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Overland

Temper democratic, bias Australian

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Summer 1970-71

46

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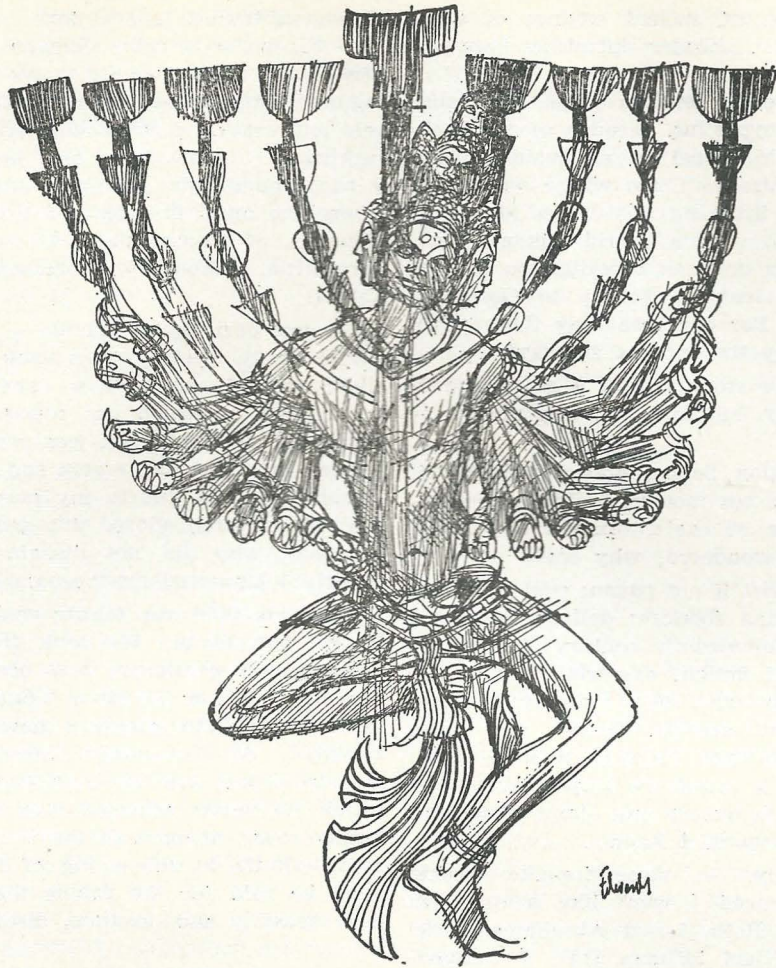
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NANCY KEESING **why the Indians?**

On blue and golden days my class of twenty fourth grade children usually had their Jewish history lesson out of doors beneath the glittering, laconic stare of the spring sky. The sky held its heat just beyond our feeling. In another month "sunlight shall glow with a sevenfold ray", which fancy prompted a talk about Solomon Ibn Gabirol and Spain, one Sunday morning. Of the golden age, we spoke; of music, poetry, necromancy, piety, Islam, el Greco and the manufacture of olive oil. Mirabelle (nominally as it were, named for her grandmother who was Miriam), told of a paella

she ate from a hand-beaten copper dish in a restaurant at Watson's Bay. Then, for we nearly always returned to them, we somehow ended our hour among the Indians: Australian Indians or Kashmiri and Pakistani descent.

We barely acknowledged our text book and scarcely, it may seem, kept to the point. A few weeks earlier we lost track of the Maccabees via a page of archaeological photographs from the Illustrated London News and from these pictures, by a process of logic perfectly apparent to the ten-year-olds of fourth grade and myself, deviated

into an investigation of ancient engines of war. Then back again to . . . border skirmishes between Pakistan and India.

We used to make tremendous leaps back and forwards in time (bypassing decades of textbook chapters). We could travel in an instant from Babylon to the Geniza in Cairo where we found Solomon Schechter brushing dust from his hair: bats too, we feared, with a horrid frisson. And before the hour was done an investigation of the history of printing took us, briefly to Germany and ancient China. For once that day there were no Indians, and why the Indians anyway?

The Indians are a story within a story and I shall tell it presently, but first . . . why me?

Often at that Religion School and especially on inclement days when our modern building smelled, like all schoolrooms, of chalk, oranges and acrid little-boys' hair, I wondered, why me?

