JUNE, 1963
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Mainstream

FICTION
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O'NEILL'S "LONG DAY'S JOURNEY
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LITTLE MAGAZINES

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POETRY
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REVIEW of "FEMININE MYSTIQUE"

ANATOMY OF A MINE DISASTER

Vol. 16, No. 6

Mainstream

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Among Our Contributors

Phillip Bonosky is the author of two novels set in the mining areas of Pennsylvania. His most recent book, *Dragon Pink on Old White* (Marzani & Munsell), deals with the life and culture of the New China.

Carl Larsen lives in New York and writes poetry and fiction. He is an editor of little magazines and was included in our little magazine symposium.

In Future Issues

The August issue is shaping up as a collector's item, devoted largely to the life and influence of the legendary Woody Guthrie. Besides recollections of the great folk song artist by those who knew him, there will be poems and writings, hitherto uncollected and forgotten, by Guthrie himself.

A large part of a future issue will also be devoted to young Negro poets, many of them associated with *Umbra,* a new poetry magazine.

in the mainstream

Taking a Stand in Dixie

What is new about the barbarism in Birmingham Alabama, is that the whole world is witness to it, and reacts with horror. But even more to the point is that today Africa, whose sons, torn from her brutally centuries ago, and brought as chattel slaves to "free America," is almost free herself. And such is the poetic justice of history that it is no exaggeration to say that the American Negro will win freedom, in addition to his own heroic efforts, with the help and the moral comfort of Africa. For slave-holding America stands judged by free Africa. And today it is important to the survival of American power what Africa thinks of it. So much has the world changed in the last few decades!

Brutality in Birmingham, Oxford, Mississippi, Georgia, Tennessee is not new. It has been going on for many years. The world's oppressed never had the power to do much about it (always with the memorable historic exception of the struggle that the International Workingmen's Association, under the leadership of Karl Marx, waged against the intercession of Britain on the side of the South during the Civil War.) Before anything realistic could be done about winning freedom and equality in the American South, it was necessary, first, for the "wretched of the earth" to rise and knock off their chains, most stupendously in Russia in 1917. This began the heroic epic of the struggle for full freedom of the world's insulted and injured, oppressed and exploited, the end of which is not yet in sight.

No struggle today takes place in isolation. That great power which impels the Negroes of the United States to "conquer or die" is the same power which brought the Cubans to freedom, which inspires the Vietnamese in their heroic struggle for freedom against the Diem clique and his American "advisers," propels irresistably forward the struggle in

Kenya, in South Africa in all of Latin America. Their victory is our victory. The victory of the American Negroes is simultaneously the victory of the Vietnamese, the Latin Americans, the Africans.

Everything therefore which threatens to abort full victory, distort it, or direct it into false channels must be resisted with all our might. American power, forced to make certain concessions, would prefer to keep the struggle within bounds, stop it short of full victory, surrender the shadow and withhold the substance. It has tremendous resources, maneuvering margin, and great power.

But it is losing. The dream that progressive mankind believed in for centuries — that America would become, in every sense of the phrase, "the land of the free," may become reality sooner than many of us know. The struggle for Negro freedom and equality is a major step in that direction.

Hungary — Seven Years After

According to Richard Nixon in 1956, the Hungarian "revolt" marked the "end of Communism in Europe." Dictator Franco also added his public views on the rosy future of his type of tyranny and counter-revolution. At the UN, year after year, the Australian delegate, to whom the "Hungarian Question" was entrusted, rose in that "parliament of the world" with his up-dated report on the situation in Hungary, which he always found deplorable. Momentarily, the suppressed Hungarians would rise once more, shake off their Soviet occupationists, and bring back Mindzenty from the American embassy, the Arrow Cross fascists from their burrows in New York, Paris and Madrid, restore their horizonless estates to the Esterhazy's, and Franz Josef from his mouldering grave.

But nothing of the kind took place. Janos Kadar, "who wouldn't last a week," has "lasted" for years. The workers who wouldn't work broke production records. The writers who "went on strike" wrote more books, plays, poems than ever before. The people who should have gotten less food, clothes, homes, got more food, clothes and better homes. Budapest is lovelier than ever. There are more schools, better looking children, and the country of "three million beggars" has none. The peasants have overwhelmingly joined cooperatives and collective farms, and the prestige of the leading party has never been higher.

And Nixon? He was repudiated by the American people who did not care for his brand of Birchism. Franco? Never has his future looked darker than at this moment.

And the Australian delegate who seemed to have a life-time occupation with the "Hungarian Question?" He'll soon be out of work. For the last straw has just broken the back of his racket. The United States government has just begun to take steps to "normalize" relations with the Hungarian government and thus remove the "Hungarian Question" from the UN. Cardinal Mindzenty will leave the U.S. embassy in Budapest.

And those progressive-minded people whose belief in progress died on the streets of Budapest in 1956, what of them? It's time that they too, put the "Hungarian Question" to rest forever and go forward once again.

Death on the Bowery

Anyone who has ever seen the Bowery in New York City knows how terrible the sight of men (and women too) lying in doorways and in gutters, lost to all consciousness and decency, can be. As Elmer Bendiner, in his fine book, *The Bowery Man,* has pointed out, the Bowery has been here for a long time. Some even say that there will always be a Bowery. The men who end up there are the casualties of life, the flotsam and jetsam inevitable in our society. Theirs is one of the grim realities at which the realist will not flinch.

But there is more to the story than that. We don't know whether the Bowery, as an institution, can ever be eliminated from our dog-eat-dog society. But this we do know—somebody makes money out of them. No matter how far they sink, how desperate their plight, somebody can make money out of them.

The railroads regularly recruit Bowery drifters for repair work way out in the woods, away from everybody and everything, and there they work them down to the nerve roots. The liquor stores and distilleries concoct a brand of wine and liquor for them that is as near to poison as you can get without being forced to put a skull and crossbones on the bottle label. They do a lot of dish-washing. But they are also the prime source of blood. They sell their blood—thinned with alcohol and jumping with germs—to the commercial blood banks for $5 a pint; and these blood banks, in turn, sell it to the hospitals and doctors for three and four times as much. Also, it is a badly-kept secret that the hospitals depend on cadavers picked up on the Bowery for their dissecting classes. Students learn from their bodies how to become doctors and surgeons.

So they have many uses, always involving cash for everybody but themselves. But the climax—we hope it's a climax—came in May when a paint clerk knowingly—the City charges in its indictment—sold wood alcohol to the Bowery clients, and in one week 50 men were dead.

Many of these men have been cast out of society by the ruthlessness of the demands on them. Some "fought" back as best they knew—by becoming bums, refusing to work, or to cooperate with the standards of a society which shows remorseless cruelty to man and beast. Many of them are the victims of automation; many have been thrown out of jobs because they're too old at 40; and many have been unable to keep up the rat race and gave in.

Greed made them and greed has killed them.

Elusive Blacklist. Everybody knows that there is a blacklist in TV, radio, films, publishing, and most other organs and avenues of public expression. But almost nobody will admit it. The blacklist has been around so long that it's gathered a history, which includes even tragi-comic episodes—like the poor screen writer who lost his job because he happened to have the same name as the "guilty" man. Or, as everyone remembers, that awful moment during an awarding of the prize for the best screen-story when Robert Rich was announced as the winner—and no Robert Rich materialized to accept his Oscar. Robert Rich, it turned out, was Dalton Trumbo —and Dalton Trumbo had no right to write for Hollywood, let alone win a prize. They even sent him to jail for a year to drive the point home.

But the years have passed. Blacklisted writers have lived long enough to see their children inherit their forbidden status. The blacklist however officially never really existed—it was the little man who wasn't there, wasn't there again today. But somehow, well-known writers, like Albert Maltz, hired on Monday were fired on Tuesday in big newspaper advertisements.

What's different today? For one thing, a man bit a dog—the victim sued his persecutor, the private group which terrorized the easily-terrorized TV heads by peddling their little fink sheet, *Aware, Inc.,* which listed the names of "Reds" and "pinkos" as ineligible to make a living in their profession. The heads of the industry paid this group well to be told whom they could hire or not hire. But John Henry Faulk fought back. He went to court and—miracle of miracles—won. Not only cleared his name but was awarded one of the highest damage awards ever—over $3 million.

But is the blacklist over? Not by a long shot. They bring a folk-song program to the air—called Hootenanny. We've always connected "hoots" with Pete Seeger and the Weavers. In fact, we thought Pete had invented the term. But lo and behold, hootenanny not only does not belong to him, we learn, but he—and the Weavers—have no right to appear on television under its auspices or any auspices. The "hoot" travels about the country showing up on campuses of various colleges.

It seems to us that college students should teach their elders another lesson in free speech and democracy. Fight the blacklist—right there with the next "hoot." Demand that the originator of hootenanny be brought to the people on TV. And, while they're at it let them raise their voices demanding the right to hear Bob Dylan, or anybody else sing "The Talking John Birch Society Blues." We think it's good satire, good music and good sense.

Who Needs Whipping? We have always regretted the falling into disuse of one of the grand old customs of the past, the only resort that the indignant citizen had against the power of politicians and the press—horsewhipping editors and Congressmen. There have been many editors we feel could have been improved by the hint, if not the actual, experience. We don't even exclude ourselves.

But it's another matter when the Congress of the United States moves to legalize the whipping of school-children in the nation's capital, Washington, D.C. as the House did in May. The measure was passed by a vote of 277-53. It has been sent to the Senate, where its fate, at this writing, is unknown.

But what *is* known is that 277 of the nation's representatives have no compunction about ordering the physical beating of school-children. They have children, too, most of them. Are they for beating their own children?

If you asked them, they would, no doubt, answer no. Why then did they pass this particular bill?

The answer is sickeningly obvious. The bill was passed so that teachers might whip—Negro students. This is the intent, this is where the "trouble" in the Washington schools comes from. Actually, as anyone who knows Washington knows, the "trouble" comes from the system of Jim Crow still solidly established in that city, and maintained just as solidly among the Representatives and Senators whose secretaries and office help are overwhelmingly white. Dogs in Birmingham, and whipping in Washington!

It is to the enduring credit of Rep. William Fitts Ryan who fought the bill and characterized it for what it is—a brutal act against Negro children.

Yes, we believe that horsewhipping ought to come back—if only for an hour. But it's not children who should be whipped.

ANATOMY OF A MINE DISASTER

PHILLIP BONOSKY

It's dark as a dungeon,
It's damp as the dew,
Where the dangers are doubled
And the pleasures are few

Where the rain never falls
And the sun never shines.
It's dark as a dungeon
Way down in the mines.

IT WAS bone-cold that morning, December 6, 1962. A storm had come up during the night, but to the men driving to work in the crackling dawn to make the morning shift at Frosty Run, No. 3 shaft of the Robena mine, this only meant trouble on the icy roads leading from Carmichael, Masontown, Edenborn, Uniontown, and other mining patches within a ten mile area.

On their car radios they were being reminded that tomorrow was the day of the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, the day that "would live in infamy." That day had been of particular importance to one of the miners on his way to work. Sammy Rain. He was in his twenties then. Before long he found himself in Uncle Sam's Jim Crow army, for he was a Negro, and he served overseas. But he'd been lucky. Twice his regiment was ordered to the front; the first time, with his "death kit" packed and ready, the order was rescinded, and another regiment was sent instead. It was chewed up. The second time the armistice intervened. After being mustered out in 1945, he came back home to Edenborn, where his family had been miners since before 1921. He went to work in the Robena mine where he was now a snapper. He had three children, but his wife had died two years ago.

He was a worried man this morning, however. For months now the company had been lopping men off crews. More and more pressure was being placed on them to produce. The old speed-up had come back, and the men were worried, not just because it meant harder work, but because the speed-up was accompanied by carelessness, indifference to safety precautions, and worse. The men had been complaining about gas in 8 Main 4 Left, where he was working. But the section foreman on the shift before his reported, consistently for two years now, that there was no gas present in the mine. He knew that rock-dusting was beng skimped, or neglected altogether, except when the mine inspector

was due. Every time he snapped his motor on, he involuntarily braced himself, for somewhere in those miles of cable, wiring in the machines, there certainly was a break, a deficiency, a flaw which could produce a spark. If that spark ever hit a pocket of methane gas, there would be an explosion so violent it would kill every living thing within a mile. The big mines today are well-lit and clean compared to what they used to be. Machines have taken over from men. With the machines has come more and more electricity. But in all the years of change in the mines, one thing has never changed: the push for more production, greater profit, and the miner's knowledge that one jackass costs the company more than one man.

Sammy Rain didn't know that only the night before, on the shift before his, Fred Spoljarich, who worked the continuous mining machine, had detected gas, testing with his flame safety lamp, and had reported it to Albert Dillow, the assistant foreman, who also noticed his lamp reacting to it. Joe Baron, a shuttle-car operator, who had been trying for six months to get the faulty steering on his shuttle-car repaired, was behind the two men. He heard Spoljarich tell Mr. Dillow that the mine was gassy, and Dillow then ordered a check curtain up to control the ventilation flow.

But when Dillow came to make his report that evening, he wrote in his notebook: "I found . . . it free of explosive gases and other dangers."

So that morning of December 6, the mine was safe. It was reported free of gas. Spoljarich didn't know that this was what Dillow had written, neither did Baron. Baron had been a scared man for a long time, but before the day was over he'd be more scared than ever before.

The foreman and bosses got juicy bonuses for higher production. This meant production of the pay-load coal, not the dead work, like timbering, rock-dusting, de-gassing, carefully testing the leaks and breaks in the wiring, seeing that all cable and machine wiring was sealed. The miners too got something for higher production. A royalty on every ton of coal produced went into the union welfare fund out of which the miners drew their social benefits and health care, including hospitals built by the union. In any case, John L. Lewis had laid down the policy years ago—the future of the mining industry, in the competition with other sources of fuel, he declared, lay in higher and cheaper production. It was hard for the rank-and-file miner to fight a speed-up when the company could cite the the words of their own long-time leader, John L. as justification: so it was "push, push, push" all the way. . . .

Ernie Bencheck that morning was getting ready to take a risk; he was going to desert his post in order to carry out other work assigned

to him by the foreman. He was a lampman. But his chief duty was to keep within earshot of the fan alarm signal, which would mean the fan had shut down, and report it immediately to the responsible officials. The lives of the miners depended on him. But he had other duties, which had accumulated in the last period. After all, how often does the fan break down? How often does disaster strike? Not often—one could risk it. He ran the elevator too; he also cleaned out the bathhouse. When he ran the elevator he couldn't hear anything. It took two hours to clean the bathouse and during those two hours he was out of ear-shot of the alarm signal.

The 37 men who descended the shaft by elevator and then, riding for half an hour, reached their work site at 7:30 A.M., were closer to technicians than they were to the coal-diggers their fathers had been. They were cutting a clay seam this morning. They made up two crews, which consisted of a continuous mining machine operator, two shuttle-car operators each, two roof bolters, bratticemen, a mechanic, a Joy 11-BU operator, a two-man section transportation crew which served the machines. There were also 17 construction men and a foreman, two repairmen, three engineers, and two mainline transportation men. Thirty-one of these men were members of UMWA Local 6321, District 4; the other six men were supervisory employees not eligible for union membership.

