of the intellectual is to be the critic—the man "who cries woe, who demands justice, who exposes corruption, who proposes Utopias, who shouts that the king is naked." Of course, here Mr. Padover assumes the perpetual existence of corruption, of woes, of lack of justice, of the need to dream of Utopias, of the existence and the nakedness of kings. "Yet even for this role of Cassandra," writes Padover, "the intellectual needs channels of communication" and, as he notes, "these media are not available to the critic of society or to the challenger of established values." And in

concludes: "We have wealth, we have political freedom, we have mass media—but what good will all that do in the absence of a vigorous intellectual life?" (*The Reporter*, April 30, 1959)

Again, Padover does not ask the right questions—nor does Mills. Why are the media not available; who has wealth; what kind of political freedom do "we" have and upon what is it based and to what ends is it confined? It is on such questions that "the sociological imagination" must be concentrated. And concentration upon such questions requires a heightened level of political awareness of struggle in this country; that will come from masses in motion and not from dialogues among academicians, in which dialogues the masses are ignored or labeled political idiots or "cheerful robots." With that kind of a base one can be as daring as he wishes, and he will be tolerated as at most some kind of an eccentric court clown, or chamber gadfly.

MILLS sees three functions for the social scientist who wishes to contribute to human affairs: 1) himself to be the repository of power—*i.e.* the philosopher-king role; 2) to be the advisor of the ruler; 3) "to remain independent, to do one's own work, to select one's own problems but to direct this work *at* kings as well as *to* 'publics.'" (pp. 179-81)

Clearly, Mills has selected the third alternative for himself; and, I think, that of these three he has selected the most admirable one, and that he has performed his selected role with great merit. Yet, I wonder if these three exhaust the alternatives open to the social scientist.

May there not be a fourth role for the social scientist? And may not this fourth role overcome some of the difficulties of the other three, including the role Mills has chosen, where real independence in a thoroughly complex and fully interdependent society is not possible, and where individualized labors tend to suffer in quality because of detachment and in impact because of the inevitable weakness of the individual?

May not this fourth role be a searching for the social force which represents deepest opposition to the antagonistic and inhibiting and corrupting features of present society? And may not such searching conceivably be rewarded by the discovery of such a force—at least in the mind of the searcher? And should he not then seek the closest possible identification with this liberating force, both in the name of enhanced clarity and of effectiveness?

Of course, in this fourth path there are dangers of faulty commit-

ment and of a blundering kind of partisanship which becomes fanaticism rather than effective dedication. But these are dangers accompanying effectuation of correct choice; the greatest danger is faulty choice.

The fourth choice, I think, makes possible the deepest societal analysis, and the most fruitful employment, in all categories, of the sociological imagination. It also makes possible an avoidance of Utopianism and requires fullest participation in life and in struggles, through which one's perception and one's devotion are simultaneously sharpened.

For me Marxism-Leninism represents this choice. Mills—so far as his published writings show—has not yet permitted himself to engage in a careful and full-scale investigation of the merits of that outlook and the logic, flowing therefrom, of that fourth choice.

* A study of the work of C. Wright Mills by Dr. Aptheker is being prepared for publication by Marzani & Munsell. This article will constitute one of its concluding chapters.—*Ed.*

We honor the memory of Louis E. Burnham, associate editor of the *National Guardian*, who died on February 12, 1960. His lifetime work in the cause of Negro liberation is more eloquent than many words.

Lou Burnham, a graduate of City College in New York, was a leader of the Southern Negro Youth Congress, along with Ed Strong and James Jackson. He helped organize the American Students Union and was southern director of the Progressive Party during the Wallace presidential campaign. In 1951, he took part in the founding of the Negro monthly *Freedom*, whose publisher was Paul Robeson, and he served as its Editor-in-Chief until its suspension in 1957, after which he joined the staff of the *Guardian*.

When friends speak of this loss, they say, "It is hard to believe," for he was only 44. But the brave new world which will owe its happiness to such as he will not forget him.

MY BUSINESS CAREER

RUSSELL DAVIS

IT must be all of forty years ago when I was nineteen that I was in Texas, traveling around down there from town to town trying to sell a small electric sign, the kind you put in the window of your store, you know, with interchangeable stencils, like: "Shoes Repaired Skillfully," or "Drygoods and Comestibles," or "High Quality Tonsorial Parlor." But I wasn't selling very many. "Lordy God son, everybody knows this is the general store," they'd tell me. "But you got to remind your custom to buy," I'd argue them. "Remind 'em," they'd answer, "remind 'em they ain't got 'ny money?" They didn't seem to understand advertising.

I came into a county seat at Fair time, and there I was surprised to see a booth set up and a man selling my sign. He had a lot of them lighted up, only they had different stencils like: "In God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash," and "No Shooting In This Saloon, Except the Bull," and "This Food Untouched By Human Hands, We Use Our Feet." I guess he must have made them himself, there weren't any like that in my kit. When I made myself known to him he acted surprised too. It seemed that the Company had assigned both of us the same territory, neglecting to mention either of us to the other. So after we'd cussed out the Company good and proper we made a deal. I told him all the towns I had been in, and he told me the towns he'd been in, we divided up the remaining towns that neither of us had been in, shook hands on it and parted company. The only trouble was as I began to find out a few days later, whereas I'd told him nothing but the truth, he'd told me lies. But by that time I was deep in the territory that he'd covered and practically out of money and there I was, stranded.

At the end of a long hot dusty day I put up at a dilapidated old

wooden hotel, the only place in town, on the edge of the Panhandle it was, and having a greasy supper of hash made of grits and God-help-u. I strolled out on to the sagging old veranda in the front that overlooked the lifeless, unpaved main street. There was a man in his suspenders and shirtsleeves slouched there in the broken rocker, his stocking feet on the rail and a hard straw hat down over his face, only he wasn't asleep because after a minute he twitched his head around a little, tilting his hat just enough so as to regard me with one eye. Then he removed his hat altogether and heisting himself up out of the chair kind of lunged at me sidewise with his neck and one hand stretched out, flashing a big wide smile and grabbing my hand in his. "Howdy, stranger, put it there," he said.

"How do you do," I said. His hand was kind of tallowy and his grip seemed to suck at my fingers besides being too tight, and I was relieved when he let go.

"Mighty happy to meet up with you, suh. My handle's Jack Munson. Friends call me Jack."

"How do you do," I said again.

"What's your handle?"

"Lloyd Trask," I said.

"Happy to meet up with you, Lloydie boy." Again he grabbed my hand and pumped it, suddenly arresting the motion and saying, "Don't mind if I call you Lloyd? You call me Jack."

"All right," I said.

"You-all native to these parts?" he inquired as we sat down.

I told him that I was not, I was a stranger to Texas, my home was in Ohio. I was trying to sell advertising signs.

Dropping his southern accent Jack Munson stated that Ohio was the first state in the Union industrially, agriculturally, ethnically and spiritually and then appended an inquiry into the success of my career.

I told him I was doing badly.

Throwing out one hand stiff-fingered he made a grimace. "What can you expect? It's the season."

I started to explain that it was more than the season, but he refused to listen. "It's the season," he insisted. "Wait, don't argue. I hate argument. I said it's the season, and if you think a minute, you'll see I'm right. You are aware of course that Virgo, the virgin, is in conjunction with the ram?"

"Well, no," I said.

Hitching his chair around he faced me, an expression of deep concern on his face, as though I had just told him I had been without food for

three days. "My dear fellow, don't tell me you've never had your horoscope cast?"

"No," I said, "I haven't. Quickly placing my hand on his arm I added, "I'm sorry, it's against my religion."

"But this has nothing to do with religion, Lloyd. When's your birthday, my boy?"

"But I'm sorry," I said, "it has to do with my religion."

"What is your religion?"

"I am an atheist," I answered in a low voice. "I'm against God and I believe in nothing, absolutely nothing."

As I spoke these words Munson started back a little, staring at me with amazement. Suddenly he again grasped my hand and pumping it in his clammy iron grip exclaimed loudly, "The first man I've ever met with the courage to speak as he believes. I'm proud to know you, my boy. Believe me it's rare to meet a man who's not afraid of the truth. A man with your courage will go far, believe me, I know. You're a business man, Lloyd. Whether you know it or not, you are. And that's what I am, a business man, a gambler in the marts of commerce, an enterpriser. And I am your man. I can put you in business. All that is necessary is capital. That is generally realized. What is not generally realized, known in fact to a mere handful, no, less, is that it is possible to go into business with a small amount of capital. You would be surprised how small an amount of capital is required for a really experienced business man like myself to put you in a paying business. And it's a lucky thing you happened along at just this moment, the moment when I am not occupied with any business at all, when I am looking for a partner, for I see that you and I, Lloydie boy, are sympatico, we both know the truth about the universe and its inhabitants. We will go far. Congratulations."

"Well—" I said.

"Don't worry. This is legal, fair and square, open and shut. You won't catch Jack Munson in anything the slightest bit shady. He knows better. And besides it's not necessary, when in a perfectly legitimate lawful endeavor we can make our fortunes in a matter of months— weeks —days. Wait, don't say a word. You probably think I'm crazy, millions are required—thousands—hundreds anyway, and, you say, you, Lloyd, don't possess these millions, these thousands, hundreds. Well, you will be astounded." He paused. Leaning forward, hands on his knees, he gave the empty street, then the blank windows behind us and finally me a sharp suspicious inspection. "Shall I tell you how much is required? For—" He drew his lower lip down, showing the roots of his teeth—"fifty dollars I can put you in a business that I guarantee will return its full investment

to us in less than one day. Are you interested? Of course you're interested. You're a business man."

"What kind of—" I began.

"How much money have you got?" he asked.

I replied that I might be able to get some money, provided I knew what sort of business I was planning to launch, but that I didn't know about fifty dollars; it was pretty steep. He replied that I must realize that the exact nature of the business would depend heavily on the amount of money available. He could start a business on any amount of money. He had mentioned fifty dollars as a kind of minimum because, while it was possible to launch a paying business on fifty dollars, the kinds of businesses one could launch on less than fifty dollars were somewhat limited. But I must not allow this to discourage me if I did not have quite fifty dollars. In fact he might be able to do something very promising indeed on a mite less than fifty dollars—providing it was not too much of a mite less. Then he asked me to put my cards on the table; that is, to state how much I had or could get.

"Well," I answered, "I might be able to get forty dollars."

He made a motion of his hand indicating grudging acceptance, then frowned. "How are you going to get it?"

"By telegraphing," I said.

He jumped up. "Come on," he said.

I sat still. "Why?"

"Come on, we've just got time. The telegraph office closes in five minutes. Hurry."

He glanced in through the window as he spoke. Although I followed his glance I could see no clock. "You haven't told me what business" I told him.

"Come on. I'll tell you on the way."

But although he talked all the way to the depot, all I knew when we got there was that the business he meant to launch had something to do with the theatre. He said that the turnover and profits in the entertainment business were unbelievable, that he knew this from a lifetime of experience. He had been born in a trunk. His father and mother had also each been born in a trunk. They had trod the boards of the Broadway theatres, toured Europe, Asia, Africa and India repeatedly and been knighted and feted and hailed by all the crowned heads. They had lacked only one thing, the very thing that he had been richly endowed with, a business sense. Thus they had died penniless. Naturally the funeral expenses for such a famous pair had been astronomical, which was the reason that he, their dutiful and grieving only son, must now start all

over again. He placed the telegraph pad and a pencil in my hands.