Why did I, pantheist if not pagan; poet of sorts; compiler of Australian folklore; deliver into forgotten corners of nineteenth century Australian history; reviewer of fiction; ex-social worker by professional training—why did I, simply because I was born Jewish, married Jewish and bore children who attend this Religion School, ever, ever, ever yield to a minister's importuning that I should teach Jewish history and ethics of which, before I began the work, I knew . . .

Nothing? Virtually. In three frenetic weeks before term commenced I went like a dose of salts through Cecil Roth, Israel Abrahams, Jack Myers and Henry Hart Milman D.D. I foraged for a battered copy of Breasted and tatty Ancient History notebooks discarded the day I sat for matriculation. The local library shelves were denuded of Cottrell and, for I, like my lessons, wander, I took in Josephus and several books of the Iliad together with Robert Graves, Deuteronomy and assorted atlases.

A severe attack of mental indigestion brought me back to the 1960s and memory. Had I really learned so much? Rather I had added formal knowledge to many bare facts, ideas, beliefs and half-heard, half-understood odds and ends which waited, dried and dessicated like packet soup in some sealed, tinfoil compartment of the mind. These particles needed only the kettleful of boiling water which I had been so hotly brewing to transform them into a nourishing (if confused), Judaic broth.

PARTICLE THE FIRST

Afternoon teas in the library-living room of the beloved Rabbi of my earliest childhood. The light is dim, the furniture heavy, the trams outside scarcely heard. Each delicate mouth-watering

cinnamon biscuit; every dark, moist cream-filled slice of chocolate cake, demands the forfeit of a kiss prickly against an old man's beard, or horrifying at the touch of an old woman's dry, parchment-cold and crackling cheek with its one brown mole lurking . . . Marvellous food is munched against a background talk of music and (could this be where the mind first learned disparity?) genetics. Genetics, of which one now realises both knew very little, profoundly interested both Rabbi and Father.

On my desk today stands a rococo ink-stand whose empty crystal bottles flank a charming little silver winged cupid. This naked imp laughs at my typewriter which has released him from the red and blue burden he was created to guard. I blame him for typing errors and am glad that the Rabbi's wedding gift to my parents has come to me. We children adored this good, warm, charming man who did not disdain to dine at our (nearly?) Koshered-for-the-occasion table.

After his time our family could take rabbis or leave them alone. We took them if they had brains, were gentlemen and occasionally if they passed one test or the other. I find it extraordinary, looking back, to discover how few completely qualified. An immensely learned specimen who invariably left the house with a borrowed book which he never returned was ruled out of the family court, along with the boor who picked up a table-knife to stir a jug of fruit cup. But it must be said for the rabbis that they retaliated most sensibly and, in time, discarded us too.

PARTICLE 2

This elderly Jewish gentleman is Speaker of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. He is seventy, I am five. He has presented me with a princely bar of chocolate wrapped in golden paper luxuriously embossed with a Scottish brand-name known to every child in Sydney. "MacBlanks make the best Chocolate" assert posters in tram cars. We believe the posters. And here is Sir Daniel handing over a pristine 16 oz. block with the unbelievably casual remark: "I've known Mac-Blank all my life since we were schoolboys in Melbourne". Sir Daniel a boy? Impossible. "Mac-Blank's career," he continues, "Shows what you can achieve if you try hard. Do you know," and he lifts me onto a pin-striped worsted knee, chocolatey fists and all, "he was so poor he made his first batch of chocolate in his terrace house—in a bath tub?" Revolting vision of elderly Scottish gentleman, pink as a Scottish cook of our acquaintance, but white-bearded as Sir Daniel, up to his steaming neck in a tub of molten brown goo. "MacBlanks make the best Chocolate". Cadbury, Fry or Pascal for my pocket-money thereafter.

Someone (Mother? Aunt?) hopes I will always remember Sir Daniel. He is not only a Great Public Figure but a Leader of the Community. Aunt, probably, because one recalls the disgrace of one's ignorance—"What Community?"

DRIED PARSLEY

"How many miles to Babylon?
—Three score miles and ten—
May I get there by candlelight?
—Aye, and back again—"

"Babylon in all its desolation is a sight not so awful as the human mind in ruins."