This group of 37 men working this section of the huge miles' long U.S. Steel-owned "captive mine" were a far cry from the miners who worked these hills fifty, seventy-five and a hundred years ago. In the beginning, they had no union, though their Ancient Order of the Hibernians, a benevolent mutual-aid society, became a means through which they exercised certain elementary cooperation, becoming the so-called "Molly Maguires." American miners were largely drawn from the Irish, Welsh, British miners who had left their homeland for one reason or another, famine or persecution ranking high. Among these immigrants were men who had been active in class struggles. There were many Chartist members among them, and they resumed their class-conscious struggles in the United States. But not until 1870 would the Pennsylvania miners, after decades of bitter struggles, during which hundreds of miners died and thousands were permanently injured, win minimum protective legislation from company-controlled legislators in Harrisburg. The law then passed provided for a second exit to the mines, and prescribed certain regulations governing ventilation, inspection of the mines, and provisions stipulating that the age of a miner entering the mine for the first time must not be "under twelve."

NOT much basically has changed however in a hundred years. No new law would be passed for half a century, not until 1911; and not again until 1961 would a law taking the new factors of almost universal mechanization into account get on the books. But even then, mine officials found guilty of criminal negligence leading up to disaster could be convicted only of a "misdemeanor," with the possible punishment of a $200 fine and/or six months in prison.

No such conviction has ever taken place, however, though many disasters have. Now, as ever, 200-300 miners die violently "way down in the mines" every year; thousands of others are regularly crippled. No company has ever been held responsible for deaths resulting from unhealthy working conditions, from silicosis, from arthritis, the many respiratory diseases miners are prone to, nor for the stunted lives and early deaths of the children who were child-slaves in Pennsylvania up until the relatively recent past. A vivid picture of mining conditions among the Irish miners exists in Jack Conroy's classic of the Thirties, *The Disinherited,* just recently reissued.

Children were not excluded from the mines until, actually, the Thirties; and, ironically enough, with the tremendous shrinking of the men actually working in the mines — half in a decade—the average age of today's working miner is around 40. Young miners are rare, and leave the area; veteran miners are protected by union seniority and security provisions. When they go—get killed, die, or leave—their jobs go with them—a process happening in steel, textile, rubber, longshoreman, electrical, lumber, and almost every other industry.

Any miner will tell you that with the economic punishment so light on the company, the law, which defines such great disasters in the mines as "misdemeanors," is more of an encouragement to carelessness than an inhibition. The coal companies have taken it for granted, the way generals going into battle take it for granted, that a certain percentage of casualties is to be expected. You can't mine coal without making widows and orphans. So it has always been, so it must always be. If you don't like it, you can always go somewhere else; this is a free country. . . .

AT about 1 P.M. that day, December 6, Paul Honseker, repairman, heard the frantic sounding of the alarm horn. He told repairman John Syrek. When Syrek looked out of the window of the service building, he saw a white cloud of dust bowling out of the elevator shaft. He ran to check on the fan and found that it had stopped. Bencheck, the lampman, whose duty it was to listen for the alarm was on his way to the bathhouse, where he was sent to do a cleaning job: he could hear

nothing. It was Syrek who informed him about the fan being down.

There is a rule nailed up on the wall. One clause of it reads:

> "If the power is off in the mine due to a shutdown, it shall not be re-energized until the individual mine foreman of Robena No. 2 and Robena No. 3 call mine foremen at Robena No. 1, who will have the power restored."

Benchek, Syrek and Honseker discussed what they should do, and decided to call the mine superintendant and the surface maintenance foreman, Robert Rennie, who was in charge of all fans. Rennie called back saying that since checks had revealed nothing wrong he'd given orders to the electrician, Donald Sherrow, to re-start the fan. Sherrow turned it back on. Telephone calls and orders were passed among a handful of officials, involving Sullivan, superintendant of No. 2 mine, Misiak, mine foreman of No. 3, and Wydo, superintendant of No. 3, who was told by Sullivan it was OK to re-energize the circuits, although he had no word from 8 main, 4 left. "That is good enough for me; put the power on." Ten minutes later it stopped again. Again no investigation was made, and the power was turned on once more.

The explosion that followed was so tremendous it knocked a foreman flat on his face two miles away. Thirty-seven men who worked in 8 main, 4 left were killed instantly, exploding their intestines, burning their bodies, blasting their arms and legs from their trunks and popping their eyes.

It took five days for six mine rescue teams to get to the scene of the carnage, gather up the body parts of the 37 men, and bring them to the surface for identification and burial. It was a grim but efficiently performed job. The mine was shut down, but only for a short time. When Superintendant Wydo ordered the miners back they refused to go until they had assurances the mine was safe for them. As though having learned nothing at all, the company fired a fanman later for refusing to do other work beside tending fans, and the union went on a three-day strike until the man got his job back.

Shortly after the disaster, rumors began to circulate that there was "something rotten" about the whole business. Why had the warning signal not been heard? Who had given the order to re-energize the mine? Why was the mine reported "safe" and "free of gas" only the day before, though it was commonly known that the mine was a gassy one? Why hadn't there been enough air pumped in to the miners at the face, not only for their own use but to keep the face clear of gas? Why had rock-dusting been neglected? What was the reason for the stepped-up

speed-up, the dropping of workers, etc.? Why was there no autopsy ordered?

An investigation commission was convened by Lewis A. Evans, lame-duck State Mines Secretary, Democratic hold-over from the previous state administration, which had been defeated in the last election by the Republican candidate for governor, Willam W. Scranton. The investigating commission met at Garards Fort company hearing room. The hearing room turned out to be too small to hold everybody interested, especially the several hundred miners who almost started a riot when they were refused entrance.

Finally, they were shunted into the adjoining bathouse where they sat on wooden benches and listened to the hearings over a loudspeaker rigged up for them. They could hear but they couldn't see. In the dull stretches they rode wire clothes hangers up and down rope pulleys over their heads.

"They don't want us to hear about the improper ventilation," was how George Ratty, a mechanic from the mine explained it. "Some of the canvas is hung so loose you could see tighter curtains at a burlesque house."

Inside the hearing room itself, Evans presided, and W. A. (Tony) Boyle, acting president of the United Mine Workers, succeeding the recently-deceased Thomas Kennedy, took on the role of cross-examiner. Company and state officials, as well as additional labor officials, were also gathered in the room. The hearing was called to elicit information and evidence that Evans could present to the governor for action, if warranted. The report was only advisory, however, which the governor could accept at his discretion, and, as we shall see, this is just what he did do.

With the working miners outside in the bathhouse listening, and in fact, the entire membership of the union hanging on his words, Boyle proved to be a vigorous examiner of the balking, suddenly vague, suddenly forgetful mine officials who paraded to the witness stand in the next 12 days.

ONE of the key questions was whether in fact gas had been detected in the mine the day before and whether the foreman had deliberately falsified his report. Fred Spoljarich, the continuous mining machine operator, testified that he had detected a concentration of more than one percent of methane gas, using his flame-type safety lamp. Albert Dillow, the assistant mine foreman, had been right behind him and also detected the gas and ordered a ventilating curtain adjusted. "He put up his

lamp," Spoljarich said, "and also found gas."

Joe Baron, who had been nearby, testified that he had heard Spoljarich tell Dillow that he had discovered gas. "I'm scared," he said. "I don't care who I hurt. Wait until vacation. I'll be through then and you can have your mine!" For him safety control was "nothing but a joke." The foremen were warned in advance when the mine inspector was on his way, and then rock-dusting and wetting-down were hastily ordered, seals on the machinery were checked, cables examined and repaired, the ventilation and flow regulated. Evans, the mine inspector chief, said that he had no idea how the officials received their forewarning.

Boyle elicited from Ernest Bencheck, the lampman, the fact that he, Bencheck, was often away on other work for long periods of time and out of ear-shot of any warning horn. "You are not in a position, then, at either those times, to hear the signal that means men's lives are in danger underground, as the law requires of a lampman?"

"No sir," Bencheck answered.

He also testified that on night shifts he was miles away from his post to fill batteries and clean up, and during that time he could not hear any warning horn either.

Robert Rennie, the maintenance foreman, was read the rules, regulating the conditions under which the power might or might not be turned on, and then was asked directly by Evans: "Were these instructions carried out?"

"No," Rennie answered.

Boyle found the witnesses for the company evasive and shifty. When Edward Urbany, another assistant foreman, who had been knocked flat by the explosion two miles away from the scene, took the chair, Boyle attacked him as being a coached witness, who kept getting signals from the general superintendant of U.S. Steel's Frick District, Ralph C. Beerbower, who sat in the room.

"Perhaps," Boyle asked him pointedly at one moment in the fencing, "you might want to correct the statement you made earlier that . . . the ventilating system was just fine. Maybe you would be less confused about that if you did not have to look at Mr. Beerbower while answering."

The men in the bathhouse howled. When Urbany insisted that the ventilation was fine and that rock-dusting was scrupulously carried out, the men yelled: "That's one for Ripley!" And they stamped their feet together.

They kept on giving their own brand of evidence in the bathhouse which played a sort of sardonic counter-point to the evidence given inside the hearing room. "It's push, push, push all the time," Russell Cuppett, who's mined coal in Robena since 1937, snorted. "The bosses are always thinking of producing. We don't have time to do a good job of rock-dusting for our own safety."

"I *know* there was gas," William Epps, another miner, told his buddies, who didn't need to be told, "in that place the day before the explosion. We had to block off the buggy road and change the air."

Inside, Boyle asked Urbany what he thought of the mining method followed at Robena. Rather smugly, Urbany said: "I like it."

"Is it a good method all the way around," Boyle asked, "or a good production method?"

"Good all around," said the foreman. The men outside started up.

"Well, 37 men are dead. It wasn't good for them, was it?"

To that Urbany had no answer. But the men in the bathhouse had.

The man responsible for the ventilation in the mine, a Mr. W. Cook, assistant general superintendant, "thought" the 84,000 cubic feet of air per minute pumped into the mine was sufficient. "I don't think it was!" Evans, the inspector, snapped.

Boyle took the position that leaky electrical cables, which had been passed as in working condition, by Marion Misiak, the general foreman, actually were defective, and the spark that set off the explosion came from one of them. On the stand, Misiak admitted that he had not inspected the electrical cables on the continuous mining machine, and the following exchange took place. (Misiak had stated that after the explosion he had received reports indicating that some of the cables were not in "permissable" condition.)

"You say then," Boyle asked sardonically, "that the explosion could tape or vulcanize splices in a cable?"

"I would say that an explosion could vulcanize a splice."

Angered by this smug reply—that it took an explosion to 'repair' cable—Boyle demanded: "Could it tape it, though?"

But Misiak had no more to say on the virtues of deadly explosions.

There was no attempt by the company representatives to examine the witnesses. The company limited itself to issuing pious statements, like the one by Jess Core, vice-president of operations of the coal division: "We try to create the safest mining operations possible. We've always welcomed suggestions to improve and have contributed in every way to this investigation to determine the cause."

But events were to prove the opposite. They fought, and resisted, the full logic of the implications of the evidence to the very last. With all direct witnesses buried, it was therefore impossible for anyone living

to say: "I was there. I saw it." And they clung to this.

At the end of the hearings the men in the bathhouse were subdued and depressed lot. They had begun to smell a whitewash, which smells very much like a rat. "It's just another meeting," one of them said, as the others, their chins fallen into their hands listened. "They're on one side of the wall and we're on the other."

The "they're" included them all.

There was good reason to feel so. In the entire 150 years of mining history no official, before or after the great Avondale disaster in 1869 when 179 miners gave up their lives in the Pennsylvania coal mines because the mine owners refused to make a second exit to the mine, ever were brought to trial and convicted. It took those 179 murders to get a second hole out of the owners—and the company-dominated legislature had to be forced to enact it into law. But nobody paid for the deaths, nobody but the miners.

In the years that followed, disaster came upon disaster. The courts regularly "found" that the right of the miner to sell his working power without union interference was "sacred"; even more sacred was the "right" of the mining companies to fire, hire, kill, burn, skip wage payment, force yellow dog contracts on the workers, force them to buy in company stores and live in company-owned shacks. Even I remember, as a child, that coal-and steel-workers referred to "cash money" payment in stead of what they were used to—script payment from the company good nowhere but in company stores.

How long was it, after all, since the coal fields and steel warrens of Pennsylvania were terrorized by Coal and Iron police, owned by the company, and when it was possible for one of the Mellon brothers, in 1928, to testify about "his" mines that you couldn't run a mine without police armed with machine guns? When the entire political apparatus of the states, and the pathetic civic structures of the company towns, was openly under control of one or another of the big financial families, whether it was Mellon, in one part of the state, or Pew, or, earlier, Frick (whose art gallery on Fifth Avenue in New York was built from the sweat and blood of the Pennsylvania coal miners).

Had much changed? Only as surfaces change in order better to hide the substance. Only to the extent that concessions had been wrested from the hands of the big financiers who, after the Second World War, which opened up the world's markets to American goods, could postpone for the time being the inevitable show-down implicit in the confrontation of the Pennsylvania workers and those who live off them.

After the hearing ended, the miners had every right to expect, in

due course, a piously-worded report from the investigating committee, which would deplore the accident, register its opposition to sin and wrong-doing, make certain recommendations that had been regularly recommended for the past 100 years, strongly imply that the miners themselves had been at least partly to blame—and then disappear. In fact, just such a report was issued by the U.S. Bureau of Mines, which had observers at the hearing. It was a curious report in which all the evidence pointed one way and the conclusion another. It ticked off the several "possible" causes for the explosion, and listed 15 recommendations for safety regulations—none of which were new, all of which should have been standard procedure for decades in the mines. The report, in strange double-talk, said: "The following recommendation has no bearing on the explosions but its adoption should receive careful consideration." And the "recommendation" which had no "bearing" was exactly what the whole thing was about:

"A modification of the fan monitoring and substation control systems should include provisions for removing the power from the mine automatically in the event of main-fan interruption. Such systems should have fail-safe features."

Certainly, although the report did not say so, the men whose job it was to attend to the fan should not be off washing down the floors of a bathhouse. But the *United Mine Workers Journal* hailed the report, stating blandly that: "The object of an investigation of any mine disaster is not to 'place blame' but to attempt to learn by mistakes made in one situation which, if corrected, might prevent recurrences of these horrors in the mining industry. . . ."

The company officials also hailed the Federal report as "constructive" for the same reasons.

So the stage was set. The state investigating committee had its lead, both from the government bureau and the organ of the mine workers; all that was left for it to do was to present a mass of details out of which it, too, would extract a promise to be more careful in the future.

But, it wasn't long after the Commission left Garards Fort that rumors began to trickle back from Harrisburg that the report would not follow tradition. It failed to appear on the day scheduled, and it became apparent that hectic behind-the-scenes meneuvers and pressure was being brought to bear. Finally, when all this must have failed, the governor reluctantly issued the report accompanied by a most unique statement of his own.

The report was sensational. It directly charged three high employees of the Robena Mine with criminal negligence and recommended that

they be brought to trial. They were Michael Wydo, superintendant; Marion Misiak, mine foreman; and Albert Dillow, assistant mine foreman, who had testified that no gas had been present in the mine before the explosion, and, later, Stanley Boskovich, mine electrician.