"But you still haven't told me what business you're planning to start," I objected.

"What?" he said. "Why, theatricals, a show. We start in a small way. Later we'll get into the theatres and on to New York."

"But how do we start?" I said.

"We travel around to barbecues. Set up our tent and charge admission.

"Admission to what?"

"To our show, our exhibition, of course."

"Exhibiiton of what?" I demanded.

"Why, snakes," he answered surprised, as though he had told me all about it before.

I dropped my pencil.

"Sure, snakes. And then we'll tell fortunes too and get the rubes for another little fee. I tell you it's a gold mine, this business, Lloydie boy. And I've got the tent, posters, tickets, gas machine—all we need is a little carbide. And I know where we can get the snakes."

"What kind of snakes?" I asked.

"Oh, king cobras, corals, rattlers, moccasins."

I shrugged. "Not me."

"They're harmless," he said. "We get them with their fangs taken out. There's a man right here in town does it. I know him."

"Not me." I said.

"All right then you can do the fortune telling. I'll show you how. I tell you we'll get our money back the first night. Hurry up, write your wire. I tell you this is a sure thing."

I sent a telegram collect to my brother-in-law asking for forty dollars and got an answer back collect the next morning. It was one word: No.

I was dejected.

"How much have you got?" Munson asked me.

"Seven dollars."

"I can start a business on that," he said.

"Oh no you can't," I told him.

He began to argue.

"If you can start one on five all right," I told him. "I've got to have a backlog."

First he talked the hotelkeeper into releasing certain items from his trunk which she had impounded for nonpayment. He argued that these items were useless to her whereas he could make enough money with them to pay his bill. With my five dollars he bought seven sluggish rattlesnakes whose fangs had either been removed or fallen out from senility.

Then early one morning we boarded a freight that was moving slowly past the grain elevator. We were thrown off at the first division point, snakes and all, but this was also our destination. We set up the tent near the entrance to a small ball park. About dusk the crowd began to arrive and a steer which had been roasting whole on a huge spit was taken down and the feasting began. Munson lighted his carbide flares in front of the posters, big tattered cloth affairs: one depicted a scantily clad young woman in the act of being devoured by lions, another showed a man with a horse's body from the waist down serenading a lady who wore a full beard, on another an impossibly fat woman was dandling a two-headed boy on her knee, while on still another a faded gorilla was carrying a rather wooden looking blonde into a forest. Then he mounted a packing box and began a spiel in a loud hoarse voice that startled me at first about the show which—he said—was about to start and selling admission tickets for ten cents each. People began buying and crowding into the small tent where I, wearing a tall pointed hat decorated with stars and half moons, with smaller stars and half moons pasted on my face, stood nervously taking tickets and yelling at a few little boys who kept peeking under the tent.

One boy crawled in under the tent wall directly behind me and tugged at the long kimona I was wearing. "Hey mister," he cried in a high piercing voice, "are you an angel?"

Balancing myself I unobtrusively placed my foot on his face and pushed, whereupon he grabbed my angle and bit it, nearly upsetting me. A ring of spectators quickly formed, all of them encouraging the boy. When I finally succeeded in extricating my foot and managed to get in a glancing blow with my open hand across his behind, there arose cries of "Let him alone, pick on someone your own size! Beating a defenseless child, he is! I want my money back! Police!"

"Tickets please!" I cried, but in my nervousness failed to collect from several, meanwhile surreptitiously kicking out at a suspicious bulge in the tent wall.

A man stuck his head under the flap. "Who in here just kicked my wife?"

"Tickets please, buy your tickets, you can't see the show without a ticket!" I yelled.

"Did *you* kick my wife?" demanded the man reaching past me and collaring a short fellow with glasses who responded with a cry of alarm.

"George!" a woman said sharply lifting the tent flap and peering in. "Come out of there."

When the tent was full, Munson came in announcing that the show

would now start and that the moment it was over Ali Baba—pointing to me—would reveal to all the secrets of past, present and future. Then, crawling under the canvas barrier that rimmed the pit we had dug in the center, he called upon everyone to peer over the edge of the canvas, but to promise never to disclose even to their wives, sweethearts or mothers, what they were about to witness. Then he called upon them to be silent, for he was about to pass through the valley of the shadow, about to take on with his bare and naked hands man's vilest enemy, and not one, not two, but thirty-six of the most dangerous reptilian monsters, many of whom had killed strong men and horses, that ever crawled the surface of the terrestrial firma. Then, bending down, he turned up the carbide flare at the edge of the pit—which made it next to impossible to see what was beyond—and peeling off his clothes above the waist and letting loose a series of shrieks, bellows, groans, howls and death rattles, plunged into the pit and began to leap about, making the dirt fly. For a climax he picked up one of the snakes that had died during the day and shaking and wriggling it so that it rattled as though alive, suddenly stuck its head in his mouth, and then of course went into an even wilder set of contortions than before, his eyes nearly popping from his head, suddenly removing it, gasping that it had bitten clean through his tongue, and, flinging it from him, collapsed down behind the barrier at the same time carefully dimming down the light. And while everyone was peering over to find out what had happened to him, he suddenly scrambled up from under the barrier and announced that that part of the show was over, now for an additional ten cents I would tell everyone's fortune. Herding all of them that he could toward my corner of the tent he pushed forward my first customer, a small grey girl of about fifteen with dust colored hair and staring brown eyes that fixed upon my moon and star studded countenance in plain horror.

The routine Munson had taught was this: Tell them what they want to hear. If it's a young fellow, tell him he's going to the city, make a lot of money, wrassle his worst enemy to a standstill and be a bear with the women. If it's an older man the same, except he's going to beat his enemy in a swap instead of wrassle him; maybe he knows he can't wrassle him. If it's a female of any age at all, just tell her she's going to travel, going to meet a dark handsome man with city ways who's rich and also a tall blond viking with a ranch, a thousand head of cattle and a four horse team, that she'll break one of their hearts and marry the other, but don't tell her which, unless you get the hint from her, because though you might think they'll prefer the viking and you even try to *make* 'em prefer him, you can't ever tell. Maybe they won't. Remember

if you get stuck at any time, or if anything happens, like one of them squawks that you were trying to pick their pocket or something, even if you're not, don't argue, throw a fit. Jerk yourself up straight, and straighter and straighter two or three times, and throw the back of your hand against your forehead and clutch your chest with the other, let out a terrible scream and a groan and say, "Oh, I'm sick, I'm sick," and fall down in a dead faint. I'll come to your rescue. Or if you get stuck for words or want to fill in, just mutter "Abracadabra" over and over and roll our eyes and let your tongue hang out and maybe blow a few bubbles. But as I took her trembling hand in my trembling hand and stared down into it, while the crowd pressed close in looking down on us as they had looked down into the snake pit, I couldn't remember anything. I just stared into her hand and kept swallowing. I remember the curious reddish patches, how worn it was, and the hard callouses on her fingers, the little red sores on her wrist, pitiful little sores. "How did you get these?" I asked her suddenly in a low tone. "Pullin' onions," she answered trembling, and as I glanced into her eyes, she added, "I works in the fields."

Suddenly I was struck a hard blow on the shoulder knocking me off my camp stool, my pointed cap was snatched off and Munson's voice began chanting, "Abracadabra, I see a journey, you will travel far on land and water, you will meet a dark handsome rich gentleman, oh-h, abracadabra, but I see also trouble, for you will meet another handsome man with light hair, or-h, get up on your stool you fool and enlighten these good people as to the mysteries of past, present and future." As I got to my feet Munson stuck the hat back on my head and pushed me down on the camp stool. Then he stood up and told the crowd to be patient, to give everyone a chance to get their full money's worth of enlightenment, and going outside began to bark for the second snake show coming up. I remembered all he had told me now and I began telling fortunes, our show went on and our business thrived. At the end of the evening we counted the money and between snakes and fortunes we had taken in thirty-four dollars.

"We'll get some real snakes," said Munson. "We'll get some that'll scare all the rubes between here and the Mexican border. I know where I can pick up a king cobra for eighteen simoleons."

I shook my head rapidly. "No," I said.

"What's the matter?"

"This ain't for me."

"What's the trouble?"

"I'm not suited, that's all."

"Don't be silly, Jocko boy. You did all right after that first one."

"I know," I said, "but I'm just not suited."

Munson drew down his lower lip thoughtfully. "Well, I suppose I can get another boy easy enough."

The money lay between us on a barrelhead. He began to gather it up, quickly, yet in a casual way, humming a little tune.

"Half of that's mine," I said.

He nodded. "All of it, Jocko boy, I'm giving you all of it you took in on your fortunes."

I shook my head. "No," I said. "Everybody that came in the tent didn't cough up another dime. Some went out without having a fortune. Our agreement was half."

Munson growled. "What agreement?"

"Partnership, half and half."

He shrugged, counted out eleven dollars on the barrelhead. "Nine, ten, eleven, that's it, that's what you took it."

"I'm due six more dollars," I said, my voice coming out a little shaky.

He smiled for just an instant, showing all his teeth. "Sorry boy, this is all that's coming to you."

I didn't say anything. He turned, took a step. I took a step. He turned and faced me. "Now I don't want to fight you, rube, but I might as well tell you something first. I been in some kind of rough shambles."

"Give me six more dollars," I said.

His eyelids flickered. "All right, twelve. I'll give you another dollar for goodwill, but not another cent. Don't ask me for another cent or so help me—"

"Six dollars," I said.

"Not by a jugful, rube."

I remembered the power of his blow back in the tent. But also I remembered the salesman I had met back at the Fair who had looked me straight in the eye and lied. Mixed up in my mind too was the little girl with the grey face, the staring brown eyes and callouses and sores. But if you ask me now, it wasn't any of these things made me hit him, but the money, my six dollars. I just wasn't going to let him get away with keeping my six dollars, that was all.

I rushed him. He stepped aside and tripped me and I went sprawling, but in a second I was up again and there he was facing me dancing up and down on his toes spitting on his hands and breathing hard, and I rushed him again. But this time when he sidestepped, I was ready, and so did I and at the same time lowered my head and butted him in the

stomach. He bounced and landed on the ground like a big loose bag. I stood over him. "Had enough?"

He didn't answer. His eyes glared and his mouth opened and his tongue wagged and he looked me up and down, but no sound came except a kind of wheeze. His breath was completely knocked out.

"Gimme the six dollars," I said.

His breath was coming back now. He sounded like an old Ford starter. Suddenly he rolled over on his side and rolling his eyes like a crazy dog he began walking himself around lying on his side like a big cartwheel, faster and faster, trying to lash out at me with his legs and his arms, keeping his eyes on me, kind of glinting. But I kept away. I stood away. "You going to gimme that six dollars?" He gave a lunge with his whole body. I could see he was good at staying on the ground. I could see if he could get me down there then he knew plenty of tricks. I gave a little jump away from him each time and I kept hollering at him while he twisted and grunted like that. Finally I crouched down low with my hands out and gauged him carefully and stepping back I stopped, took a sudden little run and landed right square on him butt first, right square on his belly, and that did it. He gave a grunt and all the air leaked out of him and he lay there with his face the color of a spoilt clam. I hauled my six dollars out of his back pocket. Then I stood by and waited for him to come to. I put my hands in my pockets and whistled a little tune while I waited. After a while he perked up, raised his head first, sat up, groaned, put his hand on his stomach and lay back, groaning some more.

"Well," I said after a little, after his groans had faded out a little, "I got my six dollars out of your back pocket, that's all I took, my share, and now I'm going. I hope this'll teach you a lesson."