PARTICLE 3

"What Community?" The Australian Jewish Community. It embraces those Jews of New South Wales, Victoria and (for our family) New Zealand in general, if the talk is of "good works". But otherwise those Jews, as above, who are not 'common', speak good English, practice professions, are rich without ostentation; or, who, being none of these, belong to any of some six families (more accurately to all of some six families) who are intermarried to a point little short of actual incest and can all count (in the 1920s) at least three generations of antipodean birth. Certain fringe people are admitted through marriage, but marriage in itself is no guarantee. "Poor Ettie would know no better. She was a very pretty girl of course, but an impossible little 'Petticoat Laner'."

Thirty years on one realises with astonishment and discomfiture, successfully concealed, one hopes, that the novelist one is interviewing has grown from an odd little beetle-browed boy belonging to the local tailoring establishment. Lucky child, he sometimes worked the immense steam-iron in the tailor's front room and once we played together for a whole afternoon in a nearby park. However: "Very worthy people but they speak Yiddish". "What is Yiddish?" "A sort of Jewish language—not very educated."

Almost anything is better than 'marrying out'. We know many spinsters who, to a dried-up woman, hug to shrivelled breasts the supreme consolation of having rejected gentile lovers.

"What is marrying out?"

"Marrying someone who is not of the Jewish religion."

"Why is it better to marry a Jew?"

"Jewish men make the best husbands."

"And if I were a boy?"

"You are not a boy. But Jewish wives are quite the best cooks—now run along, Y is a crooked letter and will never stand straight."

Remarkable. My informant's door is opened by parlormaid in black dress and white frilled cap

and apron. Later this paragon will wheel in afternoon tea, its silver trappings polished to jeweller's shop brilliance by chauffeur and housemaid—I, an inveterate slipper-into-backstairs-regions have personally observed this pair's devotion to Goddard's plate powder—they enjoy their work. "Come off it," said the housemaid, "little pitchers is listening." Little pitchers is bribed with a sugar lump and wanders into the kitchen, domain of dour Scottish Elspeth. Later, consuming bubble-bread in the drawing room I hear Elspeth described as having "Quite the most foul temper my dear, but the most incredible hand with pastry and her motza balls—you'd swear she was born to it . . ." A great puzzle.

AFTERTHOUGHT

I attended an Anglican school and made only one Jewish friend there. Her parents were strictly orthodox and I suspect regarded me as a potential bad influence. During our fifteenth year they moved from Sydney and I seldom thought of Naomi again. But recently her face confronted me from a press photograph—a family group descending from an aeroplane for an international conference. Her husband is Chinese—her children uncannily resemble their grandmother.

SECOND AFTERTHOUGHT

Many Jews in Australia are preoccupied with anti-semitism. People I know, Jewish and non-Jewish, will not believe me when I say that in my own experience I have seldom met with an instance. I have worked in hospitals, a factory, a government department, a newspaper office and have attended an art school and a university. I have made friends and enemies, have liked, disliked or felt lukewarm towards thousands of men and women, but the fact of being Jewish has influenced no important adult personal contact that I can recall. I have known Jews who try to disguise their Jewishness—this would not ever occur to me. My heritage is, one might say, as plain as the nose on my face. I understand certain golf clubs do not admit Jews—perhaps if golf instead of tennis was my sport I would feel differently. There are, after all, many golf clubs. My New Zealand great-grandfather, I have been told, refused to speak more than need be to any member of his synagogue who practised pawnbroking. Pawnbroking for Jews, he said, was perhaps a necessity in parts of Europe, but it had brought odium upon Jewish heads and, in new lands where any trade or profession was open, Jews should avoid this form of usury. Certainly there are many Jews whom I could not welcome to my house—many non-Jews, too. Bores, smart alecs, dishonorable or hypocritical people I detest.