The report charged that gas had indeed been present in the mine and that Dillow knew about it, but "no record of this alleged accumulation of explosive gas was made in the assistant foreman's record book, or the mine examiner's record book. . . ."

The report charged that insufficient air was being directed to the face of the work where the deadly methane gas was given off in large quantities. "This permitted explosive gas, which was being freely liberated, to accumulate. . . ."

The report stated that the mixture of methane and air needed no more than a spark from a defective electric motor, from an auxiliary fan, from a break in a cable; that unwetted down or un-rock dusted coal dust had been abundantly present, contributing the necessary ingredient to the explosion; that many machines were in "impermissible" condition; and that coal pieces were present in the galleries. It said that the officials' decision to turn on the fan after the first explosion precipitated the disaster: "They made no effort to determine the cause of the first fan stoppage. They made no effort to prevent the restoration of power to Robena No. 3 mine, even though they did not know the condition of the mine, particularly had no knowledge of what might have happened in 8 Left section (the first blast area). With all the lack of precautions, it was fortunate indeed that the forces of the second explosion did not encompass the entire mine. . . ."

Governor Scranton sprang immediately to the defense of the three United Steel Company officials:

> "The recommendation for legal action against the three men deal with alleged violations of the mining laws which according to the report, had no causal connection with the fatal explosion."

No connection? Evans answered tartly:

> "Anybody who reads the report couldn't agree with that. When men die in mine explosions they die because there had been negligence and violations of the mining law. The Pennsylvania bituminous mining laws, if faithfully executed will prevent mine explosions."

Boyle stated that the Governor's statement was an "ingenious generalization" and was an attempt to "mislead and intimidate the members

of the commission . . . to appease special interests such as the gigantic United States Steel Corporation."

He said that the report was clear in assigning responsibility, "Yet the governor was curiously compelled to personally moderate the unflinching recommendations to prosecute the three officials." He added: "I have witnessed the company's consistent attempts to alter the record to relieve itself of the responsibility for the dreadful disaster." And finally, the governor's statement was "an effort to relieve the U.S. Steel Corporation of its responsibility . . . a flagrant disregard for the 37 citizens of Pennsylvania who lost their lives as a result of the negligence by the U.S. Steel Corp. officials who violated the Pennsylvania law."

THE governor turned the report over to his new secretary of mines, who had replaced Evans, Dr. H. Beecher Charmbury, who promptly stated that the "report warrants further examination," and echoing the governor, added: "I've got to establish what specific charges are made against what specific men." He decided to call a meeting with a commission of the Department of Justice and himself. Evans was excluded in spite of the demand of the miners that he continue to the end.

James C. Gray, U.S. Steel administrative vice president, said sadly: "We are shocked and disappointed to learn that the report appears more concerned with actions unrelated to the explosion than in finding specific answers to the cause of the explosion. It is in sharp contrast to the report by the U.S. Bureau of Mines, a constructive document which contradicts the Pennsylvania commission report in many important areas . . ."

He said: "We concur very strongly with the point the governor emphasized . . ." that the three employees "are not charged in the report or its recommendations with any offense which caused or contributed to the explosion . . . However the filing of information could link them unfairly with the tragedy and result in untold and unwarranted damage to their reputations and in unjustified personal suffering . . ."

"Personal suffering"! What did the miners think of their "personal suffering"? I would find out. But meanwhile, Gray continued: "The report makes practically no effort to discuss conflicting testimony on several controversial issues. We are convinced that a careful and impartial review will vindicate the three supervisory personnel . . ."

Why such a furore over a "misdemeanor" which was punishable, as Boyle pointed out, less severely than a drunken driver who ran over a pedestrian? If brought to trial and found guilty, the three men could be fined at most $200 each, and/or six months in jail. Why, then, the intervention of the governor, the tremendous pressure, the action of the company?

Because a very basic principle was here involved which could have repercussions not only throughout the mining industry but throughout the entire industrial empire. Because, for the first time in 150 years, a mining company (in this case, the huge monopoly Morgan-controlled U.S. Steel) was being directly charged with responsibility for mining deaths, which promised to break forever the convenient and traditional idea that miners, like soldiers, were expected to die, that such deaths were "normal," in the nature of things, and had nothing to do with speed-ups, greed, negligence, the ruthless drive for profit, the universal conspiracy among politicians, mine owners, and, to some extent, union bureaucracy, to "solve" the problems of the mining industry at the expense of the working miner, now as ever before. This at a time when automation was eliminating miners from the industry at an increased rate, throwing them out on the scrap heap, not only in Pennsylvania but in West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and everywhere else where property is sacred and human life is cheap.

WESTERN Pennsylvania, in the Tartuffian language of New Frontier sociology, is a "depressed area." This is supposed to suggest that it is something abnormal in an otherwise "affluent society."

But this is all vicious nonsense. For Western Pennsylvania (and Eastern, too, for that matter), just as Detroit, or the South, or the New England textile towns, did not "suddenly" become a depressed area, nor is there anything particularly perverse in its stubborness to resist the general affluence. For the truth is it has always been a region where hunger, terror and social backwardness were typical and dominant for generations. And for those generations, it was an area which made the Mellons, Fricks, Morgans, Duponts, etc., rich—*rich!*—beyond all calculation. It was a country whose hills were full of wealth, and hundreds of thousands of workers gave their lives to get that wealth out of those hills and into the pockets and banks of the American billionaires. Their reward has been, for over a hundred years, misery, hunger, insecurity, terror, and depressions which regularly stole from them everything they had ever owned. Western Pennsylvania should, today, be the most flourishing, prosperous part of the United States, based upon the wealth produced here. Every man, woman and child—if they got back what they produced —would today be living in luxury. Instead of which, as James Reston of the *New York Times* would report during a flying visit to Pittsburgh in March of this year:

> Thirty years after the start of the New Deal, the record of the welfare state around Pittsburgh seems to be oddly paradoxical. It has helped the steel workers get better houses, many of them owned by the workers. It has produced service jobs for their wives but not steady jobs for the men.
>
> So they paint their houses or do other jobs around the basement when they are out of work, and bet on relief and their union pensions. This clearly has not satisfied them, but it has muffled them. It is not a crisis, but a tragedy.

In Washington, D.C., one day, not too very long after the Robena mine disaster, still rugged-looking, for all his 83 years, his leonine hair, his beetling eyebrows now white, a legend sat down to a very strange luncheon in his honor. It was so strange a meal that even the Pittsburgh newspapers could not wholly suppress their surprise, and headlined the story: 'ENEMY NO. I' DRAWS PRAISE FROM OLD FOES. For this was John L. Lewis, one time scourge and terror of the 'economic royalists,' sitting at a table in the presence of George H. Love, board chairman of Consolidated Coal.

It was a jovial occasion. By-gones were very much by-gones. That 37 miners lay fresh underground, far from Washington, their laughing mouths plugged with dirt, seemed not to cast any shadow over the proceedings. Mr. Love, grinning slyly, said: "In the struggle of 1949-50, John claims he made a man of me. I claim I made an enlightened labor leader of him. It was a real give-and-take across the table." Who gave and who took was not gone into. Anyhow, he added with a chuckle, John L. had thundered at him: "Love, you're a liar by the clock." To this he had shot back: "Mr. Lewis, any chance of one of your eyebrows for a toupee?"

Love is bald; Lewis has enough hair to cover many a nakedness.

Everybody guffawed, including Arthur Goldberg, one-time labor attorney, and now member of the Supreme Court, who was sitting next to Lewis. It was a meal for successful people. John L. was retiring from the National Coal Policy Conference. "To do him honor," said the account of the luncheon, "were the operators and owners of coal mines, present UMW leaders, heads of coal-carrying railroads and utilities and manufacturers that use coal." President Kennedy sent a telegram hailing him. Interior Secretary Steward Udall was there; so also was Commerce Secretary Luther Hodges. "Our industry is living today because of him," Mr. Love intoned, pointing to his "favorite enemy." For it was Lewis who had convinced the coal-owners that the industry could only "be saved by increased productivity." Apparently Love felt that Lewis didn't really believe this "accusation of good character," as he was to remark himself, for Love insisted: "I mean it, John!"

"There was nostalgia in his voice," says the report, as the old man rose to answer. He "spoke of the 'shadows that are gathering on all of us.' " And then, as though suddenly remembering some distant, far-off loyalty, some battle-field where he once had been, he suddenly boomed:

> "I say unemployment is the major problem facing America. Six million are unemployed and their future never was dimmer. I am astonished at the patience of these men. The longer they are patient, the more violent will be the explosion when they reach the end of their patience."

Said Mr. Routh, coal tycoon and new chairman of the National Coal Policy Conference, admiringly : "Mr. Lewis is one of the greatest orators of all time!"

Everybody applauded. Mr. Goldberg applauded and smiled. Mr. Love applauded, and smiled. So did Secretary Udall and Secretary Hodges...

The old Negro miner, whose brother-in-law, Sam Rains, lay dead with somebody else's arms and legs buried with him, who had survived the war against the Germans but not against U.S. Steel, said to me: "Old Man Lewis, sitting up there on the top floor of the union building in Washington, he don't see what's happening: he's too old, like a hound that's lost its smell and its teeth..."

TAKE A ride up the Monongahela river valley, as I did, and as I have done many times in my life, and try to look, with clear, native eyes, at the towns and cities you drive into, and you will find yourself asking yourself, how can it go on? For how long will these workers endure it? The question comes up forcefully not even so much in the Thirties as now; for in the Thirties, they *did* do something about it. But now?

It's a spring day—early spring. Not much is out of the ground yet: but there is blood-root, and, a little later, the dark hills will glow with the purple-red blossoms of the Judas tree. This is the tree, you know, on which Judas Iscariot is supposed to have hung himself after having betrayed the first militant workingman, Jesus Christ, son of a carpenter and working mother, for thirty pieces of silver to the Roman authorities. As for the blood-root, it comes first up through the dark, cold, gas-smelling earth, its bright pure flower shining with a courage that, for me, is the courage and purity of the steel-workers and coal-miners. The blossom is white—the roots and stem run with blood.

But the Judases, the informers and labor spies, don't hang themselves anymore. Instead, like a Matt Cvetic, for instance, who made a small fortune out of informing on steel-workers and coal-miners in this region, they are given a respectable obituary in the *New York Times* after the

whisky finally gets to them; and in his case, he even had a "day" named after him in Pittsburgh, and a semi-military parade in his honor. All the time his ex-wife considered him a louse, and he whined his way through court-room after court-room distributing lies and frameups as he went. It's impossible to believe anything green grows on his grave.

This is not, for me, a "depressed area." No, it's *America*—more so than Wall Street or Washington ever can be. Here is where the troops of the Coal-and-Iron police terrorized workers down all the years; where the workers hid in cellars, organized in secret. (Sinclair Lewis came here once and hid in the cellars with them to get "material"), fought the most brutal enemy the world has ever known—American power.

The terror rule of the corporations, which plundered these little towns I ride through for years, was more total than even Hitler knew how to organize. They were run by pathetic city council and officialdom owned lock, stock and bribe by the companies. The churches, ministers were also on the company dole. The mines and mills were infested with informers, and for years steel-workers and coal-miners never saw real cash, but had to buy from the company stores, live in company houses, die in debt to the company. Not only did the local police terrorize the workers, but the local politicians fought bitter battles for the vote, for with the majority vote, one inherited the pay-offs from the whore houses, gambling dens, numbers rackets, city contracts for schools, streets and jail-houses, and, during Prohibition, pay from the boot-leggers. The "bag man" was the most endearing sight in any city. He made his rounds with his leather satchel into which all the cold cash was stuffed; then he took it to the office of the mayor, or chief of police, up through sundry other elected officials to the governor himself. Democracy never worked more affluently...

Very little has changed with the years. Nor does one have to go very far off the beaten track before finding himself in Chic Sale country, with the familiar crescent cut in the door of the wooden privy. We used to knock these "poor man's reading rooms" over on Halloween and tumble them down the hill. But this isn't the main thing. Where, you ask, are the young men and young women? These working-class towns seem to have been stripped of the young! Where are they? The boys are in the Marines killing Vietnamese (as they did the Koreans), or holding down other parts of the world for democracy; or they're en route to California looking for jobs. For they can't live here anymore: there are no jobs for the young. The girls follow after them.

GO through these towns—through Duquesne, McKeesport, Glassport, Clairton, Charleroi, Monessen... and stop at one of them, Donora.

This town is worth stopping at—for it is a town that is dying. Shortly after the war, 22 citizens of Donora choked to death from the smog fumes coming out of the local mills. Dozens of others came near to dying. But even that was better than what is happening now: for the company just upped and moved out, leaving behind a city of some 15,000 souls, bewildered, stunned, abandoned and betrayed. These workers had sunk their lives in this town, in these homes of theirs, which they paid for with their hard-earned wages (and which now need paint). They can't pick up and move after the industry, or go to another town, or learn a new trade. What "new trade" is there for a man who has worked half his life in a steel mill? There's nothing you can do to the company, to the mayor or the governor or the president, to Morgan or Rockefeller. Nothing.

"I'll never leave this place," the Negro ex-miner in Edenborn said to me, staring out of the window of his newly-painted house. "I put 30 years in this town. This is my home."

He's on pension now, though by no means retired. We came knocking on his door for an opinion about the Robena mine disaster, and the prospects for justice. His bungalo, which he shared with his sister, belonged to Sammy Rain, now dead. It's attractive. In fact, it could stand as a kind of model of what American affluence does for the American worker—complete with refrigerator, TV, new furniture, etc. But this can be misleading; for here is not only evidence of American affluence but luck of another kind: widow's luck. All these new things came out of the insurance from the dead man. As for the wife, she had died two years ago. Her sister works in a hospital. The orphaned children are left. But homes all over the valley show this same evidence of luck—widows who are left with fatherless children and new TV sets.

On the shoulder of the hill stands a Negro Baptist Church of God with the rubric over its door: "Keep Your Lamp Trimmed and Burning." This is good miner's advice, straight from the Lord; and indeed the mine foreman's flame lamp was burning brightly when he poked his nose into 8 Left, that afternoon, and the flame had changed color when it found gas: but no such record ever appeared...

"Do you think these mine officials are going to go to trial?"

He's an old-timer. Justice is rarer than a yellow bird in the hills. You may see it once in your life; but nobody believes you. So, he doesn't expect too much. His history is also the American worker's. He came north from one of the Carolinas as a boy after World War War I. Why? For the same reason hundreds of thousands came north: to escape. He was an American refugee. A relative gave him a place to flop, some food, he looked around for work, and finally landed in the mines, ending as a timberman in Robena where he worked out his pension (now being cut).

"How was it for you, a Negro?"

He studied me for a moment. "I'll tell you it's still bad for a Negro; in some ways worse." He told me why. It had always been hard for a Negro to break into any industry, and he could only break into those industries which had jobs no white man wanted to do. Once broken in, it was pretty much that way for the rest of his life; it was next to impossible to move up to a better job, steadier work, more money.

Like many another worker in coal, and even more in steel, when I asked him what the union was doing, he reacted with a weary, half-resigned shrug of disappointment, verging on cynicism; there's a hurt in these men who once fought to build the union, were, and still are, good union men.