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"Away from here," I told him.

"Stick with me, Lloydie boy, I'll show you where the gold is. You'll never find it by yourself, you haven't got the knack. Better stick with old Jack Munson. He'll show you."

"You've shown me enough," I said.

"Where'll you go? Work in the fields? Swing a pick on the railroad? That's not for you. Smarten up now and stay with me. Better change your mind before it's too late, before I find another boy." He raised his voice and he raised his head too. I saw it, still pasty white against the brown grass as I glanced back. "Hey!" he hollered. "Hey Jocko!"

But I didn't look back. I heard him call "Jocko," three or four more times but I kept on walking over the grass with my hands in my pockets.

and my tongue pressed against the roof of my mouth till I came to a chuck wagon serving the last people tha was hauging around barbecue, green corn and beer out of a keg.

And who was there among them but the little girl whose fortune I'd been unable to tell but only asked her how she got those callouses and sores, standing there just biting into an ear of corn as I came up. Her eyes stared up big at me, and I realized I still had the stars and moons on my face, so before I said what I was going to say, I pulled them off.

She smiled just a little so I wasn't quite sure she had, she looked so sad and nice. With a quick single motion she reached me an ear of green corn off the back of the wagon and then watched me with her brown eyes and didn't move.

I chewed and that corn tasted sweet. I said, "In the fields where you work—" And I noticed a couple of men of her kind with the same grey dust in their clothes close by prick up their ears and listen, so I said it to her and them both. "In the fields where you work—are they taking on any hands?"

And I held my corn ear and though its sweetness almost couldn't keep, waited for some answer before I bit in again.

POEMS OF WAR AND WORK

MIGUEL HERNANDEZ

Miguel Hernandez was born on October 30, 1910, in Orihuela, near Murcia, Spain. The son of peasants, he was early apprenticed to the ageless task of goat-herding, and his formal schooling did not go beyond two years. Spain, however, was in ferment as a natural reaction to the Spanish-American war. A brilliant generation of thinkers, novelists, poets and teachers had begun to disseminate the country's native culture among broader and broader segments of the population, together with new ideas aimed at desperately needed social changes. Hernandez came into contact with the Spanish classics and burst into creativeness as if this was the most natural thing in the world. His fame was almost instantaneous in the bright pre-war Spain of the Thirties and Hernandez became part of the advanced circle of intellectuals in Madrid. He plunged into the Civil War as soldier and poet.

Everything about this man was miraculous: his few years of schooling, his vivid awareness of himself as an artist for the people, his contempt for the comforts and ways of the upper classes. Here was a man bursting with the joy of creation, in love with the world and one woman, devotion for one cause and for his two sons, one of whom was to die of malnutrition; this was a man raised as a Catholic and liberated as a full participant in an upheaval against the power of sacrosanct forces. If his death did not have the monstrous suddenness of Lorca's, and if he was unfortunate enough to survive the Civil War, wasting away in prison after prison till 1941, he struggled to shape his death into the sunlight of his life. Broken by hunger and disease, he died at the age of 32 leaving these words:

Adiós, hermanos, camaradas, amigos:
!despedidme del sol y de los trigos!

(Goodbye brothers, comrades, friends,
take leave of sun and wheat for me!)

ALVARO CARDONA-HINE
(*Translator*)

TO THE INTERNATIONAL SOLDIER FALLEN IN SPAIN

If there are men of soul without frontier,
of ample forehead, world-wide shock of hair
that crowns all distance with its hemisphere
of storm and light—with you their ways compare.

When many homelands called you with their flags
to instill in each the beauty of your breath,
you came to pacify the panther's fangs,
you came to burst in flames against such death.

It's with the flavor of her sun and sea
that Spain recovers you and helps to base
the continental framework of your tree

while through your bones, the olive groves shall trace
their roots of faith to sound an ore of glee:
the earthliness of man new worlds embrace.

ROSARIO

Rosario, you fighting girl!
Imagine that pretty hand
blowing up half the land;
concealing, ready to hurl,
the inferno wars unfurl . . .
Nothing about her to tell
her heart was a bursting shell,
fragile as glass, taut in plight,
a weapon made for a fight,
doomed in fury to excel.

In the grip of your right hand
 five lions train for a mission;
 the flower of ammunition
 is the flower in demand!
 Rosario, tall contraband
 of belfries, an angry rose
 bares her thorns against her foes,
 plows their field and sows a seed
 of constant mourning, the need
 for tolling bells, as it goes.

Buitrago nurses the scar
 of the lightning's fierce condition,
 of her leveling ambition
 and a right hand without par.
 With the frequency of a star
 in the free wheel of the sky
 her hand looms to belie
 all the gossip of her end:
 dynamite made her a friend
 and the morning, an ally.

Rosario, you fighting wench,
 it's a man you could have been
 and instead look like a queen
 come to visit in a trench!
 Proud, like the flags that we clench
 and lift to final victory,—
 oh you warring shepherds, see,
 see her colors singe the air,
 and fling your bombs at the lair
 where the souls of traitors flee.

SWEAT

All waters find their paradise at sea
 while sweat finds a horizon to collide . . .
 Sweat is an overflowing, salty tree,
 a ravenous tide.

And it appears from the remotest ages
to toast our health with welcome cups of strife,
to nourish thirst and salt by daily stages
that light up our life.

True heir of movement, cousin of the sun
and brother of the tear; its radiant vine
reveals the work of tillage to be done,
its muscle and spine.

When peasants join each dawn out in the fields,
more anxious for the plowshare than for rest,
they wear a silent, shining coat that shields
the song in their chest.

The rich and single wardrobe of these folk,
the jewel for their hand and level eye,
pours from two concave armpits that can yoke
the winds that go by.

The flavor of the soil matures by grace
of pungent flakes that fall laboriously,
of manna from the males that seeds embrace
and join in the spree.

But those of you who never sweat, who, cold
for lack of arms and music, strut like fools,
shall never wear the crown that limbs unfold
nor charge like our bulls.

You'll wallow in your stench, die in the dark!
Our glowing looks hail from a dancing cry
that bends the living body like an arc
to spring at the sky.

Lend forehead to the task, companions; whet
your sword of tasty crystals on the sod
for you shall be transparent, fortunate,
equal,—like a flood!

SONNET

No man finds rest, only his garments do
when hung and swaying solitude to wind,
—and still, an unknown life, a vague tattoo,
insists beneath the clothing left behind.

The heart's already bloomed above its tide,
the mind surveys no yard, no firmament,
—for all the body's efforts to subside,
somewhere in central sleep its ways augment.

Nobody dies. Too much is life ahead
caught in the breath of an ecstatic lung.
—Not even clothes, those lesser skins, are dead.

And though it may hold fast, the heart is flung
with passion at a world the brain had fed.
—The core of a calm Universe has swung.

—*Translated by Alvaro Cardona-Hine*

WHAT PRICE THE UN-AMERICANS?

VICTOR RABINOWITZ

WHEN, on June 8, 1956, the Supreme Court handed down its decision in *United States v. Barenblatt*, it struck a serious blow at the exercise of freedom of speech and opinion in the United States. The prevailing views of Mr. Justice Harlan appear to give almost unlimited investigatory powers to the House Committee on Un-American Activities, and on a theory which bodes ill for the future. The majority opinion, confronted with the evident fact that the Committee's investigations interfered seriously with the exercise of First Amendment rights, found justification for its exercise of power in:

"... the long and widely accepted view that the tenets of a Communist Party include the ultimate overthrow of the Government of the United States by force and violence, a view which has been given formal expression by the Congress.

"On these premises the Court in its constitutional adjudications has consistently refused to view the Communist Party as an ordinary political party."

The Court here seems to read out of the protection of the First Amendment the general subject of Communist Party activities. Other exercises of freedom of speech, the majority implies, might well be entitled to protection from unreasonable congressional investigation, but not activities which the House Committee suspected to be on behalf of the Communist Party.

The Court held further that the House Committee on Un-American Activities was engaged in a *bona fide* legislative purpose and hence was entitled to broad powers. In response to the contention that the Com-

mittee's true purpose was to expose, the majority stated that it would not inquire into the motives of committee members.

The decision in the *Barenblatt* case is even more shocking because it is in sharp conflict with the spirit, and perhaps even the holding, in the opinion of Chief Justice Warren, speaking for a majority of the Court two years earlier in *Watkins v. United States*. At that time the Court, in an extensive analysis of the operations of the House Committee and the effect that it had on the exercise of political rights, pointed out that the resolution creating the Committee was so general in its terms as to include almost anything within its ambit which the Committee wished to include. "Who can define the meaning of 'Un-American'?" asked the Chief Justice. Such a resolution, the Court seemed to say in *Watkins*, is invalid since it made it impossible for the court or for Congress to supervise the activities of the Committee, a particularly serious fault, in view of the subject of the Committee inquiry. "Protected freedoms should not be placed in danger in the absence of clear determination by the House or the Senate that a particular inquiry is justified by a specific legislative need."

There is over a score of cases now pending in which witnesses have refused to concede the right of the Committee to inquire as to the political beliefs and have been cited for contempt as a result. What will be the outcome of this litigation we cannot say. It is obvious that a host of difficult constitutional problems are raised and perhaps they can be discussed more fully on some other occasion. We will, for the present, confine ourselves to the finding made by the Court that the House Committee does perform a genuine legislative function. We submit that this finding is not supported by the facts and that a careful study of the work of the Committee will make that clear.

On May 26, 1938, Martin Dies arose in the House of Representatives and moved the creation of a Special Committee of Un-American Activities. He candidly expressed his doubts as to whether such a committee could perform a proper legislative function; he was not sure whether the Congress could "legislate effectively in reference to this matter" but pointed out that "exposure . . . of subversive activities is the most effective weapon that we have in our possession."

The promise of Congressman Dies has been fulfilled. The committee has not assisted Congress in legislating effectively in the area of "Un-American activities" and has instead engaged almost exclusively in the process of exposure. The committee (which became a standing committee of the House in 1946) has but recently passed its twenty-fifth birthday and it is clear that it has grown into quite a monster, with

sanction in our constitutional system. It has all of the outward trappings of a congressional committee. It has the usual staff of attorneys, investigators and office help; it holds meetings which bear a superficial resemblance to congressional committee hearings; it issues reports which in format are like the reports of a congressional committee. The surface resemblances between this committee and, let us say, the Appropriations Committee or the Committee on Armed Services have been sufficient to deceive many (including, as has been noted, some members of the Supreme Court) who persist in viewing this committee as the kind of creature with which it has long been familiar.

BUT the resemblance between the Committee on Un-American Activities and other congressional committees is most superficial and realistically speaking it is clear that we have here an elaborate system for the suppression of dissident political opinion by the technique of exposure which, in present political context, performs much the same role as the technique of attainder performed three hundred years ago. Political dissidents are, by legislative act, exposed to the glare of publicity under circumstances which do not permit a free debate. They are punished without trial by the loss of jobs, social ostracism and frequently economic disaster. Sometimes they have been physically assaulted and in a few cases have been driven to suicide. All of this happens although they have violated no law. Those strong enough and courageous enough to challenge the authority of the committee are jailed.

Most of the work of the usual congressional committee is devoted to considering specific legislation and when it does carry on a broad general investigation* it is for the purpose of determining whether a law is needed. The witnesses called are usually experts or government officials who have information which may help the committee to draft legislation. Most hearings are held in Washington and are attended with relatively little publicity. By and large the committees put in a good deal of hard work and the fact that the results may be unsatisfactory is not the fault of the committee system.