Some Jews seem to find what they look for—a gentleman of my acquaintance took exception to the simile “rich as a Jew” in a poem by a writer known for his liberalism and championship of underdogs. Had the phrase been “stingy as a Scot” or “Irish as Paddy’s pigs” or even “black as a nigger” it would have gone unremarked. This topic recalls:

PARTICLE 4

Mr. Abrahams lives nearby. He is a neat, precise man with a neat, precise business—accountancy. Mr. Abrahams owns a car which, though the term will not be coined for some forty years, is in the mid 1920s ‘vintage’. He drives it himself, eccentric in an era of chaffeurs, and tends it lovingly, as witness its burnished brass headlamps, twinkling klaxon, impeccably chamouised bodywork, washed and waxed tyres. The car is his chief hobby. His other great fondness is, of all things, for lawn-mowing. This taste can only be indulged during his annual holidays. No one can cut grass as expertly as Mr. Abrahams, as rhythmically, as methodically—first across the lawn, then up and down, with blades set and re-set as often as necessary. Lawn-mowing is reluctantly entrusted to a weekly ‘man’, however, because Mr. Abrahams keeps his own sabbath strictly and, on Sundays, respects the beliefs of his Christian neighbors and sees to it that no workaday sound from his establishment shall affront their ears.

(Mr. Abrahams’ quick eye and clever hands have long lain under a granite headstone. He cannot hear the protests of his Christian neighbors who now endure noisy Sunday evening dances in the new hall of Mr. Abrahams’ old synagogue.)

PARTICLE 5

To one house comes, every week, Mrs. Grinstein. Mrs. Grinstein tidies intimate drawers, mends silk underwear, and with miraculous needle pleats collars or stitches microscopic monograms on lawn handkerchiefs. Mrs. Grinstein talks as she sews. Talks and talks and talks pausing, every so often, for a genteel sniff. Mrs. Grinstein must have her tea-tray just so and her luncheon tray too. This is difficult because Mrs. Grinstein alters her diet with the seasons and her fads almost monthly.

I am supposed to keep out of the way because Mrs. Grinstein is indiscreet. Worse than her physiological theories is her gossip, for she visits other houses than this, spreads rumor, invents scandal if none exists, and never, as more tactful ladies do, uses occasional snatches of French to frustrate the listening young. Mrs. Grinstein has brilliant henna-ed hair. Her tremendous bosom is covered in georgette pleats, tucks and frills as a walking advertisement of her skill. She exasperates the

lady of the house who once so far forgets herself as to say to me, when Mrs. Grinstein at last sails splendidly homewards:

“That woman!”

“Then why do you ask her to come?”

“It is a duty to find work for her. She has had a most unfortunate life.”

“Is she married?”

“Yes of course, but . . .”

“Is her husband Jewish?”

“I’m afraid so.”

Well, well.

Mrs. Grinstein is standard-bearer for a small army of unfortunates. Two are destitute French ladies, one of whom is engaged to hold me in “French conversation” one afternoon a week. Instead we practice conjuring tricks—she is good at magic—and discuss King Albert. This lady is yellow—skin, hair, clothes, hats, everything she touches turns to yellow but not, alas, to gold. Even a handed down black-straw hat on her head acquires some queer, fungoidal bloom.

The other M’selle is white. Fierce of pale face and with a terrible temper because “she suffers from tic doloieux which is a dreadfully painful complaint”. She moves constantly from tiny flat to tiny flat. These moves are not due to difficulties with rent—an aunt sees to that—but because she quarrels with one unfortunate priest after another and tries church after church in consequence. Each new church means a nearby small flat, for M’selle has never missed early Mass in her life—without breakfast too! What piety!

“Nancy, do not cross your legs so.”

“Why?”

“It is immodest.”

“What does immodest mean?”

“An offence against the blessed Virgin.”

“What is the blessed Virgin?”

“Ah . . . ma pauvre petite!”

These ladies are one kind of ‘charity’. Another is endless committees. Causes, Jewish and non-Jewish, claim adult days and energies. The grown-ups have a tremendous sense of involvement and responsibility. Without good works a signature to a fat cheque is not charity but mere ostentation. There is much discussion as to whether older girl cousins ought to seek employment. No one questioned their right to higher education and training and degrees, but if now, they work, might they not deprive some more needy young woman of a job? The cousins triumph and we, the almost penniless, envy them extremely.