"Oh, it won't do nothing," he said, referring to the disaster and to changing working conditions. "It ain't got nothing to bargain with anymore. It gave that up."

What did he mean? He meant something like what they praised John L. at the luncheon for: how can you fight the man who praises you for the wrong reasons? Or (as steelworkers would ask me) how can a David MacDonald be expected really to fight for the interests of the steelworkers when he spends so much of his time meeting with the bosses in so-called Human Relations Committees, dedicated to anything but that? The Cold War beliefs, which these labor leaders hold in common with the bosses, makes it impossible to really fight them, at least sincerely...

This Negro miner felt that the union had made so many concessions to the company, both in spirit and in fact, that it now came virtually unarmed to the bargaining table. If the settled policy of the union was to save the industry by "producing more"—as John L. trumpeted—then how could one bargain except on the basis of—if you sweat more we'll pay you more? The utopia which had been fabricated by the union, with union-owned hospitals and various social benefits derived from the royalty on coal, had cracked badly recently; and many of the hospitals, like the ten in Kentucky, were being put on the market, or closed down. And pensions were being cut, like this man's...

"I'll bet you," he said to me, "in this patch—" looking across the valley to the houses located in little hollows—"there's more men out of work than working—right here out of a dozen, maybe seven not working—"

"What do they do?"

"What do they do? They go on relief, that's what they do."

Yes, he knew the names of W. E. B. Du Bois and Paul Robeson. I left a copy of *Mainstream* with a piece by W. E. B. Du Bois on John Brown

in it. It seemed to me I had detected in this man some echo of the militant Thirties, but I didn't press him. His sister had some rather tart comments to make about the growth of Jim Crow. "Before 1921," she had told the Pittsburgh *Courier,* "race meant nothing here. We all went to the same little red church—both the white and the colored. We lived together, we ate together, we slept together. Homes were always open. We stuck out a lot of hardships together; the war, the flu . . ." Her memories went far back. But, today, she added, "there are plenty of places we can't go. But when something like this happens, things let up a little. People sympathize. The worse off you are, the friendlier people are."

WE drove to Masontown in the hope of seeing the mine workers union local president. But when we arrived at the union office, which was a one-room affair with desk, chairs and telephone, sandwiched in between a loan office and a funeral parlor (which is, I suppose, comment enough), we found it shut. It seemed that the union president had office hours, like any other executive, and we'd come at the wrong time. An old miner, now retired, also had had no idea what the office hours were, and had come to pay his dues—you have to maintain your dues payments to the union to keep getting your pension and other benefits. So we talked to him.

He had that leathery-faced look of men who spend their lives out in the air and weather. Like everybody else, he was sure nothing would come of the state investigation. Also, like everybody else, he had no doubt as to what had led up to the disaster—the slighting of safety precautions in the cause of boosting production. Higher officials got paid bonuses for stepped-up production; so, "being human," they "naturally" took working miners off non-productive labor, like rock-dusting, wetting down, shoring up, taping splices, etc., and kept them where the money was—bringing out coal. The man who was supposed to be listening for the danger signal was off, as we know, on other work when the disaster struck.

This old man, too, had his say about the flabbiness of the union's fighting spirit—more in sorrow than anger. What he and all the others were protesting, though they never put it into exact words, was the fact that the disease of business unionism had taken over in the mine unions. Union officials kept office, hours, had secretaries, bookkeepers (there is much paper work now demanded of unions to keep up with the provisions of the Taft-Hartley law and the Landrum-Griffin law), and their work was chiefly executive; some were no more than glorified insurance agents. Actually, as in steel and auto, they were part of a tight machine, the model for which was erected by John L. Lewis in the struggle against

the "reds," and followed more closely the laws of small-town politics than of trade unions. Union officials today more and more often are college-educated graduates of "courses" in union affairs, often studied in college and universities whose entire intellectual direction is anti-working-class; such bureaucrats often have no practical knowledge of the industry into which they are propelled at the executive level. At the heart of it is not only the theory of accommodation to American power, external and internal, but the unholy fear that one day once again the rank-and-file workers will break out of the bureaucratic chains and go their own way, as they have often done in the past. It's my own conviction that the evidence for such breakthroughs is slowly, and quietly, building up, and, as John L. Lewis said, one day it will explode.

We made a little detour into one of the mining patches that haven't changed their character in generations. Set off from the main road, it was a little village of frame shacks, each with its wooden privy two skips and a jump in the rear. Some of the shacks were being boarded up, however, and we asked one of the miners what was happening. "Being sold," he said.

Sold? Donora was dying, a whole town; this little village was being sold.

Yes, it seemed that the man who owned these shacks also owned, or mostly owned, the baseball field of the Pittsburgh Pirates. He had just sold the field to the University of Pittsburgh. These shacks he had bought from the company many years ago; obviously they (and his other "investments") had paid off well, for he could bandy millions of dollars about, in proposed deals, with no visible strain. He got $2 million for his share in the playing field. Pittsburgh that week was agitated, not over unemployment, but over the problem of getting a new baseball field for the city, and the politicians were buzzing around the honey pot of city-financed deals like flies.

Well, these shacks were the source from which a good part of those dollars originally came, just as money from the whore-houses often found its way to supporting the churches and cathedrals and foundling homes of the cities.

The Frosty Run shaft of Robena Mine No. 3 is a collection, on the surface, of zinc-colored buildings that reveal absolutely nothing of the tragedy deep within, several miles underground. But over the vast intricate-chambered mines the denuded hills have a brooding, brown look, like mounds covering not only the fresh dead but the older dead of many yesterdays. I look over the hills and over the cluster of buildings through

which they toted the canvas-covered dead—some in pieces, put helter-skelter together to make a man—and I'm filled with a sense of horror, with the special horror of our times, the same horror I felt when I looked across the empty, unspeaking acres of Buchenwald in Germany where hundreds of thousands once shuffled in slow columns to the ovens, in a crime so huge as to escape all standards of retribution, except the fundamental, all-cleansing storm of revolution, which came to only one part of that criminal nation, eliminating its ruling class.

This is a small part of the same truth. It's all so simple here. Men work hard all their lives and produce enormous wealth. They get back only a fraction of what they produce; that fraction is enough to keep them going but never to give them a chance to lift their heads, for any secure length of time, above the waters in which they flounder.

TODAY, tens of thousands of miners, steelworkers, textile workers, rubber workers, etc., are being thrown out on the scrap heap as useless. Gild it anyway you like, the reality is that these men are surplus in fact, they gather at government offices to get "surplus" cheese, butter and bacon. Automation is supposed to be the villain. But automation merely speeds up and intensifies the process that has been at work here for many, many years. For the villian is still the system which accumulates immeasurable power for destruction against the rest of the world, and meanwhile this same power slowly kills off its own workers, bit by bit, keeping it all under a cloak of words and phrases, controlled by a bureaucracy, and worst of all, most insidious of all, the workers themselves are slowly, remorselessly robbed of confidence, militancy and hope. They fall into apathy. They sit around and wait.

Over 90,000 steel workers, thousands of coal miners, and thousands of the young coming out of school, sit around and wait. They listen to TV, they go to the corner bar, they tinker forever on the motors from their jalopies and get them to stay alive long enough to take them back-and-forth before they break down again.

Cynics claim that there is really nothing more to the life of the American working class than this: that they have been bought off with Bob Hope on TV, 3.2 beer from FDR Roosevelt, a second-hand car, inside plumbing, Supplementary Union Benefits, Social Security and a pension.

But this is far from the truth. Never before in their history perhaps is there more hidden anger among the workers than today. There has never been greater insecurity, and the dangerous apathy is not indifference but the absence of practical hope. The thousands of paid union "organizers" keep a tight grip over the union machine to save it from the Left; they fear the Left more than the devil fears holy water.

But the old workers themselves are "living through" the positive aspects of what they've won after decades of struggle, and cling to those benefits, while the young workers, who already take them for granted, push forward to greater rights and benefits. This new generation, the sons of the fathers who sacrificed so much, do not remember, are cynical, impatient, demanding. Some deviate into scabbing, strike-breaking, non-union voting in elections. But this is a symptom, not a change.

American labor faces the greatest crisis of its history in the next few years. The need for an active, militant Left is felt in the very bowels of the American working class. It will give birth to that Left as surely as day follows night. Its destiny is to free itself, fully and completely; and it cannot fail.

At this writing, I have no word on how the Robena Mine disaster will be resolved. Will justice prevail? Not for the 37 men, nor for their widows, though the death money buys their widows and children new clothes in which to attend the funerals. But mine disasters are only a dramatic climax to conditions which kill the miner and his family every day, as they kill the lives of all American workers each day in their own fashion.

There is no finish to this article; only the date line changes.

Clarksburg, W. Va., April 27: The explosion in the Compass No. 2 coal mine that killed 22 men Thursday night came soon after a state mining inspector had reported serious safety violations in the mine ...

Clarksburg, W. Va. April 30: Visible evidence indicates ignition of methane gas near a loading machine set off the explosion which killed 22 men last Thursday in the Clinchfield Coal Co's No. 2 mine, an investigating committee said today ...

May 1: President Kennedy expressing concern over the deaths of 59 coalminers in recent explosions, ordered an urgent Federal investigation of mine safety practices and regulations today. The President told Secretary of the Interior Stewart I. Udall to act immediately. ...

That is, if Mr. Udall, having dined so jovially with that old lion, John L. Lewis, can be persuaded that the death of 59 miners means anything to anybody. In between testimonials to mine union leaders, the ordinary miner keeps dying. Only four months separated the agony in Robena from the agony in Dola, West Virginia. . . .

And tomorrow?

THE DAY WE BEAT ARMY

CARL LARSEN

AFTER an initial spurt, the faucet dribbled off, and then there was nothing.

No hot water again. Paul inspected his face in the mirror, wondering if he could get away with not shaving. To hell with it, he thought, and immediately felt pleased at the energy he would save, the pain he would avoid by this small betrayal.

To make up for it, he held a washrag under the tap, squeezed it out, and vigorously washed his face. That was better. He felt wide awake. Straightening up, he spread his lips. Two rows of nearly perfect white teeth appeared in the mirror. Only four fillings in thirty-eight years. It pays to take care of yourself. He breathed deeply. The air, even in the bathroom, was cold. But it was good; got you going in the morning.

The winter daylight seeped slowly down between the buildings. Across the way, a light went on behind the frosted window of a bathroom. That would be the Puerto Rican who ran the grocery store across the street, dragging out of bed to get down and receive his morning bread delivery.

Obliquely, Paul listened to a distant toilet flushing as he slipped on his grey work shirt. Staring at the ceiling and working with the top button, he sighed. The Knicks had probably lost again last night. They were playing the Celtics at the Garden, and rarely beat them there. He'd have to remind Helen to pick up some tickets for the next time Boston was in town. Russell was great, but Cousy was still the old master when it came to ball-handling.

He stood on tip-toe and looked out the bathroom window watching his breath crystalize and disappear. It would be cold on the docks this morning. And he'd need a new pair of gloves before the winter was over. He frowned, drew back, and closed the window. Helen would be getting up soon, and wouldn't want the wind coming in on her back. He heard her stirring in the bedroom, in her seventh month, and uncomfortable even in sleep. He thought of last night. He had forced

her, and she had moaned in pain. He turned back to the mirror, carefully avoiding his own gaze.

He wanted to hurry so that he could catch last night's scores on the radio. The news should be on in a couple of minutes. A shame, really, that they never gave much newspaper space to the soccer games. Even though the season was over, all you ever heard was pro basketball scores, talk of Spring training in Florida and the Yankees, and a few rehashings of the pro football playoff game. He had played basketball and soccer at college, and had been good. He felt that he could still probably stand up with most men his age. How old was Cousy? Well, Cousy hadn't been slinging freight on the docks for fifteen years, either.

Involuntarily, he straightened up and tightened the muscles in his arms. Yes, good shape, still in good shape. Hardly changed, he thought, since then. He smiled and narrowed his eyes, and his mind flew back to that moment of absolute triumph years ago, the day they beat Army. It was warm in him, a thing he could touch any time he wanted.

THE raggedy untouted soccer team from City College, travelling upstate to West Point, presumably to become another cold statistic in Army's fabulous string of victories. Only they hadn't.

From the opening instant, he and the other kids on the team had sensed that they could win. The role of the underdog suited them, and they had grown closer because of it, sensing one another's moves and fakes, and feeding him because he was hot. He had made no mistakes; he was there when the ball was. As it progressed, he could feel the game beginning to revolve around him. A power that he had never known flowed through him, a feeling that had not lessened with the years. And then, hours too soon, the final gun. And victory swelled in him, bringing with it the fantasy of happy tears as his team mates hungered around him, and leaped in an excitement they could not contain.

Paul smiled, and recalled the pride he had felt when he read the Daily News the next morning:

> "What seemed to be an outclassed band of Beavers from CCNY pulled off the Upset of the Year yesterday at West Point. Army's victory string ended at 43 as the locals, sparked by Paul Redding, thumped the Cadets 4-1. Redding scored twice, once on a foul in the first half, and later, near the end of the game, to wrap it up with a brilliant 30-foot kick that faked the Army goalie out of his shoes. CCNY, going unranked into the game, should move into the top 10 on the strength of . . ."

The words came back to him easily. He still had the clipping

around somewhere. He'd have to ask Helen where it was.

The feeling raced through him again, and he felt a sudden, crazy urge to climb the three flights to the roof and . . . what? He stopped. Right: what? He looked directly into his own eyes as his blood slowed.

Well, he thought, well, maybe watch the sunrise. Over the slums. Watch the sun rise out of Flatbush, watch it move, unhurried, while he broke his back on the docks, to sink, again, somewhere off in New Jersey. The days were long, even now when they were supposed to be short. Friday had been tough, and he'd stopped in at Caesar's for a beer before coming home. The guys had teased him about having a first child after being married so long, about how he never came in any more. They were good guys, good natured, but the feeling was there. In many ways, he had never been able to sit around and drink with them until four came, and the bar closed. Sometimes he would go down for an hour or so, but it was never the same.

Helen used to go up to the Bronx and visit her folks sometimes, and he would take a couple of dollars and blow them with the guys. But since she got pregnant, she'd stayed pretty close to home. Home. He wondered what she'd been doing in this place for fifteen years, without any kids. They had married early, but he'd always done what was expected of him.

"Hey," Helen said, sleepily, "turn up the heat!"

"Just a minute. I'll build a fire under the bed."

No answer for a moment, then, "Why don't you knock on the pipes?"

He left the bathroom and came to the bed, kneeling beside her. She smiled, her head in a wreath of fine, black hair. Her eyes were closed and he surveyed her face. Her nose was classic, he thought, Roman. Her eyelashes curled just a trifle against he cheek. If the chin was a little weak, the contour of her face, a diamond, saved it. Beginning to fill out now, he thought, reaching full womanhood.

"The Super's an Eskimo," he said, putting his head down beside hers, on the pillow. "How's about a little breakfast for a starvin' working man?"

Quietly, he put his hand under the covers, resting it on her swollen breast. Almost imperceptibly, he felt her tighten. Then she kissed him. It was a signal for him to move, and he stood up. "Don't bother," he said, "I'll fix something."

"It's all right." She sat up and pulled the strands of hair away from her face. "Hand me my robe."