Not so the Committee on Un-American Activities. It rarely considers legislation and though it alleges it has made seventy-nine recommendations for legislation up to 1958, this claim, like so many reports of the

* Historically, the important congressional investigations in the past have been carried on by special committees operating under a narrow grant of authority and going out of existence when their purpose has been achieved. This was true of the Teapot Dome Investigating Committee of the 20s, of the LaFollette Committee of the 30s, of the Kefauver Committee of a few years ago and of the Kennedy Committee of current fame.

Committee's other activities, is a fraud.* Close analysis of the Committee's work makes it clear that it can claim responsibility for only two statutes, the Internal Security Act of 1950 and the Communist Control Act of 1954. Hardly a record of which the Committee can be proud.

Even Congress does not seriously consider the Committee as a legislative committee. In the past few years about 12,000 bills have been introduced into each session of Congress. These have been divided among the nineteen committees of the House, so that each committee has had to handle, on an average, about 575 bills. However, in the 83rd Congress, only 4 bills were referred to the Committee on Un-American Activities; in the 84th Congress, only one; in the 85th Congress, five.

SUCH lack of a legislative function is not, of course, to be confused with lack of activity. Although the committee has only nine members (compared, for example, with the Appropriations Committee which has 50 members or the Education and Labor Committee which has 29), they work harder than almost any others at their tasks. In the past 20 years the committee has taken about 50,000 pages of testimony and has issued about 10,000 pages of reports and other publications. Since 1950, the period of the committee's greatest activity, it has called over 2,000 witnesses on 527 separate hearing dates and in that same period of time has spent perhaps \$5,000,000. It has a staff of about 55, more than four times the staff of the Foreign Relations Committee and almost three times the staff of the Ways and Means Committee.

All this frenzy of activity is directed exclusively to the committee's purpose of exposure and the suppression of unorthodox political activity which follows thereon. The holding by a majority of the Supreme Court to the contrary is not supported by the record.

A committee with a legislative purpose calls witnesses because it believes that they will supply information of value to it. Most of the witnesses called by the Committee on Un-American Activities are persons who the committee knows in advance will refuse to give information. No one has attempted to compare the number of witnesses friendly to the committee with those hostile to it. A random sampling, however, shows that the unfriendly witnesses outnumber by far those who cooperate with the committee. In 1955, for example, the committee held hearings in Newark and in Los Angeles; it also held hearings in Washington on the Committee to Secure Justice in the Rosenberg Case. At the Newark hearing there were four friendly witnesses and twenty-

* Justice Harlan, in his opinion in *Barenblatt*, apparently accepted this committee contention at face value and relied thereon.

three hostile; at the Los Angeles hearing there were four friendly witnesses and twenty-four hostile; at the Rosenberg Committee hearing there were four friendly witnesses and seventeen hostile. There is no legitimate legislative purpose to be served in calling witnesses who will refuse to answer questions.

Even the testimony of witnesses friendly to the Committee does not, by and large, supply information for legislative purposes. Such testimony generally consists of two parts: first, a list of names of alleged Communist Party members (frequently, when the witness is unusually efficient, accompanied by addresses); second, a description of alleged Communist Party activities. A list of names can serve no legislative purpose; it serves only to expose persons who have engaged in activities which the Committee regards as un-American. And even the description of Communist Party activities, in the overwhelming majority of cases, turns out to be a description of lawful political work well within the protection of the First Amendment. It is rare, indeed, that a witness tells of activities which even approach the espionage, sabotage or sedition of which the Committee constantly accuses the Communist Party.

Space does not permit an analysis of even a small portion of the Committee hearings to demonstrate that this is so. A fair illustration may be found in the Committee's investigation of the motion picture industry, which has been going on now intermittently for well over ten years. The Committee has been successful in turning up an unusually large number of informers in Hollywood, including such well-known persons as Clifford Odets, Edward G. Robinson, Elia Kazan, Abe Burrows, Jean Muir, Budd Shulberg and others. Many of these witnesses described their Communist activities as "innocuous." In detail it turned out that the Communist Party had collected money for Spain, had protested the execution of the Rosenbergs, had raised money for the *Daily Worker*, had discussed cultural activities in Hollywood, and that some members had worked on Henry Wallace's speeches and on motion pictures produced in Hollywood. In a few cases, witnesses alleged that the Communist Party attempted to dictate cultural standards, but so far as we can recall not a single witness said anything about espionage or sabotage or conduct which might by any stretch of the imagination be described as sedition.

The same was true at the Newark, Los Angeles and Rosenberg Committee hearings mentioned above, where witnesses testified, for example, that collections were taken for the *Daily Worker*, that petitions were signed for the Rosenbergs, and that the Communist Party attempted

to elect its own members to office in trade unions. None of such activities are illegal or subject to action by Congress, and we doubt whether even the House Committee would claim that such is the case.

IT IS true that on rare occasions witnesses have told hair-raising stories about Communist preparations to overthrow the government. Some of these, like John Lautner (who has appeared before the Committee at least nine times), are professional witnesses and others are persons who are obviously irresponsible. Even if all of this testimony were taken at its face value, the Committee has been listening to such charges now for a generation and certainly it has all the information it needs for a legislative purpose.

The Committee's exposure purpose can be illustrated in many other ways. One of its most popular and certainly its most voluminous publication is its mis-named "Cumulative Index to Publications of the Committee on Un-American Activities, 1938-1954" and the Supplement to that Index covering the years 1955 and 1956. Although purporting to be an Index to publications, it is actually an index to names. The 1938 to 1954 index contains the names of about 30,000-35,000 individuals and several thousand organizations; the Supplement contains approximately 12,000 names. Each of these individuals and organizations has been "mentioned" in a House Committee hearing or report. Anyone interested may, with the aid of these reference works, determine whether his employees, his fellow-workers, his union officials, his neighbors, his personal enemies or, for that matter, the Justice of his Supreme Court, have ever been referred to at a Committee hearing, and on what occasion.

This is not all. The Committee also publishes a "Guide to Subversive Organizations and Publications" which, like the Index, is intended to provide publicity to those organizations unfortunate enough to have incurred the displeasure of the Committee.

The routine Munson had taught was this: Tell them what they of the Committee and furnishes a ready guide to federal, state and local officials in their own local hunts for subversives. Echoes of these indices occur frequently in the records of courts and administrative agencies. Many persons, for example, have lost government jobs or been denied government licenses because they are alleged to have been members of or attended a meeting of some organization "cited" by the Committee as a Communist-front.

The Committee boasts of its card index. Professor Carr of Cornell University estimated in 1952 that the index included one million names. Since the bulk of the Committee's activity has taken

place since that date, the index today probably includes two or three times that many names. Robert Stripling, Chief Investigator of the Committee until 1948, has stated that about twenty thousand persons had access to that file; this includes Congressmen, other government departments and even private organizations. On occasion Congressmen have used the files of the Committee for the purpose of making public charges on the floor of Congress.

A scandalous incident occurred in 1948 when Congressman Fuller of New York attacked the late Clifford T. McAvoy for visiting Fuller's district "for the express purpose of telling the people there how to vote in the Fall election." Fuller said that he had received from the House Committee a list of 37 "citations" of McAvoy's alleged subversive activities. These "citations" were then read into the Congressional Record. In 1948, Congressman Nodar, also of New York, read into the record a list of alleged subversives residing in a Federal housing project in his district—a list he said he received from the House Committee. Other similar instances could be cited.

The Committee itself has on many occasions publicly announced that it was turning over portions of its files to local governments so that they could assist the Committee in rooting out alleged subversives.*

FURTHER illustrations of the Committee exposure purposes could easily be cited. Many witnesses are called on to provide no testimony at all except the names of alleged Communists. Thus, at the Gary hearing in 1958, a witness named Albert Malis appeared before the Committee and admitted previous membership in the Communist Party but stated that he could not remember the names of others. He was asked no questions about the activities of the Party but was excused from the stand with the suggestion that he might be willing to give the names in executive session. Another witness called in Washington admitted previous membership in the Communist Party but refused to name others on constitutional grounds. He was not asked any questions concerning his activities as a Communist; instead, he was cited for contempt. Similar instances could be multiplied almost indefinitely.

It is common practice for the Committee to interview "friendly" witnesses before they take the stand and usually to secure in such private

* The most recent example occurred this summer when Congressman Walter, Chairman of the Committee, in calling off a proposed hearing on the subject of education in California, announced that he was turning over information in the files of the Committee to the local school authorities for action. When it developed that some of the local school authorities were not interested in following the matter up, Walter threatened to take the information back and to proceed with the hearing originally planned.

conferences all of the information which is later spread on the record in public hearings. Under such circumstances it is difficult to understand what purposes the public hearing serves. The following testimony, taken from hearings held in the summer of 1957, is typical:

Mr. Arens: Now during the course of your membership in the Communist Party did you know a number of people as Communists who were engaged in the communications field?

Mrs. Greenberg: I did.

Mr. Arens: Have you conferred with myself and with other members of the staff with reference to the facts as you have known them?

Mrs. Greenberg: Yes, sir.

Mr. Arens: Do you have before you now a list of names of persons that you have given to the staff here, persons known by you to a certainty to have been members of the Communist Party?

Mrs. Greenberg: I have.

Mr. Arens: As to each of these persons, have you served with him or her in a closed Communist Party meeting?

Mrs. Greenberg: I have.

Mr. Arens: Would you kindly tell us the name of each of these persons, and give us just a word of description concerning each one of them." (85th Cong., p. 1510)

The witness then proceeded to list the names previously given to the Committee.

Some of the most prominent "name droppers" have been called on a number of occasions, each time repeating the same testimony. The case of John Lautner has been mentioned above. Matthew Cvetic testified on four occasions in the 81st Congress. Barbara Hartle testified twice in the 83rd Congress and twice in the 84th. Mildred Blauvelt testified in the 84th Congress and was only a few months ago recalled to give further testimony at hearings in New York. As in the case of Lautner, no reason appears for the calling and recalling of such witnesses, except to get additional names; frequently the same names are repeated over and over again.

One witness, Irving Fishman, does not give names but testifies to the alleged importation of Communist propaganda from abroad. He travels with the Committee almost as if he were a member of its staff. In the past few years he has testified in Washington, Philadelphia, San Francisco, New Orleans, New York, Buffalo, Boston, Newark, and a second time in Washington. His testimony is much the same each time; its only value is that it produces additional headlines each time a new city is visited.

THE work of the Committee provides an almost inexhaustible field for research and some day someone will undertake a thorough survey of its activity. One of the subjects which requires examination, for example, is the Committee's "clearance" procedure. By this technique a witness who has been "named" before the Committee may secure "clearance" and thus get his job back. Instances in the field of the theatre have been given wide publicity because the persons involved are public figures: Lucille Ball, for example, is an illustration. There are many others not so well-known.

A few weeks ago the New York press reported the case of a film writer who had been blacklisted for over 10 years, although he could not understand why. Recently he discovered that another person with the same name had been identified at a House Committee hearing as a Communist and that his employers had blacklisted him through error. According to the newspaper reports he then secured a letter of "clearance" from the Committee and presumably is now once more available for employment.

There are many other similar stories which are current in Washington and elsewhere among those who have had much contact with the Committee. Many of these are difficult of proof and would require investigation for verification.