He laid the grey bundle of terrycloth down beside her and went into the kitchen to turn on the radio. "It snowed last night," he said.

"Oh, God," Helen said, "I was going shopping for a crib today. You think I should?"

"How do you feel?"

"All right."

"Be sure to wear your rubbers." The radio warmed up, and he adjusted the volume.

AT 6:30 the news came on. Celtics 127, Knicks 98. And the Rangers had lost their 7th straight, besides. No one was even figuring them for the playoffs. Well, he thought, we still have the Yankees in town.

Helen entered the kitchen, her robe open, exposing the taut bulge of her stomach. Its almost visible growth in the last month had fascinated him. She yawned and stretched, knowing he was watching her, then went into the bathroom.

Shutting the radio off, Paul got up and took the bread, mayonnaise, and bologna from the ice box, and began making his lunch.

"Oh, you know who called yesterday?" she said, through the door, "I forgot to tell you."

"Who?"

"Freddy Chillington. You remember him, don't you? He was in our class at City."

"Yeah." Paul remembered. The guy in the Drama Society, with Helen. "What'd he want?"

"He wants to come over and see us. He says he's between jobs right now."

Paul frowned. "There's nothing open at the docks."

"No, he's an actor. I think he's the only one in the Dram-Soc who actually got into acting. He's been up in Provincetown doing Macbeth."

"What did you tell him?"

She came out, putting a final hairpin into the tight bun she wore at the back of her head. "I told him to come by some evening this week. It's all right, isn't it?"

"Sure."

"He said he was on Broadway last year. He had a small part in something by O'Neill." She smiled to herself, obviously engaged in some memory.

The face of Chillington came back to him. Tall, thin lipped; a loudmouth. "Didn't you use to go with him?"

"We just went out a couple of times."

Chillington had a rather faggoty voice, if he remembered correctly.

"Well, nothing happened. We just went out."

He put his sandwiches into a paper bag, then rolled the top shut. Suddenly he felt her behind him, her arms around his middle, her stomach pressed against the small of his back.

"Jealous?" she asked, teasingly.

He turned around and took her into his arms. "Nobody wants a fat old married woman," he said.

She snorted. "Don't be too sure!" Then she kissed him. Her mouth opened, and he felt her tongue flicking at his upper lip, forgiving him for last night.

He drew back. "Save some for when I get home," he said. "Who else called? Any other old flames?"

She shook her head. "Just my mother."

"How is she?"

"My brother's going to Dentistry school next Fall."

"Finally made up his mind, huh?" He tried to work up some interest. The doctor had told him to try and be extra understanding while she was pregnant. Avoid arguments. Personally, Paul thought Helen's brother was worthless: he had a soft life, little ambition, and Paul secretly suspected he was mentally retarded. No sense in starting things now.

"Yep," Helen said, "now we can get all our teeth pulled out free when we get old and grey."

"I'm ready now. I didn't sleep very well last night, and I'm bushed."

Monday is usually easier, isn't it?"

"A little. But a two-hundred pound box still weighs two-hundred pounds. And someone has to move it."

He went back into the bathroom and began combing his hair. He heard her take down the frying pan.

"Helen?"

"Uh-huh?"

He grinned. "You remember the day we beat Army?"

"Do you ever let me forget it? Christ, Paul, you'd think that was all you ever did."

Silence.

"Paul?"

He came out of the bathroom, vigorously drying his hands.

"Paul," softer.

"Uh-huh?"

"Why?"

"I donno. I was just thinking about it. I just wonderd if you still have the newspaper clipping around." He looked up. She was putting strips of bacon into the pan, an almost-smile on her face. Hastily, he added, "I saw one of the guys from the team the other day. He works for one of our truckers."

"Who was it?"

"Stan—Stan Reubens." He flushed, feeling that she knew he had lied.

"Aren't you going to shave?"

"The water's cold. Probably cut my throat,"

"Eggs?"

"Fine." He sat down at the table, feeling uncomfortable, as she broke two eggs into the frying pan.

"I think we should get an exterminator in before the baby comes. No matter how often I spray, there's always roaches."

THE doctor had said he could forsee no difficulties, that whatever had caused her miscarriage must have healed over the years. "Well, in a couple of years, I'll have enough seniority to move into the office. That is, if Herb ever retires. Then we can afford to move, maybe. I don't want to raise my kid in this dump."

Her eyebrows lifted, but she said nothing.

He continued. "Do you?"

She shrugged. "It's all right."

"Well, if they don't put up more heat, it'll be bad for the kid." She set the plate of bacon and eggs before him, and put two slices of bread in the toaster. Then she turned back to the stove, to get the water for instant. "By the way, if you're going out today, could you pick me up a new pair of work gloves? These are all worn through at the fingers."

"Can it wait until you get paid? I have to pay the insurance."

"Sure. No rush." He began to eat, and she drifted back into the bedroom. He felt that there was something wrong with her.

In a moment she was back, and sat down across from him at the small table. "Paul," she said, "why do you talk about that game so much?"

He thought quietly, wedging a piece of egg between his fork and a strip of bacon. "I wasn't aware that I talked about it so much."

"You don't. But sometimes you do."

"It was just something I did. Something I was proud of."

"Hasn't there been anything since then? That you were proud of?"

Without smiling, he looked at her stomach as she sat back, winked, and finished his eggs.

She cracked, and smiled broadly, getting up. I'll look for the clipping today."

"It's all right. I was just trying to remember some of the guys on the team. Don't worry about it.'" He rose, taking his plate and fork to the sink.

Paul stood there, watching the cold water run onto his plate, and evenly over the edges. Now he would take down his coat and hat, and go to work, and by the time he got home, it would be dark and cold again.

Had the days seemed so long, back when they were first married? He couldn't recall. Then, sex was only a necessity. His father had gotten him the job, and he and Helen had quit school and were married. Things had been strained with both their parents at first. Then, the miscarriage, the sober talk from the doctor. No, days weren't so long, then. He had been promoted to Head Checker after only two years. The position had been fine for awhile, but money had been tight. And he'd asked to go back on as a tail-man, where he could knock down the tips from the drivers. It added up. It all added up. The work was harder, of course, and he'd been too tired in the evenings to think about night school.

Helen must have believed that he was interested in his major in college, Engineering, because she kept urging him to go back. But the major was vague, and he had only chosen it because everyone had to have a major. He wanted to play soccer. He had been proud of his body and the way it responded to his commands, had felt the sureness and grace of his own body when he outmaneuvered an opponent. That had been something sure, something he knew he could do better than most others.

NOW, it seemed like those days had flown. They had probably seemed endless. Meeting Helen in college and slowly drawing her away from the drama crowd, taking her with him, carefully arousing her womanhood. He had been almost a star athlete, and he had been proud of her.

In the showers, his buddies had teased him—hey, ol' Paul looks tired tonight!—what's the matter, Paul, ain't you gettin' none?—he remembered the security and the steam, the smell of sweat.

He made no mistakes. He had kept her happy. He hadn't fooled around with other women because he had no need to. He had gone to plays with her occasionally, and, following her lead, had usually agreed with her criticisms of the theatre.

But then there was also fifteen years of living in the slums, of

never having quite enough money put away to move uptown, or into a house in one of the suburbs. She seemed content to wait, had agreed when he went back to handling freight. He would move up, would skip Head Checker, would move right into the Dispatcher's office, make a Dispatcher's pay. Wait. Fifteen summers and fifteen winters, and now there was the baby coming for her.

She had worried when she found out. But this time, she had carried it for seven months, and with each passing day, seemed more certain that it would work out. Strangely he thought of it as the same child that she had carried for him before they were married.

Women need children, he told himself, pleased that he was virile, that he desired her, that she still responded with much of the old abandon.

Helen had gone back to bed. He went into the bathroom. It's been a pretty good life, he thought. Then he smiled. Silly. He was not yet forty. But work was hard on the docks. He was waiting for something better. Waiting. How many tons of freight had he lifted onto the low, four-wheeled flats, and again unloaded into boxcars? A million?

Again the desire came over him to walk out the door and race up the stairs, breathing deeply, feeling his legs pump as they used to, feeling the old grace; to burst out onto the tenement roof and shout: "Listen, City? I see you getting up now, I see you every day! You're a lazy bunch of bastards, but not me—me, Paul Redding! The guy who beat Army!"

He opened his eyes and stared at himself in the mirror. He was breathing hard, and for no reason, his teeth were clenched. He forced himself to relax, and study the man standing before him.

Every line in the face was familiar, yet if he saw it himself, from the grandstands, say, would he remember the act, the goals—ones scored, missed, the ones, the other ones that somehow materialized?

In the mirror, he saw a roach behind him. Slowly, at its own pace, it moved down the wall, near the cold pipes. Going about its business, unperturbed by his presence.

He blinked hard, as if wiping the thoughts off the eyes in the mirror.

"What time is it, Helen?" he asked.

"Nearly seven." A sleepy voice.

"Guess I'll shave." He opened the medicine cabinet and reached for his razor.

LITTLE MAGAZINES IN AMERICA:

CONCLUSION OF SYMPOSIUM

With these few last contributions we bring our Little Mag symposium to a close. We would like to thank our Contributing editor, Walter Lowenfels, whose fertile imagination conceived the thing. For those who would like to review what writers and editors in the thick of the little magazine movement think, we refer them to the November and December 1962 Mainstreams. *All told, we received sixteen responses and, with this issue, met our promise of publishing everyone who replied to Walter Lowenfels original questionaire. Little re-editing was done because, we discovered, little magazine writers are developing a language of their own, coining new words, deliberately mispelling others. Charles Bukowski's reply is the only one which we have censored for obscenity, and there only in a few places. We have let most of the contributors swear their heads off. But Mr. Bukowski, as he confesses, was drinking when he wrote his reply. Since we weren't drinking when we edited him, nor do we think our readers will be drinking when they read him, we thought he had us at too much of an advantage. Therefore the XXXX's. We wish to publicly thank everybody who has contributed to the symposium. Walter Lowenfels called the little magazine movement a literary "underground of the USA that can't be stopped." Whether or not this is true—and some of the small editors themselves said it was not—it is a lively, fascinating movement. For those interested in a comprehensive listing of the world's independent periodicals, including little magazines, we suggest the Directory which appears in TRACE No.* 47, *which can be ordered for one dollar, from Villiers Publications, Box* 1068, *Hollywood* 28, *Calif.* (Ed.)

JOHN WILLIAM CORRINGTON, POET, NOVELIST

MY own development is inextricably linked with the little magazines, and for that reason they seem very important to me. For all their postures and clique, for all their fatuous pretensions and over-inflated conception of their role as uncorrupted literary conscience of America, the little magazines remain the breeding-ground of much significant contempory talent—and almost the *only* ground upon which the poet (as distinguished from the novelist, essayist or short story-writer) can set his feet with any degree of assurance.

But the little magazine, by the nature of its asserted purpose and because of its non-commercial position in an essentially commercial society, finds itself eternally trapped in the slim ground between two destructive forces.

On the one hand, the little magazine always lives with the danger of becoming a kind of esthetic curiosity. It finds (or its editors find) a certain kind of attraction in the notion of becoming the fountainhead of a new movement. The hallmark of a 'movement' is its exclusiveness —usually figured forth in terms of obscurity, peculiarity, and a cold refusal to make even the smallest gesture of willingness to become a viable part of the 'world outside' its charmed circle.

On the other hand, and I think no less dangerous, is the temptation to become, for better or worse, "totally committed." It is fashionable in some circles to be *engagee.* The cause, or the judgment as to whether little magazine hustling can aid the cause, is relatively unimportant.

In the first category, one cannot help mentioning THE CHICAGO REVIEW under Rosenthal. That his removal from the editorship was both summary and unwarranted is, I think, generally agreed. Yet his determination to print the "underground" and nothing else had, in point of fact, turned the REVIEW into something of a yawn-piece among those of us who admire Corso, Ginsberg and Burroughs' work, but prefer a more varied diet. The same charge is leveled at the short-lived BIG TABLE. Both magazines stopped being reviews: they became documents. Others of the sort though more subtly guilty, are THE PARTISAN REVIEW, THE SEWANEE REVIEW, and a number of other large quarterlies. They smack of clique. What they print, like their commercial cousin, THE NEW YORKER, has the stench of closed corporation about it. To the degree that this is true, they fail to be useful. They introduce us to nothing; they review only their own stale conceptions over and over. There is no profit in this. There is no health and diversity in it.

In the second, one must lump those magazines and editors which have found anti-war propaganda, racial injustice, or internecene battle with other poetic factions to be proper matter for literary quarterlies. In my own opinion, this sort of thing is beyond the scope of a magazine. It may be well—it is—within the scope of the writer to handle the problem of nuclear war or racial injustice. I have written and published work bearing on both. But a magazine has, I think, the responsibility to print the best work it receives—not to fish and dredge for poems or stories pointing out the moral of war's immortality. A magazine which seeks material to 'point up' the Negro's anomalous and unhappy position in American society is simply mistaking its function. Indignation may well

have been the keynote of Ida Tarbell's success; without doubt it was indignation that swelled the ranks of the ill-fated Abraham Lincoln brigade. But as indignation does not serve in place of brains, so it does not act as a guage of literary merit. If such rubbish as 'social relevance' is the canon applied to Wallace Stevens, the result is a devaluation of Stevens. I take it my readers would grant the absurdity of any measure that would give such a result. If James Joyce were measured by his handling of social problems as such, the result would be the same. On the other hand, if being *engagee* is a kind of *sine qua non,* a final criterion, I expect Upton Sinclair is the greatest novelist ever turned out in the history of American letters.

In the same general area of 'causes' one might fit the spectacle of MUTINY's recent crusade against 'the beats.' The editors of that occasional magazine solicited signatures last year for a petition which claimed that 'the beats are NOT poets.' The signatures they garnered were, for the most part, predictable: but the absurdity of their contention (as well as the vagueness of their target) brought a kind of sustained and general horselaugh forth from both writers and readers sophisticated enough to understand literary-magazine low-comedy when faced with it.

To summarize these chaotic remarks: the literary magazine is caught forever between two opposed inclinations. On the the right is the temptation to flee from an essentially callous society into private symbology—and private-club magazines. On the left is the prospect of 'influencing world affairs' by grappling with the problems of an immensity beyond both their proper scope and their obvious capacity.

It is not easy to be a first-rate literary magazine. Writers and editors tend to be thinkers and feelers as well. But the finest magazines manage somehow to combine rigorous and realistic standards of literary merit with a continuing consciousness that literature is a product of life and its ramifications: not an escape from both. The best of the littles have no preconception concerning form or subject. The only axe they grind is wielded to chop away the phony and the empty. This balance, added to the well-known sacrifices most editors make, provides the American writer with an enviable platform for his work. If American literature is preeminent in this century, the little magazine has certainly a claim to having made it so.

LEE HOLLAND, EDITOR 'OUTCRY'

YOU call it "Underground" if your nose tells you that it smells of old cemetaries and bold undertakings; you may even call it "Resistance"

if it reminds you of the last whisper of air climbing from any enclosure-vacuum; you might even stoop so far as to invest it with some Vesuvian praenomen to swell it classically. You do what you want with it but, generally speaking, it smacks of rabid diathesis from this viewpoint.

Naturally, I am disregarding, totally, the "extra-terrestrial" aspects of publication when I say this. In doing so, we inevitably come down to some sketchy interior analysis of the foray and find that we, as editor-writer-reader, are contribally castigated with the one diabolic event we never allowed ourselves before, i.e. commitment—unavoidable and, once taken, unalterable. Unfortunately, perhaps for both the reader and writer, this amuletic phenomena manifests itself primordially in the fanatic heaps of massaged complexes in one form or another that abound within this wondrous world of little magazine-small press operation. It seems that the vast majority of the deific primates that infest this profession of editorship have groped their ways, collectively, from the jungles of secret, obsolvent readings to an uninterested ancestry in the hot circle of political intrigue—zap, you're a proofreader. The rest of the one-act-one-theme farce is easy, mayhap too much so. . . .

After gnashing of teeth and wailing about printing fees, relegated to knocking knees in the shadow of *status quo* with their pitiable offering on the altar of art, they bitterly sweep out hesitance and take it on, a cause. *Any* cause, so long as there is the handy, defensive excuse ready-to wear and healthy for the priming. In retrospect and prospect, of the "independent" littles now so abundant, there are so few of that mighty mass with a genuine offense to offer on literary values than any comparison with the technique-methodology of the others is all but blasphemy. *Avant* (the term) has begun to indicate, in actuality, an existence bordering on stasis, living in hindsight of seasons. But you are absolutely correct in saying it ". . . can't be stopped." I am tempted to ask everyone I meet, who in hell would want it if it were? Undoubtedly, for those *avants* to which I am referring, come the little, bare justifications, the insidious, manacled speeches they give each other about little mags being the "last frontier of the experimental" (true, in some cases), the place where impreened prestige was gained, the only vestige of honesty and superior sacrifice left for the individualist. If they are the last frontier (of anything), I ask myself how cum so many who invariably mutter the same trysts; if this is where the leis are garnered, how cum none support the weary: and, certainly, if this is where one finds the last wretches of self-appraisal and appraisal, why all the magnificent parodies of P. T. Barnumism *re* editorial politics ameliorating every other editor/contributor?

Exaggerations? Yes, I admit to a portion of them. Only, however, for the sake of continuous constructivism, for negation and destruction of old, faked systems must come before commitment can ever begin. We *are* weary of the chaotic fifties; once that twitching roar was echoing out, we began to think we had the raging chamelon by the hair, subdued, domesticated. But we had never really met the crux of the matter. We were still publishing magazines (and still are) that had the same, vitriolic breaches of literarium with the same, calliopmouthed editors with whom we had begun the clatter; we thought name and location conversion would produce the illusory success, whatever its paltry characteristics and soiled banners. In essence, we had created a new breed of Frankenstein, traded peanuts for microzoa, bad beer for flat, and chess for tin-can hockey. Whatever we were before, we had become once again —and still uncommitted.

Fortunately, there were those few who did something about the problem, even through that mad time. *Miscellaneous Man, Whetstone, Between Worlds* (though sometimes with problems of their own); there were a few. *Targets* and *Wormwood Review* suffered later. There were more that found little other than shifty eyeing among that angry rabble. But too, too few. To them go our deepest reverence. And the sanguine attitudes of those carried to many of whom they never even dreamed. The foul multitudes that were and are left at least keep our pagination and schedule of clean irrelevant Narcissisms. That alone earns them my best wishes to continue for massive milliards.

The pity of it all is that vital committment to a lasting credo comes to so few, yet is quite accessible for considerate, consistent usage. It is only a matter of a moment's reflection before that next acceptance. The lit pipe before signing that rejection slip. A brief light in the dark pressroom. The ease of bewailing our solvency lack is frightening in application. Likewise for the swollen university press wallet, a lack of award audiences, the *avant-avant* cliques. Under commitment, none of these is the centurion that stabs. We realize that, given "angels," we would search out sanitarian principles. Arbitrarily sated with "group" funds, we would adhere to purposeful purpose no better than diligent academies; marshmallowed with "right" subscribers, we would buy the advertising, wheedle the reviews, beg distribution and, in short, breed more readers to whom we could bow subserviently for our "responsible" lack of editorial arson.

With commitment, the act of publication itself becomes essential, personal; each submission a challenge, each finite correspondent another goad to accomplish Promethean goals until there is no more growth (professional and personal) to be grown, no perceptions beyond those just seen, no magnitudes beyond the level just reached.

From the beginning, but especially now, OUTCRY became a commitment. For me and for itself. Everyday it becomes more of one, more insatiable, demanding of itself the unaccomplished and incomprehensible.

Anyone care to join himself?

CHARLES BUKOWSKI, POET

IT might be a little too late to hear about the "littles" from me, and also the horses walked over me today, so all in bad shape, so, hell, fine, I'll tell you all that I know about the "little" magazines. They are a scurvy lot, most of them, run by homosexuals, madmen, posers, people with acne, fast-buckers, snivelers, religious old ladies, whippers of hounds and so forth. Mail out a selection of poetry and chances are:

a. you won't get it back.
b. you'll get it back with a promise of publication but it will never be published.
c. your work will be returned, after some years, without either a rejection slip or a note.
d. they will think you a genius and they will come to your door to look at you and drink your beer and talk.
e. you will get semi-literary letters from divorced ladies with children or from ladies with various maladies such as:
    1. missing leg.
    2. overfat butt
    3. a love for Henry James.
    4. a stock of old poems about the sea and the moon.

Many of these magazines are started by young people without drive or followthrough, imbued with the first flush of life without mama, tangled with tapes, gin, easy lore, unrealistic romanticism, manes, scandals, accents, politics, the front-lawn love of dogs, familiarity with jazz and a touch of pot, and god knows what else and God doesn't damn well care and neither do I, except they waste our time, my time, and I'm an old bear and I have some talent but not much time, and if I am going to waste it myself and not have it done for me by a group of amateurs who believe the Literary Life is something they've read somewhere instead of being New when our blood can hardly bear the world, and the only honor is carving what we can before they find us dead in some alley and our canned heat and our pale purple rejects from POETRY CHICAGO.

We are at the mercy of these people, these fakirs, because the way we write can only be sent, with our liquored grief of homage, to small publications that will not be seen laying around on chairs in the barber-shop or on Aunt Emma's frontporch swing or down with her bloomers in the bottom drawer either. We've got to take the gamble and hope it's better than betting the horses; but the horses have been g.d. better and the whores, and the rats too. I've lost over 200 poems into the space of literary amateurism and fakism and soft-ass-ism. I do not keep carbons. Why not? you ask. That's a thing in the mind that tells me that if I keep carbons, I too am a posturer looking for gravy and easy light. Hell, you say, haven't you any respect for your work? No, no, I don't. Not *after* it's written. Then, it's dead. Who wants Christmas trees in April? And yet I bitch because these poems (and stories) have been destroyed or ass-wiped, I bitch not out of personal loss of a creation of Art (?) but from the fact that they will not face up, these putrid over-night editors; they hide, destroy, malface, eradicate, pollute, damage, piss-on, masterbate away the little hope I have of honor between men and women and g.d. trees and silence and a rose whacking it up in a glass of liquor.

I shoot these things out on a thin stem to these people because when I get drunk I write a good deal and I am drunk a good deal of the time and I get embarrassed sending poems to the same places especially when these places tend to accept my work. It is like going to the same whore 2 nights in a row; it just isn't done. If the thing is still working you got to stick it somplace else.

Little magazines (and I wish to god they wouldn't call themselves "little" but literary; it is a mind state that builds smallness—let's use the good words) tend to start well if they are going to start at all, but it is not long before they begin to be formed by pressures, the pressures of opinions and other editors, critics, readers, writers, printers, street car conductors, lady friends, university libraries, enuchs, soothsayers, sub scribers, punks, dilletantes, clowns, fame-seekers, and the steam and stench and grip and strappade of going down to the heavy Voice of the Thing Outside telling us what to do. Eventually the average literary magazine becomes the front room of one group of tea drinkers. This ravage of reality and wideness is most common and those who break bread together also toss the worn ribbons of their Underwoods into the same shrine and praise and comradey, ejaculating warm literary hand-shakes across the same worn table. Shit, this does not make ART! I would rather run in the forest with ten dogs looking for some poor stick of meat than have hand in their photo-snapping, all-engulfing GROUPS: BLACK MOUNTAIN; BIG TABLE; GINSBURG, CORSO,

BURROUGHS, WHAT THE HELL else group the mountain-sheep watchers and so forth. And Martinelli writes me that old man Pound knew what he was doing and that the Communists are xxxxxx. I agree that old man Pound *sometimes* knew what he was doing but I will not admit that the Communists are xxxxxx. I would rather admit to the obvious: that mankind, given the soul and the opportunity of the history of centuries of Art and History and what else, turns it down for a can of beans and a light in the mirror that makes monkeys, I will only admit that Mankind is (or are) xxxxxx.

What I am getting at with all this slaver is that you don't have to be a xxxxx to use one. Nor do you have to use one to be one. The little magazines, on the whole, are a xxxxx mess. You wouldn't catch me at the nearest bar with one, or any other place where I have to, or hope to, hold my head high for a little while.

And when we are all dead, and the small weeping ceases and the grass grows on the countryside and the rabbit comes out and stares stupidly at the sunshine, then, I guess, baby, it will be clean for a while—for a while—for a while—you can't have it all—you can't have it all—we don't have it g.d. now!

Ah, I know the subject was the Little Magazine. What a subject. Let's talk about the use of the 4-edged screwdriver. I'm out of beer. I have 4 dollars left which will buy me 12 good bottles plus a pack of cigarettes. The whiskey makes blood. Met a guy on the corner today, black beard, asked me for 50 cents. Glad I didn't give it to him. Might have been a little magazine editor.

Memorial for Federico Garcia Lorca

In Spain of the year 1936,
in the July city of Granada, Republic of Spain,
five vagrants, five Catholic sons,
five soldiers under the banner,
"Down With Intelligence! Long Live Death!",
seized the gypsy poet of Spain,
poet of joys and sorrows,
poet of our deeper needs,
took him from the house of Luis Rosales,
placed him against an anonymous wall
and censored the poetry of his body
with bullets.

At that moment,
at that tragic fragment of violence,
a covey of birds frisked into the horizon
like screeching arrows of song,
announcing that Federico Garcia Lorca
had entered the eternity of art.

Today the five assassins of intellect
freely walk shaking hands with tourists,
with American officers,
with professors of literature—eating, drinking, loving,
actually alive.

But gardens of Spanish agony whisper,
the mines whisper, the factories, the vinyards,
the parched prisons whisper:
"See the five rich gangsters,
see the five heroes of Franco,
see the five brave matadors of one poet."

LESLIE WOOLF HEDLEY

O'NEILL'S "LONG DAY'S JOURNEY"

THE motion picture made of Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey Into Night* enables many thousands of peoples whose chances of ever attending a live performance are slight to see one of the very greatest plays ever written in America. A motion picture, which is essentially the art of the eye, can never be of course a fully adequate substitute for a live performance of a play, which is essentially an art of speech. But the director, Sidney Lumet, has overcome the difficulty admirably by keeping his camera moving sufficiently for the eye to be occupied, while remaining true, but for some cuts, to the drama as O'Neill wrote it. Ralph Richardson as the retired actor who was once a matinee idol, and Katherine Hepburn as his once beautiful wife, now a drug addict slipping towards insanity, give what could well be the greatest performances of their career. Jason Robards Jr. as the older son James, who dissipates his life in alcoholism and whoring, repeats the splendid performance he gave on the stage, Dean Stockwell as the younger son Edmund a lad of poetic gifts, who has gone off to sea and returned with lung tuberculosis, was selected, I suspect for the "Hollywood" reason of looking the part rather than any ability to give the full meaning and implications to O'Neill's lines. But if he does not make the most of his part, he does not spoil it.

Freudian?

MANY viewers, observing the pattern of an apparently happy and prosperous middle-class family rent by frustrations and hatreds, at first hidden and then flaring out, with the sons attached to the mother and despising the father, will apply to the play a "Freudian" label. But it is not a Freudian play. It is true that Freud brought such patterns of family life into public discussion. But he took them

out of their history and social contradictions, "explaining" them with his own arbitrary invention of eternally unchanging "instincts," of the son always desiring his mother in love and hating his "rival," the father, of the individual yearnings for the untrammeled freedom of the "libido," and the "libido" imprisoned by an eternally repressive society, of the eternal Oedipus Complex and "death wish." But O'Neill the artist has an insight much truer and deeper than that of Freud the psychologist, an insight which rises from his awareness of the actualities of life and of the relation between the forces of society and what happens in the mind. O'Neill discloses the tragic situation of a woman in a society where private property is sacred and the male—property owner and breadwinner—is supreme, so that however frustrated and broken she may be by her marriage, she is so barred from any path to independence and freedom that even the possibility of it never enters her mind. Further, O'Neill shows the obsessive power of money over the mind in a competitive society where money has become the supreme embodiment of good, the magic key to the satisfaction of all human wants, so that the drive to possess it and the haunting fear of not having it come to overwhelm all human values and attachments. We learn how this fear is so ever present that a person is no more conscious of it than of his own breathing.

AS the play develops, the audience becomes aware first of the father's miserliness. He seems to be in a perpetual war with a world constantly stretching its claws out for his hard-earned money, his guarantee against dying in the poor house. And like many such misers, he is an easy pray for get-rich-quick swindles and purchases worthless pieces of land. The house they live in is disliked by the whole family, but it was a "bargain." His youngest son, whom he loves, has tuberculosis and the father deludes himself that a free, overcrowded sanitarium will provide better care than a costly private one. He goes about the house turning off electric lights to save pennies. When his wife had had difficulty with the birth of the second son, he had gotten a "bargain" doctor and it could have been as a result of the improper care that she first turned for relief to narcotics.

But James Tyrone is not a hard figure, rather a soft pathetic and defeated one. We learn of how at the age of ten, he had been the oldest child in an Irish immigrant family. Their father had deserted them, and gone back to Ireland. The mother had supported them by washing and scrubbing other people's houses. Once she had gotten a dollar tip, and she came home

with a bag of groceries, weeping and saying that at least that one day all of them would have enough to eat. The boy had gone to work in a machine shop for fifty cents a week. And so, in youth, the "power of a dollar" had burned itself into his mind. He had become an actor, of immense promise, and consuming love for the stage. He was spoken of as a successor, in Shakespearean roles, to the great Booth. But then he had made a fantastic success as the hero in a tawdry, sentimental melodrama, which he played year in and year out over the country. How could he give up the sure income this gave him? And so his talent, in the end, had gone down the drain. Very subtly, O'Neill shows how the father becomes aware of his money obsession, saying that perhaps the "power of a dollar" had burned too deep in him, and yet even while he says this he begins to defend himself and is unaware of how much this obsession still guides his thought and action.

Then there is the mother. She had been a shy, sensitive, sheltered and pretty girl, eager for love and yet afraid of life, romantically planning to live a life of dedication as a nun. But the Mother Superior had told her to wait one more year before entering the convent, to make certain that this was her vocation. And during that year she had met, in her father's house, the handsome, glamorous, actor, James Tyrone, the idol of all theatre goers. She had fallen madly in love, and they had gotten married. But then came disappointment and bewilderment. She did not have the home she wanted, she could not bring up her children as she wanted. It was a life ofwearying travel, of cheap hotels, of no companionship, of a kind of unconscious cruelty by her husband because he did love her. After the painful experience of the second childbirth, she had turned to narcotics, and alcohol. But the reason was not so much physical pain, as that this seemed to represent the only way of escape open to her.