Among the activities which occupy much of the Committee's time is that of self defense. An outspoken and effective critic of the Committee may, with reasonable certainty, expect a subpoena from it. Thus, when John Cogley, under the auspices of the Fund for the Republic, wrote an extensive report on blacklisting in the entertainment industry, the Committee devoted days of hearings to an attempt to rebut the report. Cogley was himself called to testify, as were others who had worked with him. Harvey O'Connor and Frank Wilkinson have both been called by the Committee for the avowed purpose of questioning them concerning their efforts to have the Committee abolished, and both were cited for contempt when they refused to cooperate with the Committee. Here again no conceivable legislative purpose could be served by such extensive efforts on the part of the Committee to justify itself in the eyes of the American people.

Frequently the hearings of the Committee are so timed as to give assistance to one union in opposition to another on the eve of an important union election or collective bargaining situation. Sometimes the Committee holds hearings in order to influence an intra-union struggle. Only recently the Committee visited Chicago, where internal struggles were taking place in the Packinghouse Workers Union and International

Association of Machinists. Members of conflicting groups in the unions were subpoenaed by the Committee and questioned by it.

The Committee's record of interference in Labor Board elections is a long one. As long ago as 1941 the late C. I. O. President, Philip Murray, charged the Committee with conducting investigations in order to interfere with a Labor Board election at Armour & Co. Since then the Committee has subpoenaed unions involved in major strikes or Labor Board elections at R. J. Reynolds Company, the General Electric plant at Lynn, Massachusetts, the Westinghouse plant in Pittsburgh, the Sylvania Company's plant in Warren, Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia plant of the Eby Company and the bitter strike some years ago at Hearn's department store. The 1958 hearings in New England were called in the midst of an election contest between the UE and the IUE. On several occasions the principal witnesses against officers of American Communications Association have been the officers of rival unions or employers in the industry and this experience is common in the trade union movement.

THAT all of this constitutes a clear abuse of the powers of Congress and of legislative committees is so clear that it should be apparent to all. But it has been said that there is none so blind as he who will not see and the only government agencies which are able to check the Committee in its activities have chosen to be blind. There are at least one hundred Congressmen and possibly many more who in private conversation have indicated their detestation of the Committee and its works; and, indeed, this includes even one member of the Committee. In public, however, no more than two or three can be counted on to raise their voices in opposition to the Committee's work and only one Congressman Roosevelt of California, has thus far been willing to take the lead in a move to clip the wings of the Committee.

There will be more court battles over the power of the Committee and victories will be won, but it is by no means clear that the activities of the Committee can be blocked in an effective way unless the Supreme Court can be induced to reverse its decision in *Barenblatt*.

The only effective way to stop the activities of the Committee is by public pressure on members of Congress, many of whom appear to be terrified that any opposition to the Committee will have disastrous political repercussions. It has long been rumored that the Committee collects information not only on the public generally but on some Congressmen as well. Whatever the reason, rare, indeed, is the Congressman who up to date has dared to make an effective challenge.

to the Committee. It is true that public opposition to the Committee has been rising not only from those who view the Committee from the standpoint of the political left, but also from many highly "respectable" sources which evidently feel that the Committee is a vestige of McCarthyism and should be abolished. That such opinion has not yet reached proportions sufficient to influence the actions of Congress is self-evident. Continued and increased activity is necessary before a break-through in the House is possible.

The fury of the Cold War has diminished somewhat in the past few years and there are signs of increasing activity on the part of those who believe in unorthodox political views and in the importance of preserving First Amendment freedoms. The Committee stands today as a major obstacle to the continuation of such growth. Increased concerted activity on all fronts is necessary if it is to be abolished.

Mr. Rabinowitz is a leading constitutional lawyer. He argued the case of *American Communications Association vs. Dowds*, and fought to a successful conclusion in the U.S. Supreme Court the case of *Abramowitz vs. Brucker*.

GUSTAVE COURBET, REALIST

ALICE DUNHAM

NOT many painters whose works survive as important contributions to art remain controversial a hundred years later. In the 1860's in Paris, Gustave Courbet, with a genius for both painting and effrontery, stood up against the combined forces of classicism and romanticism to establish the validity of his own painting and his own vision. In the 1960's his paintings, in the realist tradition, are the antithesis of the manner of painting which has come to be called in Europe the "American style"—a combination of highly simplified or non-objective forms used either in cool repose or in the agitations of abstract expressionism.

The "American style" is sponsored by many important galleries and by museums like the Whitney and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Among us, this kind of art is not only dominant; it is fashionable. The fact that more American artists than not paint with some degree of realism does not keep them from feeling the impact of the "American style," from feeling apologetic. "Yes," some say, "I'm afraid you can tell what it is I'm painting."

And so Courbet, through his presently unstylish paintings, is once again forcing a reconsideration of what makes a work of art valid. I heard this incident at the opening of his exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art: A couple near me were amazed at what they saw. One of them said, "Look at the space he creates, look at the color and texture of the light-edge of the rocks!" Then, with a glance around the gallery, the other one answered, "Yes, and do you know I believe hardly any of these paintings would pass a jury today."

The inspiration to assemble this great collection of Courbet's work

for exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Boston Art Museum came from Mr. R. Sturgis Ingersoll and Mr. Perry Rathbone. The immense task of choosing and assembling the eighty-six paintings was carried out by Mr. Henry Clifford, Curator of paintings at the Philadelphia Museum. He secured the cooperation of the French government and of some fifty museums and private collectors in Europe and the United States. The paintings are on exhibit for four months—from the middle of December to the middle of February in Philadelphia, from the middle of February to the middle of April in Boston.

It is a pity that practical consideration of the length of loan, insurance costs, and transportation difficulties limit the number of places where this exhibition can be seen. But anyone who can beg, borrow, or steal a lift in either direction should do it. As a last, desperate resort, there is always the New York, New Haven, and Hartford.

Sometimes it is hard to imagine why certain paintings were ever the cause of bitter contention. Impressionist paintings, with their placid charm and shimmering surfaces, seem incapable of causing offence, much less strife; but in the 1870's they were so different from official Salon standards that they were excluded from most of the exhibitions. The offence of these artists was in looking freshly at nature and in considering color as a mode of light. Courbet, in fact, contributed to the Impressionist vision, especially by his insistence on knowing and looking at nature directly. It is therefore easier to understand why from 1840, when Courbet was twenty-one, until 1800—the thirty years immediately preceding the flowering of Impressionism—a conflict was inevitable between Courbet with his individualist ideals and the Salon with its narrow requirements for painting.

The eighty-six paintings in this exhibition are chosen to show the range and development of Courbet's work. Only some of his subjects brought him into conflict with the officialdom of the Salon. Portraits and self-portraits, the sea, varieties of flowers provoked no automatic storms. But when Courbet painted beautiful women instead of goddesses, the classicists were offended, even though many of these women were at least first cousins of Venus. And when he painted the very recognizable hills and cliffs of Ornans, his beloved home, this defied the romantic standard that works of art should be grand, exotic, and, if possible, violent. Théophile Gautier, whose red waistcoat had once been the symbol of romantic revolt, wrote in 1855 in *Les Beaux Arts en l'Europe*, "We continue to believe that M. Courbet, under the pretext of realism, calumniates nature horribly."

In these conflicts it is revealing to observe the difference between

the rigid, unimaginative attitude of art officials in defending romanticism and the keener insight of the greatest practicing romantic of all—Delacroix. He said of Courbet's *L'Atelier*, which had just been refused by the jury of the Exposition Universelle in Paris, "They have rejected one of the most outstanding paintings of our time, but he [Courbet] is too sturdy to be discouraged by so slight a setback."

Subjects portraying ordinary events of daily life but painted with importance on a large scale were sure to draw official fire. *Return from the Fair* (1850: Catalogue Number 12), *Bonjour, Monsieur Courbet* (*The Meeting*—1854), *L'Atelier* (1855)—all these seemed scandalous. Where were the gods, that a painter was now permitted to glorify peasants and their work, or to glorify himself on a country walk or in his studio? But the most provocative painting was the *Return from the Conference* (1863), a group of happily tipsy priests, two of them on one donkey and the rest doing as well as they could on foot. This anti-clerical painting was doubly refused, by the Salon of 1863 and by the Salon des Refusés (set up by Napoleon III to quiet the clamor caused by rejections from the regular Salon). *Return from the Conference* was finally bought by someone especially devout, just so that it could be destroyed!

Courbet's subjects were only occasionally provocative. Nevertheless his style and his statements about painting were constantly opposed to the official position, which had rules for everything. Courbet had only one rule: respect for the individual vision. He studied and loved the Venetians, Velasquez, Frans Hals, Rembrandt; but he felt free to take or leave, according to his need. He studied nature directly, and from this wealth of observation he created his paintings.

The Village Maidens (Cat. No. 16) shows his three sisters in the valley known as "Le Communal" at the foot of the "Roche de L'Heures." There is an immediacy in this painting which comes from Courbet's knowing the spot well, but the charm comes from spacious composition, the fresh application of pigment, and the dramatic accents of the figures. That Courbet didn't slavishly put down on canvas whatever appeared to his eye is clear when we compare this painting with the preliminary sketch (Cat. No. 17). In the sketch a giant tree dominated the lower sky; in the painting the tree has been reduced to a bush and the figures become more important.

The question of painting what you see and only what you see could appear to make a slave of an artist. When Courbet was asked why he didn't paint angels, he replied, "Because I have never seen any." In retort he was criticizing the anemic art which depended for its sustenance

on copying what some other artist had copied. Courbet's painting was always nourished by a close study of nature in all her moods.

But "copying nature" is very different from copying a painting, where some previous artist has already made the basic decisions as to what is to be included and what left out. An artist with nature as his model *must choose* a few things from the variety which is present in such abundance that it cannot all be put down, even if the artist should want to. His ability to see and choose makes the difference between a subtle, poetic vision like Courbet's and the routine painter who can't see beyond the obvious.

Courbet's color is pre-Impressionist, so that the general tonality in the exhibition seems dark by comparison with the brilliant color that flows from the Impressionists to Matisse and other twentieth-century artists. This does not mean that Courbet cannot do incredible things with color—in the freshness of a flower petal, the crest of a breaking wave, the edge even of a rocky cliff. Sometimes he uses a brush; sometimes for accent he will take a palette knife and pile on the pigment—as, for example, in the *Head of a Pig* (1869: Cat. No. 74). The one effect of his color which seems heavy is his use of green, a dangerous color for any artist.

Courbet was modest in his approach to painting. He never tried to make others paint like himself. He held, rather, that the moment a person says, "*This way is the only way to paint,*" the person is wrong. And when an official says this and has the power to enforce it by excluding paintings from exhibition, then art itself is impoverished. This modesty was apparent when, in 1862, Courbet was asked to start a school. "I cannot presume to open a school," he said. "I can only explain to the artists who will be my collaborators, not my pupils, the methods by which, in my opinion, one may become a painter—methods by which I myself have tried to become one since I began—leaving to each one complete control of his individuality, full liberty of self-expression in the application of this method."

In his studio which was not a school Courbet introduced animal models—an ox and a horse, which were not entirely aware of the niceties of studio life. The landlord saw to it that the school was of short duration, but the educational principles of training artists to see for themselves came to have some influence.

By 1870 Courbet had beaten down the critics. His paintings were unanimously voted into the Salon of that year, and like Daumier he had refused, on democratic grounds, the Legion d'Honneur. At fifty-one, he had waged and won his thirty years' war. Without realizing it, he was

about to enter a seven years' war in which he would lose his life but not his principles.

What kind of man was this painter-fighter? Though he lived in Paris, Ornans was his birthplace and his emotional home. He loved the fields, the hills sloping away toward Switzerland, the valleys with their rugged cliffs. All these can be seen in many of the paintings in this exhibition. He had, too, the independence which comes from being part of a family well-to-do if not wealthy. His parents were respected members of the little community, and his grandfather Oudot, in whose house Courbet was born, was an outspoken anticlerical radical from the year 1793. Years later, Courbet wrote, "My grandfather had invented a maxim which he repeated to me again and again: 'Shout loudly and walk straight ahead!' My father always followed this advice, and I have done likewise."

Courbet's first great struggle was to win the right to try to be a painter. All through his schooling at religious institutions he used a combination of active and passive resistance against subjects odious to himself but required for admission to the bar—the career his father desired for him. The boy did well only in painting and in original literary composition, and he was the despair of his family. The hardest people to contend with are those one loves. In the end, however, Courbet managed to show devotion to his family as well as determination to be a painter, and in the end Courbet's father relented.

Courbet, now twenty-one, left for Paris, secure in the friendship of his old friend Max Buchon, whose humanitarian principles agreed with his own. He left, also, with a little instruction in painting which he had acquired on the side, at Besancon. But ever afterward he was self-taught.

Within a year he had painted *Lot and His Daughters* (Cat. No. 1). Within two years he had painted a self-portrait with his black dog, and this was accepted at the Salon of 1844. Within the next few years Corot, Daumier, and Proudhon had become his friends. He acquired patrons, and all his works, whether accepted by the Salon or not, were painted with direct honesty.

Twice, in 1865 and 1867, Courbet set up pavilions to exhibit his paintings independently, a new, daring and expensive thing for an artist to attempt. Earlier, when Louis Napoleon wanted to buy his self-portrait *The Man with a Pipe* (Cat. No. 9) for 2,000 francs, Courbet declined and asked for double the amount. It was to be expected then, that in 1870 Courbet felt no regret for the demise of the Second Empire which occurred after the Prussians defeated the French at Sedan.

Under the Government of National Defense which followed, Cour

et as President of the Art Commission worked to protect art treasures from the dangers of fire, theft, or destruction, since Paris was still under siege. On April 16, 1871, he was elected to the governing body of the Commune as a delegate from the sixth *arrondissement* of Paris.

Four days before his election, the delegates had ordered the pulling down of the Vendôme column as a symbol of Napoleonic oppression. The enactment of this "crime," for which Courbet was in no way responsible, provided the pretext for his political persecution after the Commune had been drowned in blood. Reactionaries, back in power, not only killed 6,000 men, women and children in street fighting, but slaughtered 25,000 to 30,000 additional victims in reprisal. Courbet, who had manifested his support for the people of low estate whom he had honored in his painting, was spared execution; but he was held in jail in conditions of filth and vermin for three months, then tried, convicted, and sentenced to a term of six months. His health suffered, but, even so, securing some paints, he had the heart to do some work (Cat. Nos. 7, 78, 79, 80, 81). In 1872 Courbet sent two paintings to the Salon, which were rejected on political grounds, as were Daumier's, without being looked at. Puvis de Chavannes, a member of the jury, resigned over this injustice, whereupon his paintings were rejected too.

Courbet might still have recovered his health if he had been relieved of worry. He wrote a droll letter from Ornans that he was worn out carrying water to extinguish flames in a house belonging to a royalist—and to think that I have been called an incendiary makes it all the more disgusting." But Thiers' government fell, and an even more reactionary one followed. It was decreed that the entire cost of the reconstruction of the Vendôme column should be borne by Courbet personally! This vindictive act, for which there was no precedent, was a crushing blow. In November, 1877, Courbet, four years in exile, received news that his paintings had been seized and sold at public auction. In late December he was dead.

This is the man who wrote to his sister Julie, while his trial was in progress: "Moreover, I am proud to have been a member of the Commune in spite of the accusations against it, because that type of government, resembling in principle the Swiss system, is the ideal government: it eliminates ignorance, and renders war and privilege impossible."

Everyone always knew what Courbet was painting and what he was saying. No wonder he was hated—and loved.

NOTE: The Catalogue of the Courbet Exhibition is invaluable, compiled with meticulous skill. Each one of the eighty-six paintings has its

photograph, notes, history, exhibition information, and bibliography. *Gustave Courbet*, by Gerstle Mack (Alfred Knopf, 1951), is also written with great care. The excellent reference notes give the exact source of every quotation, often from unpublished documents in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris. The few direct quotations I have used here have come from these two publications.

REALISM

The appellation of realist has been imposed upon me just as the appellation of romanticists was imposed upon the men of 1830. At no time have labels given a correct idea of things; if they did so, the works would be superfluous.

Without discussion of the applicability, more or less justified, of a designation which nobody, it is to be hoped, is required to understand very well, I shall confine myself to a few words of explanation to dispel misunderstandings.

Unhampered by any systematized approach or preconceptions. I have studied the art of the ancients and the art of the moderns. I have no more desire to imitate the one than to copy the other; nor was I any more anxious to attain the empty objective of art for art's sake. No! I simply wanted to extract from the entire body of tradition the rational and independent concepts appropriate to my own personality.

To know in order to create, that was my idea. To be able to represent the customs, the ideas, the appearance of my own era according to my own evaluation; to be not only a painter but a man as well; in short to create living art; that is my aim.

—GUSTAVE COURBET, 1855

RiGhT FaCe

Vitamin Leaflets?

The head of a Congressional survey team reported that the Soviet bloc was doing "a very fabulous propaganda job" in Southeast Asia and the Middle East....

The theme of the propaganda, he said, was that the Communist system promised the best opportunity for providing the necessities of life for inhabitants of the under-developed countries....

Mr. Boggs called for more effective counter-propaganda by the United States Information Agency.—The *New York Times*.

Down with Dogma

The German Social Democratic party met in extraordinary congress to bury its Marxist past formally.

Before 340 party leaders lay a new manifesto committing the party to a political philosophy based on private property and parliamentary democracy....

In his keynote address Erich Ollenhauer, the party chairman, took note of some rank-and-file unrest over the trend of the party, which will henceforth abjure the class struggle and hold out a friendly hand to organized religion.

The Communist Manifesto will remain "the outstanding historical document of the international Socialist workers' movement," Herr Ollenhauer said. But a living and forward-looking party has to keep in step with social and intellectual developments of the times, he warned. . . .

"The demand that the political program of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels be made the basis of a Social Democratic program in the year 1959 is so un-Marxist as to be unthinkable," Herr Ollenhauer continued. "If we were to follow this line of thought, we would be reduced to a specter."—The *New York Times*.

Seems Defeatist

A lieutenant in the Army's quartermaster depot in Philadelphia won a military award for finding the right-size blanket to cover the Nationalist Chinese soldier.

Lieut. Luther Beaver, 25 years old, was a textile engineering officer with the United States military assistance advisory group on Taiwan.

He and other officers noted that the Chinese forces had been using more raw cotton than necessary and that they had been covering themselves with blankets of all sizes . . .

The lieutenant explained that the Chinese soldier had previously gotten his blankets wherever he could, from this country, native suppliers in Japan. It was up to somebody to design a smaller blanket suitable for every Chinese soldier, he said—*AP* dispatch.

Foresighted

Taipei, Taiwan.—President Chiang Kai-shek has asked the people of Nationalist China to refrain from celebrating his birthday—*AP* dispatch.

His Brother's Keeper

Rabat, Morocco—The Ministry of Health asserted that at least 9,400 cases of partial paralysis of arms and legs had been caused by a fraudulent dilution of cooking oil with a mineral oil used to rinse aviation engines.

The Ministry said the actual number affected was "probably more than 10,000," since many possible victims live in isolated rural areas. The situation has been officially proclaimed a national disaster.

The mineral oil was purchased from surplus stores of the United States Air Force base at Nouasseur, near Casablanca. Twenty-seven merchants have been arrested and charged with mixing the mineral oil with olive or peanut oil and then selling it for cooking purposes. . . .

No action was planned against the United States Air Force, which had put the oil on the market early this year at a surplus sale. It was sold as machine oil.

"Its subsequent use is not our responsibility," an Air Force spokesman said—*AP* dispatch.

books in review

One of the Roughs

WALT WHITMAN'S LEAVES OF GRASS: The First (1855) Edition; edited, with an Introduction, by Malcolm Cowley. Viking Press. \$5.00.

THE appearance of this book is big news. The first edition of *Leaves of Grass*, which Malcolm Cowley calls "the buried masterpiece of American writing," is a version virtually unread in our time. Its republication by Viking makes again available to the general reader the original form and phrasing of the incomparable *Song of Myself* and eleven lesser poems—the group with which Whitman launched his lifework—as well as the trail-blazing 1855 Preface.

I wish I could say that Cowley's Introduction measured up to its task of critical interpretation.

Of attempts to characterize Whitman as a kind of transplanted oriental mystic there is no end, and Cowley unfortunately follows this trend when he writes:

The system of doctrine suggested by

the poem (*Song of Myself*) is more Eastern than Western; it includes notions like metempsychosis and karma, and it might almost be one of those *Philosophies of India* that Zimmer expounds at length.

It is true that Whitman expressed his vision of democracy with prophetic fervor. He wrote to inspire and convince, not by argument but by incantation. More than any other modern poet he has preserved in his work the primitive magico-ritual character of poetry. Consider the following:

1. "Mixed tussled hay of head and beard and brawn it shall be you,
Trickling sap of maple, fibre of manly wheat, it shall be you,
Sun so generous it shall be you,
Vapors lighting and shading my face it shall be you,
You sweaty brooks and dews it shall be you . . ." etc.
2. "With your moccasins of dark cloud come to us,
With your leggings of dark cloud come to us,
With your shirt of dark cloud come to us,
With your headdress of dark cloud come to us . . ." etc.

The first is from *Song of Myself*, the second from a Navajo ritual chant. There is a certain resemblance in form and purpose. But shall we therefore call Whitman's work more Amerindian than European?

Cowley bases his theory of mysticism on the fact that Whitman's sudden gush of poetry in his middle thirties was the result of

a mystical experience in the proper sense of the term . . . essentially the same as the illuminations or ecstasies of earlier bards and prophets. Such ecstasies consist in a rapt feeling of union or identity with God (or the Soul, or Mankind, or the Cosmos), a sense of ineffable joy leading to the conviction that the seer has been released from the limitations of space and time and has been granted a direct vision of truths impossible to express.

The ecstasy or inspiration described by Cowley is by no means rare in the experience of men of genius; while it lasts, consciousness, perception, sympathy and creative power suddenly expand far beyond the subject's imaginable capacity, so that he writes or paints or preaches with an authority, freedom and eloquence never approached in the normal state. Like Goethe, he feels possessed by a daemon. Such experiences, although not yet well understood, are not necessarily mystical or occult. They may occur even on the somatic level, as when—to choose a crude example—an average baseball player, like a flaring nova, starts hitting at a .500 clip, keeps it up for a few weeks, then lapses back to his normal .250 pace.

In the case of Whitman, who deified the common ("the costless average, divine, original concrete"), the ecstasy illumined his oneness with God only

in so far as everything and everyman was "God" to him. It revealed rather his relationship to himself and to the democratic common man, who "at last only is important."