THE older son, James Tyrone Jr., had seen the two people to whom he was mostly attached, who meant all of life to him, his mother and his younger brother, slowly being destroyed. Bitterly he blamed his father for this. But there was nothing he could do except helplessly watch the destruction going on, and this impotence had led him to drink, becoming, as the father derisively says, the family "tramp." And the younger son, Edmund, a talented poet, tubercular, finds himself utterly alone in the midst of a family he loves. He is alienated from his father, because of the harsh barrier of the father's penuriousness; from his mother, because she is drifting into a private world of her own, wants to face none of his problems, sees

him as only her "darling baby;" from his older brother, because his brother is dissipating his life in alcoholism.

The play is a masterpiece of dramatic writing. O'Neill beginning it in 1939 at the age of fifty, had attained a realistic style in the highest artistic sense of the term; the ability to unfold the deepest psychological conflicts and truths while presenting what seemed to be actual people in wholly credible and unaffected relationships. He had transcended the expressionistic devices for which he had previously felt the need; the masks of *The Great God Brown,* the religious-poetic symbolism of *Lazarus Laughed,* the interior monologues of *Strange Interlude,* the mechanical transference of Greek myths to modern times in *Morning Becomes Electra.* The reason of course was not the sudden discovery of a new style but the ability, finally, to see the psychological problems that had so occupied him in their most realistic objective and socially engendered light. Curiously, when in the earlier plays he had transferred a problem arising from his own life to other people in other circumstances, the result instead of becoming more objective, had become more subjectivist, as the expressionistic devices indicated. But now in *Long Day's Journey Into Night,* when he has thought the problem through, faced it directly, and seen it in its social setting, he can write about himself but the subjectivism disappears. It is no secret that in this play he is portraying his father, his mother, his older brother and his own youth. But the level of understanding is such that the question of whether or not the play is autobiography, hardly matters. The play has become a searching insight into what bourgeois society does to the human beings in it. And more specifically, it reveals a chapter of American history; the contradictions in the life of the Irish immigrants to America, which paralleled those of all the other people who came as immigrants to the "land of promise."

Masterful

THE construction is masterly. The play is a long one, the movie version with some cuts and no act breaks running for almost two and a half hours. All the action takes place in a single day, and the one setting is the living room of the Tyrone home, in the countryside near the sea. Except for a servant girl who appears in one scene, there are but these four characters, and what they say seems at all times perfectly natural and unrestrained. There is but one "event." The visit to the doctor, which confirms the fact that Edmund has tuberculosis. This serves to generate the disclosure of a tragic history covering two generations. It is a drama not so much of action as of continuous revelation of new depths with each disclosure engendering another, and the whole moving with inevitability to the awesome impact of the last words. They are quite simple words. The mother, who has now completely lost touch with reality and is reliving her adolescent years, is speaking while the other three are silently listening.

She had wanted to become a nun, she says, but the Mother Superior had advised her to wait a year. How could such a wise woman have given her such bad advice? For in that year she had met the attractive actor, James Tyrone. They had gotten married. Then, she says, "We were happy — for a time."

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

We would like to call our readers' attention to a book by Hal Driggs, *Land of Neversee.* It is a satirical fantasy for the young of heart, with illustrations. Readers of *Mainstream* may remember Mr. Driggs' story in the August, 1962 issue, "The Fox," written under the pseudonym, Hal Craig. *The Land of Neversee* may be ordered from the author at Bayside Press, 2586 Diamond Street, San Francisco 12, Calif.

off the record

The Blues:

The Delta and Chicago

THE path of the blues, like the path of its close brother, jazz, made its way up and over many bends of the Mississippi, from the Delta to the sprawling South Side of Chicago. Above all else, the blues is the music of the American Negro. The authentic blues is never stereotyped, for each is the song of an individual, screaming, crying, and sometimes even slyly smiling. To understand the blues is to understand that each song is the intense expression of a single man with a name of his own, a soul of his own, a man whose color has been used as a reason for depersonalizing him, for forcing the anguished cry "Nobody knows my name!"

From the early 1920's when the Wisconsin Chair Company started Paramount Records in order to sell its phonographs on the Chicago South Side to the Crown and Chess, blues singers have recorded unimpeded by the commercial restrictions of lilly-white tin pan alley.[1] Their audience demanded high standards of musicianship and poetry, for unlike the "5 foot 2, eyes of blue" hit tunes of the day, the blues had to say something strong to each listener as an individual. If a singer did a half-done job, there were few coins in his hat, and his records did not sell.

Robert Johnson

WITH the renewed interest in the blues, both in jazz and folk music circles, many record companies have re-issued the old 78 RPM "race records" produced by Vocalion, Paramount, Okeh and others on LPs. Probably, the most important and outstanding of these re-issues is *Robert Johnson, King of the Delta Blues Singers,* (Columbia, CL 1654). Robert Johnson, who many leading blues authorities, including John Hammond and Samuel Charters, believe to be the greatest recorded blues singer, only had five recording sessions, all in November 1936 and June 1937. A few months later, at the age of 21, he was poisoned by his girlfriend.

Robert Johnson had just started his professional career at the time of his murder, but the power and the intensity of his blues and the variety of guitar accompaniment he used was not only professional in precision but expressed a stark beauty that many of the older professionals never attained. The "Me and the Devil Blues" draws tight the feelings of a man driven "evil" by the tough life he leads. The devil comes early in the morning and they walk side by side, evil as the devil. Johnson sings, He's going "to

beat my woman till I get satisfied." And if he catches his woman foolin' around with another man, lord, it's his "32-20" to "blow her half in two."

Sometimes the woman, as in "Traveling Riverside Blues," is keeping him in one town:

I'm going to stay around Jonesboro
until my teeth is crowned with
gold (repeat)
She's got a mortgage on my body, a
lien on my soul.

but even if it's talk about a woman, the language that Robert Johnson uses comes right out of the sharecrop system of his home area, Clarksdale, Mississippi, the "lien" and the "mortgage" being a part of every Negroe's life.

Robert Johnson had to keep moving for a blues singer could not make a living then or now in one city or area, but possibly a more drivng reason was the trouble and hard woman that haunted him in "Hell hound on my Trail.":

I got to keep moving, I got to keep
moving,
Blues falling down like hail, blues
falling down like hail.
I can't keep no money, Hellhound on
my trail
Hellhound on my trail, Hellhound
on my trail.

But the road ahead was dangerous and Robert Johnson knew it when he sung "I got stones in my passway, and my road seems dark as night:"

My enemies have betrayed me, have
overtaken poor Bob at last (repeat)
And there's one thing certain, they
have stones all in my path.
Now you trying to take my life and
all my loving too.
You laid the passway for me, now
what are you trying to do,
I'm crying "Please, please, let us be
friends,
And when you hear the howling in
my passway, honey please don't let
me in."

Chicago

TODAY on the streets of Chicago's South Side, the country's largest Negro ghetto, the old names are forgotten. Robert Johnson and Blind Lemon Jefferson no longer make the front windows of record stores, but their blues are played and new blues are being made by Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker, B B King, Memphis Slim and many others. The blues men are no longer kings of the city as they were in the twenties and the thirties. The new dynasty is headed by Ray Charles and Fats Domino; Gospel groups second; and third but still important, the blues men. They play the clubs near 63rd and Cottage Grove, the red light district of Chicago, and appear at the Sutherland Hotel, a leading jazz center. Three or four times a year B B King will organize a night of the blues starting 12 midnight lasting until 4 or 5 a.m., an event that attracts thousands from all over the South Side. Pervis Span, "the rock and roll man" of WOPA, had a blues show 11:30 to 12:00 every night on the radio until 1962.

The blues are not dead, but they are different. Everything is electric, the guitars, the harmonicas, even the organs. The blues are more than ever an expression of the frustrations of the Negro people, but as these become more intensified, their expression has become more direct, more tense.

The South Side is row upon row of three story houses spread mile after

mile. Every three or four blocks there is a commercial street going east-west having two or three cleaners and bars on every block. You can not walk two blocks in this area without seeing or hearing the sirens of paddy wagons or patrol cars. It is an occupied city that expects an outbreak at any moment. Police do not enter in numbers of less than six. The houses that they enter are dark fire traps, over-priced in rent, under-heated in the winter, ovens in the summer. The only escape financially possible is to leave that house, dress real fine, go into the movie, eat high at the bar, and forget—listening to the blues. The guitar or piano doesn't have to be great, just driving with beat, so you can dance and forget.

When I first started Hoboin', hoboin,' hoboin'
I thought a freight train would be my frien'
You know I'm Hoboin', hoboin' a long way from home
You know my mother followed me that mornin', followed me to the yard
You know my son, he's gone, he's gone, he's gone, somewhere.

JOHN Lee Hooker with an electric guitar singing the "Hobo Blues" or "I'm in the Mood" keeps the customers moving in the South Side clubs. In the South Side *National Foods* chain his record *The Blues* (Crown, CLP 5157) hemmed in by the "white man's world" sells well at a dollar. Being pushed and hemmed in during the day, John Lee Hooker expresses that he is boss, big man with his woman at night; he is "a crawlin' king snake, an I rule my den, come give me what I want baby, an I wont crawl no more." His woman in "Queen Bee" has the best ole stinger you ever did see," but her love is never sure, because things might get tough! John's jobs run out and then she moves on.

She stung me this mornin' I been lookin' for my Queen Bee all day long.
She stung me in that place one time, Lord, I hate to see my Queen Bee leave home.

The South Side unemployment rate of 25% gets into the "House Rent Boogie." John plays a fast boogie behind his talk:

I come home last Friday, told the woman that I lost my job.
She say "That don't confront me so long as I have my rent next Friday."
I didn't have my rent so out the door I went.

The blues of today just as in Robert Johnson's time are the uncensored folk music of the American Negro. Although tin pan alley has become integrated to some extent, it has not progressed to the point where it will accept the frank and piercing outcry of a people about their own lives. There is little resemblance between Johnny Mathis' love songs and Chicago's South Side. *The Blues* of John Lee Hooker are authentic. They come from his own tears and from the cries of his people.

JOSH DUNSON

books in review

Feminine Mystique

*The Feminine Mystique** by Betty Friedan should be required reading for every woman college senior: it will be remembered, I predict, long after Aristotle and Diogenes have become dusty on the living room bookshelves.

Mrs. Friedan has articulated, at long last, the vague discontent that has been erupting among educated housewives for the last fifteen years. Dubbing it "The Problem That Has No Name," Mrs. Friedan catalogues its symptoms: boredom, a feeling of incompleteness, escape into sexual promiscuity, fatigue, and—worst of all—the production of passive, delinquent children who carry on these symptoms to the next generation.

The author traces the Problem back to pre-Susan B. Anthony days and—she maintains—the years before "The Vote" was granted to women, were our Finest Hour. The fight for women's rights changed women from mere chattels to human beings with character (much as today, perhaps, the fight for Negro Civil Rights is "bringing out" aspects of the Negro which are not as "innately submissive" as certain American whites would have us believe.)

The Let-Down

ONCE "The Vote" was obtained, however, something negative happened to intelligent women: a depression, when women's energies were channeled into supplementing the family income; a war; and then, Post-World War II, when a mass campaign was launched, Mrs. Friedan claims, to keep the Little Woman in the home where, she was told, she was to fulfill herself by producing babies, baking ready-mix cake, and chauffering Cub Scouts. This, said the Sex-Directed Educators (i.e., those educators who feel that a girl's education should differ qualitatively from a boy's education)—this was her destiny because of her anatomy. Women doctors, artists, congresswomen? Unfulfilled neurotics! —was the reply.

Freudian psychology added to the pressure exerted by mass media upon women: *Sexual fulfillment was the goal of women's emancipation,* said Freud. Mrs. Friedan, however, differs: "Freud was a prisoner of his own culture and the Sexual is only one dimension of the human potential." More-

* *The Feminine Mystique,* by Betty Friedman, W. W. Norton Co., $5.95, 410 pp.

over she decries the use of his erroneous generalization by unscrupulous advertisers and businessmen in order to sell products. In the course of her research, Mrs. Friedan read reams of "Motivational Research" studies and found that "empty, purposeless housewives" were wide-open game for the "manipulators"—

> "Time and time again, these surveys shrewdly analyzed the needs and even the secret frustrations of the American housewife; and each time if these needs were properly manipulated, she could be induced to buy more things."

Strangely, the surveys showed that it was very difficult to sell unwanted products to the Career woman—she had neither the time nor the inclination to go out to buy them. Mrs. Friedan accuses American industry of the *"subversion of women's lives in America to the ends of business"* — namely, profit. A large accusation, Mrs. F.

Dr. Spock

MOREOVER, she quotes the eminent American authority on child-rearing, Dr. Spock: "Not long ago Dr. Spock confessed, a bit uneasily, that Russian children, whose mothers usually have some purpose in life besides motherhood —they work in medicine, science, education, industry, government, art—seemed somehow more stable, adjusted, mature, than American children, whose full-time mothers do nothing but worry about them. Could it be that Russian women are somehow better mothers because they have a serious purpose in their own lives?"

Mrs. Friedan also quotes a psychiatrist who says that American women have evaded personal growth in two major ways: Non-commitment and vicarious living (that is, living through their husbands or children). She likens the danger of the housewife state to the danger that pervaded the millions who walked to their own death in concentration camps in Nazi Germany.

The solution, Mrs. Friedan says, lies in *Work* and *Love*. "Self-esteem in women, as well as in man, can only be based on real capacity, competence and achievement, on deserved respect from others rather than unwarranted adulation."

"There is something less than fully human in those who have never known a commitment to an idea. . . ."

Through self-fulfillment in work which taxes her highest capacities, a woman can find the self-confidence through which she develops a "Self" and without which she cannot love—only allow herself to be loved. *"Women's sexual nature cannot fully flower when she must deny her intelligence, her highest human potential."*

Large Problem

MRS. Friedan has posed a large problem and one that has been simmering for many years, but she fails to answer it completely. She proposes a new "Life Plan" for women which would enable her to work part-time or complete her education while her children are growing up. When the children reach maturity, says Mrs. Friedan, the educated woman can then resume her career. But Mrs. Friedan does not suggest what these women are to do with minor children while they are working or studying—children who would thus be thrown upon the mercies of a society which has made no provisions for even a part-time working mother. Mrs. Friedan does not talk about the hostility of a society which has been harangued into believing that "Woman's place is in the home"; she does not go into the hostility of some men, who see career women as raising their "normal" unemployment rate of 6% even higher. Nor does Mrs. Friedan suggest how women are to "commit themselves to an idea" in an environment where even male dedication is looked upon askance. *The Feminine Mystique* opens up the problem of fighting further for women's rights. What is needed now is further inquiry into the ways and means of putting some of these rights into effect.

JANE MARCINKOWSKI

Kent in Greenland

Rockwell Kent's Greenland Journal. Ivan Oblensky Publ. 302 pp. $7.50.