Cowley himself seems not firmly convinced of the validity of his theory. He admits that "Whitman, when he was writing the poems of the first edition, seems to have known little or nothing about Indian philosophy." Concepts like metempsychosis "were vaguely in the air of the time, and Whitman may have breathed them in from the Transcendentalists." Certainly he differed with the traditional mystics in many important respects. Unlike them, he "was never a thoroughgoing idealist" ("materialism first and last imbuing"); he did not regard the sensory world as illusory ("I accept Reality and dare not question it"); he sought fulfilment not in denying or mortifying the body but on the contrary in accepting it joyfully as inseparable from the soul (self, consciousness, identity); he steadfastly believed in science and material progress, loved life and inspired that love in others.

Whereas the mystic's espousal of asceticism diminishes his humanity in the hope of rising free of material concerns, Whitman's doctrine urges men to enlarge their humanity by plunging into and identifying with all aspects of life, with all that this implies of perfect equality ("For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you"), sympathy, love, and the democratic brotherhood of man.

To this reviewer it seems clear that what Whitman discovered in his ecstatic experience was the unity of nature, including his own, in all its contrariety. *Song of Myself* sets forth in a thousand variations, and always in

concrete terms, the principle of the dialectical unity of opposites composing emergent reality: the interpenetration of the individual and the mass, the separate and the aggregate, self and not-self, the master (leader) and the rank and file—precisely those contradictions that must be resolved if democracy is to come to full fruition and bring forth a superior humanity.

How Cowley can ignore Whitman's dialectics is hard to understand. Puzzling too is his contention that *Song of Myself* "is hardly at all concerned with American nationalism, political democracy, contemporary progress, or other social themes that are commonly associated with Whitman's work."

Granted that *Song of Myself* is rather an overture to the main grand creation of *Leaves of Grass*; still it announces the theme with unmistakable boldness:

I speak the password primeval . . .
I give the sign of democracy;
By God, I will accept nothing which
all cannot have their counterpart
of on the same terms.

In his poems Whitman expressed himself in figurative language, indirectly and not always clearly; but in his prose he was explicit. There was nothing occult about the contradictions he observed. "The master (democratic leader), he wrote in *Democratic Vistas*, sees greatness and health in being part of the mass; nothing will do as well as common ground." And in the same essay he specifically disclaimed any superhuman sanction for his democracy:

. . . the last, best dependence is to be upon humanity itself, and its own inherent, normal, full-grown qualities, without any superstitious support whatever. The idea of perfect individualism

it is, indeed, that deepest tinge and gives character to the idea of the aggregate.

The key to *Song of Myself*—to all of *Leaves of Grass*, in fact—is to be found in the deceptively whimsical lines of the coda:

Do I contradict myself?
Very well then . . . I contradict myself;
I am large . . . I contain multitudes.

Cowley supposes that Whitman was "defiant" about his contradictoriness, and that later "it worried him." If so, why did he not cut or revise the lines in a later edition, since he revised so much else?

The less said the better of Cowley's "feeling" that Whitman with his sloppy clothes, his beard and untrimmed hair, "was a predecessor of the beatniks" who "stayed out of the rat race" and "avoided the squares." It seems a bid for attention uncalled for in a critic of Cowley's sagacity.

The most rewarding pages of his Introduction are those in which he analyzes the narrative structure of *Song of Myself* (which has perplexed many a Whitman devotee) and critically compares the 1855 version with later editions.

For convenience he divides the poem into nine sequences tracing the course of the poet's ecstatic revelation. These might be briefly summarized (eliminating a few mystical terms) as follows:

1. Introduction of the composite democratic hero in a passive, receptive mood.
2. The beginning of the ecstasy: perception of the unity of the self with all mankind (brotherhood), and recognition of the

limitlessness of even the most humble aspects of nature.

3. Development of the main image of the poem: the grass, the miraculous in the common, a symbol of democracy.
4. Discovery of the universal in his individual self.
5. Ecstasy through the senses, chiefly touch and hearing.
6. The hero's power of identification with others and with all nature. Omnipresence.
7. His sense of omnipotence and prophetic power.
8. The climax: exhortation to all men to accompany him on his journey to fulfilment and happiness.
9. After ecstasy, exhaustion, but with new wisdom and peace. His farewell:

"I bequeath myself to the dirt
to grow from the grass I
love,

If you want me again look for
me under your bootsoles."

Cowley is right in his estimate of the 1855 version of *Song of Myself* as being superior to the revised editions. In making some of his changes Whitman appears to have forgotten his original intentions, at least in part.

Leaves of Grass was planned to be (in Whitman's words) "the song of a great composite *democratic individual*." This hero was introduced in the first edition as "Walt Whitman, an American, one of the roughs, a kosmos." Says Cowley: "That is exactly how he should be presented, since he is speaking for all Americans and indeed for all humanity." In later versions, however, he appears as "Walt Whitman, a kosmos, of Manhattan the son." Thus localized, Cowley points out, he no longer speaks for all America or for the "roughs" who form the mass base of democracy. Accordingly the scope of the poem suffers.

Occasionally Cowley's objections to

Walt's revisions seem like hair-splitting. But he is on sound ground in his discussion of the changes in sequence 6 (the power of identification) in which Whitman identifies with participants in various historical events including the Alamo and the sea-fight between the *Serapis* and the *Bonhomme Richard*. In the first edition the poet-hero is a *participant* in these actions; he "is one of the murdered Texans—perhaps the 'youth not seventeen years old'—and he *is* one of the sailors on the *Bonhomme Richard*." Thus the poet can say, thanks to his power of identification: "I am the man . . . I suffered . . . I was there."

In 1876, however, Whitman inserted the line in the Alamo passage, "Now I tell what I knew in Texas in my early youth" (apparently forgetting that he is now a son of Manhattan), and another line introducing the sea-fight: "List to the yarn as my grandmother's father the sailor told it to me." In this version, therefore, he is no longer a participant but has only heard the stories at second hand; so that the theme of the sequence, his power of empathy or identification, is momentarily lost.

The other poems of the first edition include such impressive pieces as *I Sing the Body Electric*, *The Sleepers*, *Exile*, *Rope*, and *A Boston Ballad*. But these are dwarfed by *Song of Myself*, which by itself comprises more than half the book.

Indeed, the immense value of this Viking volume lies in having restored that poem to us in its original form and saltiness of language—one of the proudest products of our literature. All Americans, but especially progressive ones, should be thankful.

PHILIP STEVENSON

The Assassins

THE WEB OF CONSPIRACY, by Theodore Roscoe. Prentice-Hall. \$10.00.

THIS is in some respects an important book on the conspiracy to assassinate Abraham Lincoln. Throughout, it is well written. That half of the book which exposes the political and personal villainy of John Wilkes Booth is historically valuable; the other half, which attempts to involve the Radical Republicans in the plot, is historically dangerous.

With painstaking research, Mr. Roscoe proves that John Wilkes Booth was no victim of a sudden, passionate impulse stemming from an unhinged mind. The assassination plan was long in maturing. Booth was beyond question a Confederate spy of many years' standing, an agent of the Confederate underground, which operated from Canada under the direction of Richmond. His astonishing escape after the murder was made possible by innumerable members of that underground, working in a chain from Washington to Garrett's farm in Virginia. Even in his private life Booth was far from the man that neo-Confederate myth has painted him. He was by his own written statement a lover of the institution of slavery; on stage he was an inferior actor; in the saloon a frequent and heavy drinker; in the bedroom the patron saint of prostitutes in a dozen cities, and an almost compulsive seducer of women.

Mr. Roscoe's evidence on these points is the more important today, when strange events surround the approaching centenary of the Civil War.

President Eisenhower, while making strenuous efforts to shunt aside the civil rights bill, signs an act directing that a monument be raised to the memory of Dr. Samuel Mudd, convicted as Booth's accomplice. In the same month, the President orders the flag lowered to half mast in honor of the last soldier of the Confederacy. It is well, then, for our generation to be reminded of some truths. The Lincoln assassination was no maniacal aberration from the pattern of Confederate conduct; the shot fired at Ford's theater was the almost certain sequel to the shot fired on Fort Sumter. By underlining these facts, Mr. Roscoe's book does us a service.

Unfortunately, this is not the end of Mr. Roscoe's story. It is his belief that the assassination conspiracy was aided, and its true history covered up, by men in high places in the North; that the Radical Republicans wanted Lincoln out of the way and therefore failed to prevent his murder.

This book is not the first to lay a portion of the blame for Lincoln's death on the Radical Republican group. In 1937, Otto Eisenschiml published a work which implicated Lincoln's Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, as the arch conspirator. Mr. Roscoe spreads the charge of guilt, implicating not only Stanton, but, by name, Congressman Thaddeus Stevens, General Benjamin Butler, and Wendell Phillips. The list makes Roscoe's bias clear. Stanton was the most consistent member of Lincoln's cabinet, determined that Union victory in the field be crowned by the war amendments designed to make the Negro truly free and equal. Stevens' services to the Negro people and to civil liberties remain unmatched in the House of Representatives to this day.

Butler was the first Union general to free fugitive slaves, and the first to force the Confederacy to recognize the military status of Negro troops. Phillips was one of the most effective Abolition orators.

Mr. Roscoe proceeds by means of rumors and echoes of rumors; by insinuations based on unproved hypotheses; by sly queries, innuendoes, speculations; by half-formulated inferences; by wisps of backstairs political gossip. He inquires so persistently that the reiterated question is made to take the place of the indictment which he cannot bring. "Was it deliberate design? Accidental oversight? Downright bungling? A wise policeman never raids his own house?" Why, where, who, how many, how much, how often, and why and why and why, until logical thought is blocked by the endless unanswered query.

The author complains that the government wasted time by tracking down some false leads—inevitable in virtually any detective operation—and then complains again because it failed to make investigations which, in my opinion, would have proved equally fruitless. He inquires solemnly what became of Booth's extra suit of underwear, left behind in his room at the National Hotel. (You probably don't believe me, so see page 185 of Roscoe's book.) Now it may be that the immediate seizure of Booth's spare woolies would have led to great revelations—anything is possible—but I for one doubt it.

With it all, Mr. Roscoe proves nothing against the Radical Republicans. He proves nothing because he cannot. In one sentence, he admits that he has no proof; that this portion of his book can offer only a "hypothesis."

Why, then, this wearisome traversing of roads that admittedly lead nowhere? Yet Mr. Roscoe has a purpose: to blacken the record of the left-wing Republican leaders who pressed unceasingly for the abolition of slavery, and who helped make possible the "Black Parliaments," one of the brightest pages in our history.

The speculations of Eisenschiml in 1937 and of Roscoe today would be less dangerous were the issues of the Civil War settled. For proof that they are still unresolved, ask the friends of Mack Charles Parker; ask the mother of Emmett Till. The statement of John Greenleaf Whittier comes to mind: "Wherever God's children are despised, insulted, and abused on account of their color, there is the real assassin of the President still at large."

ELIZABETH LAWSON

Road, But No Guide

ROAD TO REVOLUTION: A CENTURY OF RUSSIAN RADICALISM, by Avrahm Yarmolinsky. Macmillan. \$5.95.

THE trouble with Mr. Yarmolinsky's "Road" is that one cannot tell from his description why it should have led to revolution at all; nor would one know how the workers and peasants of Russia overthrew both czar and capitalism in 1917, clearing the way to world leadership today.

The *International Review of Social History* describes this book as a "magnificent example of historiography," failing to observe how much prejudice has distorted its narrative. Mr. Yarmolinsky's anti-Soviet bent is so strong that, even when he discusses events and figures a hundred years or more

ago, he must slip in a smack or two at the new society. In order to comment adversely on the USSR today, he makes out Nicholas I to be by contrast a benevolent despot who permitted culture to flourish in freedom in his time. He does not tell his readers that Nicholas, known as "the knout" by his subjects, decreed that people could not wear beards or smoke in the streets.