TO read a book by Rockwell Kent is to get to know him intimately. And since he is a good man, this is a good book. It is a "diary and sketch-book," of the year 1931, when Rockwell Kent was living and painting in an isolated settlement in north Greenland. The Greenlanders, who are a mixture of Eskimo and Danish, liked him and he liked them. They lived by fishing and some hunting, connected to the rest of the world only through the export of some skins and whale oil and the occasional reception of radio broadcasts, with food enough to keep them alive and healthy, barring disasters, but otherwise on a level of poverty so universal that they never thought of it as poverty. Kent learned from them their ways of fishing, and how to drive a dog team over the ice, found he could eat raw fish and seal meat with relish, and took part in what might be called their good-humored, free and easy family relationships. As for the Greenlanders, they quickly came to love this "outsider" who never acted as if he thought himself different from or superior to them, and who could not only paint pictures but also build a house with his own hands.

Ordinary

THIS is not a book of exploration or adventure. One gathers from various hints, mostly between the lines, that there were times when the discomforts were exacerbating and the perils were great. But the tone and

intent are not to stress the strange, the frightening, the marvelous. On the contrary, they aim at making this community two hundred and fifty miles above the Arctic Circle seem as ordinary as a New England town, except that the people are less contaminated by the poison of private property, competition, and the obsession with gain at a fellow human being's expense. It was not a Utopia. Kent noticed a certain apathy among the people, a product of the fact that life had no promise of being, the next day, any different from the day before. But at the same time the civilization to which Kent would soon return had breadlines, widespread unemployment and starvation in the midst of the richest, most productive country in the world, and in it fascism was raising its club.

Passion For Nature

KENT went to Greenland for the same reason that he went to the Equator, the tip of South America, Alaska, and the storm-lashed rocky islands of Maine. All his life he has had a passion for nature at its most wild and grand, unscratched by human tools, and for people living so close to nature that it shapes their bodies and mind, while their friendly, communal life in wresting their needs from it leaves no room for one man's hand being raised against another. It is not that he is a fugitive from civilization, but that as part of it, he must leave it periodically to keep his perspective. And so his paintings, drawings and writings are a constant, challenging reminder to civilization of what it has lost or blindly thrown away in the realm of beauty and humanity, or of what makes life worth living. It is an art and message which by its supreme health is a challenge to the sickness at the heart of civilized life, and an implied demand that civilization cure its one-sidedness.

This sunny book about a frozen land is pure Rockwell Kent, which means that it cannot be compared to anything else. It gives us a feeling for nature from which our lives tend to shield us, and more important, enlarges our lives with the acquaintance of people whom we cannot forget once we have known them. This is achieved through a happy collaboration of writing and about eighty or so masterly drawings. As for this spirit that imbues the book, it is best expressed by a passage from the book itself:

> Once upon a time I went for a visit in a certain lonely part of New England. It was all new to me and picturesque, and as I was being driven from the railroad station I asked my small-boy driver eagerly about this and that and here and there in the fine countryside we came upon a little, vine-grown, quaintly gabled cottage that had about it every suggestion of glamour and romance. "What sort of people live there?" I cried out. And the small boy, looking at me as if he thought me crazy said "Huh! Why regular people." It is only when, at last, all people, whether they're white or brown or black, or wear petticoats, grass, skirts, or sealskin pants, have become to us *just regular people* that we're fit either to paint pictures of them or write papers for learned societies.

Kent practices what he preaches.

S. FINKELSTEIN

RiGhT FaCe

"Thanks for Nothing"

The following news item appeared May 9, in the New York Times. *We republish it here for those readers who may have missed it.* Ed.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., May 8 (AP)—Here, in a juvenile court judges office, many sides of the Birmingham story emerged today.

Judge Talbot Ellis sat behind his desk. He has crisp gray hair, a clean-cut profile. He speaks in a low, kindly voice.

On the other side of the desk was a 15-year-old Negro boy, Grosbeck Preer Parham. He is big for his age. He was arrested five days ago for participating in the integration demonstrations here.

A sign in the desk bore the motto: "Prayer changes everything."

Behind Judge Talbot was the boy's mother, Mrs. Aileen Parham.

The conversation among the three went like this:

JUDGE: Grosbeck, I'm going to let you go. Your mother must have been mighty worried when she couldn't find you. Why did you tell the officer you were 17? That's why they put you in jail instead of bringing you here.

BOY: I said I was 15.

JUDGE: Now, Grosbeck, you know violence in the streets is not the answer to this. Just the other day, Attorney General Kennedy said this problem 'won't be solved in the streets.' And I often think of what one of the founding fathers said: 'There is no freedom without restraint.' Now I want you to go home and go back to school. Will you do that?

There was no answer. The boy stared at the judge, unblinking.

JUDGE: Are you mad at me, son?"

BOY: Can I say something?

JUDGE: Anything you like.

BOY: Well, you can say that about freedom because you've got your freedom. The Constitution says we're all equal but Negroes aren't equal.

JUDGE: But your people have made great gains and they still are. It takes time.

BOY: We've been waiting over 100 years.

The judge told him about attending legal conferences, working there with Negro judges and attorneys.

JUDGE: Now, we were all equal there, not because the Constitution says so, but because we are equal in our profession.

MOTHER: May I say something? I don't approve of street violence either. But after a civil rights meeting we did try to get in touch with city officials and they wouldn't see us. And I know this, judge—these younger people are not going to take what we took. I have another son in Oberlin [College], and he'll never want to come back here.

She described her experiences as a shopper in downtown Birmingham and said, "If I'm going to spend my money in the stores, I think I should have the right to sit down and eat a sandwich in them."

JUDGE: Mrs. Parkham, what do you think of Booker T. Washington?

MOTHER: I think he was a fine man. But his day is past. The younger people won't take what we did.

BOY: Does Birmingham have a health board? Are they concerned about what happens to Negroes in Jail?

The judge nodded affirmatively.

BOY: We were picked up at 2:30 and we didn't get anything to eat all day. The next morning we wouldn't have gotten anything either if we hadn't gotten together and beat on the bars and yelled.

A juvenile court officer asked, "Would your mother have had food for over 100 people if they had come at once to your home?"

BOY: Maybe not. But you should have seen the slop they fed us. It wasn't fit for a human being to eat.

JUDGE: Well, I expect we could talk all day about these things. I want you to go now and I still hope you'll go back to school.

MOTHER: Thank you, Judge.

BOY: (under his breath): Thanks for nothing.

COMMUNICATION

"Unamericana"

A *QUARTER Century of Americana* is a cartoon and quotation history of that mutation of American "democracy" the House Un-American Activities Committee—HUAC to its friends. It shows that throughout the history of the Committee it has been opposed and ridiculed by the broadest of forces in the country. Religious organizations from the Union of Hebrew Congregations to the National Council of Churches have openly opposed the HUAC. Individuals including Albert Einstein and Thomas Mann have warned Americans of the impending danger inherent in this collection of super-duper 110% Americans out to scrounge up a "menace" even when none exists. As Thomas Mann warned us: "Spiritual intolerance, political inquisitions, declining legal security—that is how it started in Germany. What followed was fascism, and what followed fascism was war."

Prof. H. H. Wilson has written in the forward to this book that:

> Beyond the legal, constitutional issues involved is the fact that these committees represent a long established beachhead for the most extreme, right-wing racist, anti-democratic forces in the United States. Repeatedly defeated at the polls and generally unsuccessful in building a popular base, these elements are able to block legislation, harass progressive legislators, and through their access to the *Congressional Record* and the publications of HUAC and the Internal Security Subcommittee pour forth a stream of libel—immune distortion and innuendo that is used to confuse, immobilize and corrupt political debate. For this alone no society committed to democratic political process can tolerate their existence.

What more need be said of this Committee of the House of Representatives and its Senatorial counterpart? The cartoons reproduced in

* *A Quarter-Century of Un-Americana.* Edited by Charlotte Pomerantz. Marzani and Munsell. 127 p. $2.50

A Quarter-Century of Un-Americana do ample justice to the absurd yet dangerous antics of the witch hunters. From the pens of Ben Shahn, Hugo Gellert, Fred Wright, Renault and Robert Gwathmey, to list just a few, the world of Un-Americana has been pregnantly observed and picturesquely drawn for a wide audience.

James Baldwin has written in the envoi that: "the House Un-American Activities Committee is one of the most sinister facts of the national life." How true. Yet this very fact is one that to date has not influenced the thinking of the majority of the American people. The fact is that this very February only twenty Congressmen voiced opposition to an increased appropriation to this group of Congressional clowns. Certainly this is an improvement since 1962 when only 6 Congressmen could be collected in opposition to the fund drive by HUAC, but it is a far cry from abolition. Hopefully this book will reach a wider cross section of our population and make them see the evils and true nature of HUAC.

It is unfortunate that this book suffers from certain shortcomings. Undoubtedly the editor of this book had to sift out a tremendous amount of information in her compilation of the material to be used in this study but it is sad that certain valuable sources were overlooked. It is especially unfortunate that the editor has failed to refer the readers to the important study of HUAC compiled by David Wesley in his pamphlet "Hate Groups and the Un-American Activities Committee." This pamphlet brought out originally in 1959 has now gone through two editions and has been praised by such notables as the late Eleanor Roosevelt. To "forget" this study is especially regretable considering the outlines portraying the racist and anti-Semitic characters of John Rankin, Wood, Velde and Walter.

Because this reviewer is somewhat biased, being Associate Editor of *Rights* and a staff member of the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, it is with dissapointment that I find that the editor of *Un-Americana* has failed to mention the fact that the national campaign to abolish HUAC was physically kicked off in 1954 at a conference called by the Civil Liberties Committee, a fact not overlooked by HUAC. I realize that not every detail of the fight against HUAC can be mentioned in any study of the obnoxious investigating committee but why one of the leading organizations in the fight is relegated one lone quote is a point of interest.

It is also a shame that many of the cartoons and quotes are not given sources immediately following them. I realize that a list of acknowledgements is included in this book but many people would have wished

to know the exact source while reading without having to resort to searching through a page of acknowledgements.

This reviewer also wishes that this book would have contained more informative material on such Committee members as Gordon Scherer and Ed Willis, to list just two. Outside of a casual reference to Scherer as a "John Birch character" there is no delineation of this characterization. The *Congressional Record,* Vol 107, No. 50, p. 4335, notes that Gordon Scherer is an "identified" member of the "Committee of Endorsers" of the John Birch Society. A reading of "Hate Groups and the Un-American Activities Committee" would have shown interesting sidelights into the character of Ed Willis that would have been of interest to the reader of *Un-Americana.*

The history of HUAC is too sordid to develop in any review—*Un-Americana* gives the highlights. The McCarran Act is its only prized piece of legislation but the people whose lives and jobs have been ruined by this committee are proof of an evil that will only be abolished when we can convince the American people of the need to replace this Committee with the First Amendment to the Constitution.

A prime example of the insincerity of HUAC presented itself during the hearings held on November 14 and 15, 1963 by HUAC supposedly dealing with the Friends of British Guiana. This organization was set up with the hope that it could raise enough money to give the government of British Guiana a printing press so that it could publish a daily paper. Of course the Committee seeing subversion everywhere was quick to decide that newspapers in Guiana are obviously subversive and prejudicial to the best interests of the United States.

It was during this hearing that a note was passed from Gordon Scherer to Ed Willis, that read as follows: "Ed—do you know what an untouchable is? Answer: a negro, catholic democrat veteran on the government payroll." Leaving aside the racist overtones to this note, it is incredible that American taxpayers should support Congressmen who are more interested in writing "jokes" to each other during a legislative hearing (while a witness was being questioned on the stand) than in observing the hearing.

The sense of humor of Messrs. Willis and Scherer, of the Committee, is rather perverse. If there are people who cannot be touched in the United States, they are not veterans, or government employees or Catholics, and certainly not Negroes, who are being bitten by dogs, beaten, jailed, and shot at in the Southern states of our country. The real "untouchables" are right-wing organizations like HUAC. The note is reproduced here, for those who want documented evidence:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

MEMO

Ed do you know what an Untouchable is ?

Ans: A negro, catholic, democrat veteran on the govt payroll.

The above note is offered only to show that the nature of the Committee in action is even more noxious than the cartoons in *Un-Americana* portray it to be. I hope it will be used in future editions of *A Quarter Century.*

Un-American should be read and supported by everyone interested in abolishing HUAC. Leaving aside the shortcomings no one concerned with the battle for democracy in this country can afford to ignore the opportunity to strike a blow at this Committee. This book should receive a wide audience and be very useful in the battle for abolition.

PHILIP ABBOTT LUCE

(Cont. from May "Off the Record")

Daisy, Kentucky less than twenty miles from Hazard. As he started to sing his first song, I made these notes: "A lone voice out of a hard set jaw—fingers pacing through the air." "On Top of Ole Smokey"—giving a new texture ——not ¾ time but a fast banjo with a slow voice." I had to put my notebook away for that song and the songs that followed were sung with a force that compelled an absolute silence . The noise of the pen on the paper would have been too loud.

Again, there is a lot that can be said about the masterful handling of both guitar and banjo, but the power it adds to the song is what strikes this listener. The "Graveyard Blues" and "House of the Rising Sun," both of which have also been performed by Negro artists are adopted by Roscoe and speeded-up in accompaniment, but unlike a lot of the speeded-up "Bluegrass" music, the songs retain the pathos of the blues only translated into the style and thoughts of Eastern Kentucky people. *The Music of Roscoe Holcomb and Wade Ward* also exhibits Rossie's skill as an unaccompanied singer in his lonesome rendition of "Man of Constant Sorrow.":

For six long years, I've been in
trouble, no pleasure here on
earth I find
For in this world I'm bound to
ramble, I have no friends
to help me now.

The music of Wade Ward is banjo and fiddle music, and probably the most difficult for city people to get used to. There are sixteen selections, one a one-way conversation between Wade and his late wife Molly, Wade taking the lead; thirteen others are solo banjo selections, and the two remaining are solo fiddle pieces. One of the photos in the notes by Eric H. Davidson shows Wade Ward sitting in his living room, smiling and picking away. His home is in Peachbottom Creek, Virginia. His music is much more relaxed than that of the Hazard area and he has developed his instrument, the banjo, showing far more versatility than the usual string band's banjo. Listen to his banjo, and although not a word is sung, you hear a man having a good time, and saying through his banjo and fiddle "Yup" or "Shucks" or just plain "Hello Stranger!"

Yes, the old time country music above everything else is human. Those people who listen to it, play it, seem to get completely absorbed by it. Ralph and Richard Rinzler, John Cohen, and Eric Davidson who wrote the notes for these albums also wrote a small book on each of the artists, and their lives, and the music they've made. John Cohen in *Mountain Music of Kentucky* has a folio of striking photographs of the Hazard area. If you want some more of an idea of what's going on in Hazard, in depth, write to Folkways Records, 121 West 47th St., New York City, enclosing 50 cents and ask for the notes to album FA 2317. Cohen's photography is a work of art in itself.

So if you're tired of music that seems to be constructed instead of grown up natural, go out and listen to some of these records, and hear some of these people sing at concerts, and don't be scared off if the words don't come clear the first time or so, just lean back and smile with the singers.

—JOSH DUNSON