One would gather from Mr. Yarmolinsky's long recital of failures, infiltration by informers, betrayals and retreats that a revolution of the people to attain socialism was inconceivable. Perhaps that impression is what he intends to leave with the reader. But how, then, does he explain the success of the one trend he hates among all the revolutionary movements, namely Marxism?

What is the vital ingredient missing from his account? It is the Russian people, whose presence was felt in one form or another in the revolutionary activity of all the groups that he describes. For example, here is his evaluation of the Decembrists, whose heroic though abortive uprising on December 14, 1825, gave that movement its name:

They were, by and large, perceptive patriotic, public-spirited young men, but impulsive and unstable, with an enthusiasm for freedom and justice, half genuine feeling, half rhetoric. Pushed by the hands of chance, they fought, however ineptly or ineffectually, the opening skirmish in Russia's battle for democracy. . . .

But this is only a partial characterization of the declassed intellectuals and nobles who were the articulate leaders of the Decembrists. It hardly explains why three thousand ordinary soldiers, representatives of the peasantry, marched into Senate Square in St. Pet-

ersburg on that historic day in an effort to keep Nicholas I from being crowned Czar. Nor does it explain why hundreds of workers from the factory suburbs hurried to the square to hurl bricks at the government troops lined up against the insurrectionists.

These workers were the new force beginning to churn up Russian society. In the 18th century, the first signs of capitalism appeared on the Russian scene with the emergence of state factories of military goods for the government. These were supplemented later in the century by factories owned by the nobles. The workers in these establishments were serfs in legal bondage to their workshops. Later came factories employing free labor, developing out of home industry and from the activity of merchant capital. Many of these "free" laborers were peasant serfs forced into the factories by their landlords, to whom they had to give part of their wages.

By 1825, the year of the Decembrist uprising, there were 210,000 of these industrial workers, 95,000 of them serfs bound to their factories and 115,000 free laborers. It was this change in class relationships, as well as the impact of capitalism on the peasants and new workers, that accounts for the difference between the earlier revolts and those of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Frederick Engels recognized this transformation when, writing of Russia in his pamphlet, *Savoy, Nice and the Rhine*, he observed:

The industrial and agricultural development which the government and the aristocracy have promoted in every possible way has thriven to such a degree that it can no longer be reconciled with the existing social conditions. Their abolition is a necessity on the one hand and an impossibility—unless they are changed by force—on the other.

His refusal to understand this fact—confirmed by history—leads Yarmolinsky to distort the role of all the actors and leaders of Russian radicalism in the 19th century. He regards the socialism of the great literary and social critic, Belinsky, as a late aberration springing from his libertarian humanism. But Belinsky's trial-and-error journey to socialism was quite different from Yarmolinsky's description. Belinsky wrote:

I now have a new extreme. This is the idea of socialism, which has become for me the idea of ideas, the being of being, the question of questions, the alpha and omega of faith and knowledge. All from it, all for it, all in it.

His socialism was, however, not a utopian one. He understood the hard realities on which it was based, declaring, "I know that industry is a source of great evils. But I also know that it is a source of great benefit for society. Properly speaking, it is but the last evil of the domination of capital, its tyranny over labor."

Since the movement of the people is missing from Yarmolinsky's recital, he again cannot see beneath the surface of such a crucial event as the freeing of the serfs in 1861. It appears to him as no more than a move in the conflict between the czar and the nobles, and between the intellectuals and the landlords, a step on behalf of the down-trodden serfs.

How differently Karl Marx put it in a letter to Engels dated Jan. 11, 1860:

In my opinion, the biggest things that are happening in the world today are on the one hand the movement of the slaves in America, started by the death of John Brown, and, on the other, the movement of the serfs in Russia.

Yarmolinsky's failure to cast light on Russia's road to revolution stems from his inability to analyze the central factor involved: the development of capitalism within the body of feudalism and autocracy, and the effect of that development on all classes of Russian society. He cannot even explain why the intellectuals he portrays turned to insurrection and terrorism, why they vacillated, why many of them turned tail, nor why some learned what the journey on the road really entailed.

DANIEL MASON

Books Received

BIRD IN THE BUSH: OBVIOUS ES-
SAYS, by Kenneth Rexroth. New
Directions. \$3.75.

OBVIOUS, hell. Some of you will call the birds nightingales. Others will swear they are jays and crows. Where more solemn jokers want their opinions taken for permanent wisdom, Mr. Rexroth is eager to proclaim his prejudices pro and con everything from psychological testing to Martin Buber's Hasidism. Outrageous he is, like a cannonball express taking water on the fly; if you don't like getting splashed, you needn't ride behind his tender. But if you can bear judgments that carry with them the seeds of their own contradictions, the silly and the sensible, the sharp and the wild, the arbitrary and the unerring, all in one human package, then you will have a lively ride on Mr. Rexroth's roller coaster. He doesn't fear to dash past the seraphim of contemporary criticism. In politics, he may make you wince; but he is

still closer to being an irritating friend than a former one.

GOD'S FRONTIER, by Jose Luis Martin Descalzo, S. J. Alfred A. Knopf. \$3.95.

THIS is the story of Renato, a young railroad switchman who finds himself working miracles in spite of himself. A fallen cross rises; a dead canary comes back to life; a woman killed in an accident is also resurrected—all these things are done through Renato by God; Renato himself is baffled and afraid: he has no control over his miracles.

The agonized peasants of his village fear death by starvation in the coming season if rain does not come soon; a drought has lasted for months with no sign of relief in time for the harvest. They beg Renato to perform a miracle and bring rain; he tries, but no rain comes: there apparently is too much sin in the village.

Then some bright people decide to make money out of the miracles already performed: they advertise in the nation's press; cynical publishers and politicians help spread the word, and the

little village becomes a second Lourdes. The crippled and curious pour in, so does money. Everyone in the village begins fattening on the profits from Renato's miracles. When he realizes what has happened, he destroys the false shrine, and is murdered by angry villagers. After his death they realize he was Jesus, returned to earth again to die for them; they repent and rain comes.

That this heavy-footed book should have won the highly considered Eugenio Nadal literary prize reflects the condition of life and literature in Franco Spain. Not that Father Descalzo cannot write well; his talent appears sporadically: in a vivid description of the Spanish countryside, in a central character torn by conflict, in some passages of realistic dialogue, compassion and suspense. But the book is bogged down by its burden—a sermon against sin, Father Descalzo blames the agonies of Spain on lack of faith; he inveighs against rich and poor alike for their envy, greed, lust, hypocrisy, cynicism, corruption, etc.

Anyone seeking signs of literary life in Spain had better look elsewhere than to *God's Frontier*.

Letters

Dear Editors and Readers of *Mainstream*:

The first issue of *Studies on the Left* is now available. It is a new radical socialist scholarly journal emanating from the universities and colleges of the United States and published at Madison, Wisconsin, three times each academic year (fall, winter, spring). The journal publishes articles and reviews in the social sciences, philosophy, literature, the arts, and the history and philosophy of science.

Articles published in *Studies* subject conventional scholarship to fresh inquiry, present new research inspired by the radical questioning of all aspects of social life and thought, and offer contributions to a better theoretical understanding of the past and present social development.

The first issue (fall, 1959) includes such articles as:

Hans H. Gerth and Saul Landau on History and Sociology.

Paul Breslow on Cozzens, Salinger, and Kerouac.

David Eakins on Objectivity and Commitment.

Lloyd Gardner on New Deal Foreign Policy, 1937-1941.

The journal is published by graduate students and young instructors. It is affiliated with no particular group or viewpoint, and the editors welcome all radical scholarship, that is, which does not fear to pursue all relevant questions and which digs to the root of things.

The success of the journal depends upon the robust participation of radical and left inclined scholars. Unfortunately it also depends upon sufficient financial support. All donations (small, moderate, large) will be deeply appreciated and well applied (a donation of \$5 or more entitles the donor to a one year subscription).

All correspondence, manuscripts, subscriptions, and donations should be addressed to:

Studies on the Left, P. O. Box 2121, Madison 5, Wisconsin.

Subscription costs \$2.50 for three issues; single copy costs 85c.

Our best wishes to the editors and readers of *Mainstream* for the new year and new decade ahead.

Fraternally,
The Editors of *Studies on the Left*

Editor, *Mainstream*:

Quasimodo's poem spoke of the black scream of the mother as she ran to her son crucified on the telegraph pole.

And I instantly thought—Of what consists his immortality?

I couldn't tell whether the thought was prompted alone by the imagery.

Or whether it had come from my son's question days earlier—

"How can you just become nothing when you die?"

I had said many things, many times—the scientific—I live on in you.

(But you are better); And you will live on in your children.

And—if you will devote your life to something that will benefit man you will achieve true immortality.

But that time, having been tortured with black thoughts thru a decade of bomb rattling,

Wondering if he (personally) (for you know how often a mother thinks personally, and not always of all peoples' future)

Would survive to live in a socialist tomorrow . . .

I had said, "Even now at twelve, you've achieved a measure of immortality.

Your unusual gentleness with younger children;

Your fair mindedness;

Your studiousness;

The things you've felt brave enough to say in class about things you believe in.

These have had their impact on your friends. Someone will benefit; someone will be better for having known you.

But so sharp and unbidden was my response to the black scream of the mother as she ran to her son crucified on the telegraph pole

That inside, in twisted knots, I was saying frantically, Hurry, hurry! grow up—have children—you've got to make it.

EVELYN ALLOY

Editor, *Mainstream*:

I very much regret that in my article on Hemingway in the January *Mainstream* I inadvertently attributed the quotation with which I took issue to the San Francisco Review, as though it were an editorial statement on the part of the magazine. I should, of course, have made it clear that this was simply a remark made in the course of a specific article by one contributor.

ANNETTE T. RUBINSTEIN

Just Published!

MANSART BUILDS A SCHOOL

By W. E. B. DU BOIS

It is a major publishing event that Book Two of W. E. B. Du Bois' great trilogy, **THE BLACK FLAME**, has been issued under the title, **MANSART BUILDS A SCHOOL**. Following the publication in 1957 of the first volume, **THE ORDEAL OF MANSART**, the new volume depicts on a vast canvas the sweep and drive of the heroic, stubborn, many-sided struggle of the Negro people for equality during the years between 1912 and 1932.

Across the stage of this massive and brilliant historical novel, a literary form deliberately chosen by Dr. Du Bois because it enables him to penetrate deep into the motivations of his real, flesh-and-blood characters, move such distinguished figures and personalities as Booker T. Washington, Tom Watson, Oswald Garrison Villard, Florence Kelley, Joel Spingarn, John Haynes Holmes, George Washington Carver, Mary Ovington, Stephen Wise, Paul Robeson. Maintaining the continuity of the novel's theme and action through his main protagonists, Manuel Mansart (born at the moment his father, Tom Mansart, was lynched by a mob of racists) and his three sons and daughter, and the key Baldwin, Scroggs and Pierce families, the author brings his story up to the disastrous 1929 stock market crash and the Great Depression that brought Franklin D. Roosevelt into the Presidency of the United States, and with him such men as Harry Hopkins, Harold Ickes and many others.

It is a gripping and deeply meaningful work of literary art that will endure.

Mainstream Publishers, \$4.00

New Century Publishers, 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y.