PARTICLE 6

Not with fists, but with loud, angry voices, my younger sister and I fought on our way to school. One of the teachers is witness to the incident and

reports our disgraceful behavior to the headmistress who calls me to her study. I am invited to proffer my version of the affair—virtue, as I explain, is all on my side. The headmistress is a delightful woman whose brown hair escapes its pins in all directions and whose every conversation is punctuated with futile stabs and jabs at wisps and strands and hairpins. She says that no matter what the provocation I, as elder, must accept the blame. “Besides,” she continues, frantically skewering a recalcitrant lock, “we know your sister has a quick temper and we try to make allowances because of her Eastern blood.” What does she mean? Simmering with mixed feelings of injustice and curiosity I confer with Father who fumes: “Eastern poppycock! Jewish people like us are no more Eastern than the man in the moon”.

Yet, a few years later when I read “The Seven Pillars of Wisdom” Father’s face regards me from an illustration labelled Sheik Somebody ibn Something. Here is Dad to the last bone as he returns from an early morning swim wearing a long striped towelling robe, a surf towel wound like a turban round his long head from which juts the identical thin, strong, nose, the overhanging eyebrows; and eyes, one is sure, as grey as his and with the same brown flecks. Sheik Whosit is not tall, however, and Dad is over six feet. “I can’t see the likeness,” he grumbles. “But I remember Lawrence. We were at the same rest camp in Italy for a few weeks in 1917.” “Did you actually speak to him?” “Oh yes. Quiet chap. We took a walk together every afternoon.” “What did he say?” “I can’t remember. Neither of us played billiards.”

ANOTHER PINCH OF DRIED PARSLEY

Q.: What is your name?

A.: N or M.

Q.: Who gave you this name?

A.: My Godfathers and Godmothers in my baptism wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven . . .

Poor Anglican kids. Their interminable catechism drones on and on and on and they swear they will, to a girl, “die” if they don’t have it word perfect when the Bishop comes to examine them for confirmation. They envy me, for I, as homework for weekly Scripture, must learn a Psalm. I may choose my own weekly piece. So it comes about that by my fourteenth year King David’s lovely songs, in the incomparable King James translation, are mine.

PARTICLE 7

Our surname is Dutch. Our forbears migrated to England for some reason, encountered the ‘hungry

forties’ and sailed to the newest country they could think of—New Zealand—where one great-great-uncle was the first Jew ever to live. Family legend has it that in the fifteenth century our ancestors fled the Inquisition in Spain, went to Holland and found their name sounded like “Kaiser” to Dutch ears. Germany being an enemy then, too, they changed the offending syllables to something near in sound but inoffensive. We still have distant relatives in Amsterdam. I am fifteen and Holland sounds stodgy. So . . . I am Spanish. I cultivate the appearance of Miss Dolores del Rio and am secretly observed by my sister during a looking-langorous practice session. Sister has a score to settle and goes direct to Mother with a report that I am unwell. “Well, her cheeks were all pulled in and her eyes were sort of half-closed, and when she walked she wiggled. You can’t blame me!”

PARTICLE 8

I am seven again. The Maccabean Hall, the New South Wales Jewish War Memorial, is finished. We have lived Maccabean Hall, dreamed Maccabean Hall, talked Maccabean Hall for months. I have been to a children’s fancy dress party there; and there have presented a bouquet to Lady Isaacs, wife of the Governor General. Now we are to attend the Maccabean Hall for Hebrew classes. Ichabod. How the glory has departed. A dusty, musty downstairs room is filled with little girls wearing patent leather shoes and little boys with funny black caps. It is hateful. The teacher is antediluvian. Hebrew is horrible. After three weeks a sharp little boy pinches me hard enough to raise a bruise but offers to kiss me if I will arrive ten minutes early next Sunday. If I defect the next pinch will be harder. Father takes over our Hebrew instruction.

PARTICLE 9

Synagogue is an interminable climb up steep, narrow stairs. One is jammed firmly, fore and aft, between puffing ladies who exude an odor of damp silver fox furs. There are lamps and marvellous choral singing and rich curtains and scrolls crowned with tinkling bells. Synagogue is also excruciatingly boring and uncomfortable—below the shawled men rock gently to-and-fro, to-and-fro, to-and-fro until, hypnotised, one dozes. Subsequently, suitable pious books are provided from some forgotten shelf since when, in my memory, all Biblical heroines simper alike with arch, sweet, mid-Victorian copper-engraved smiles.

Synagogue above everything is an indigo-domed ceiling winking with a myriad golf-leaf stars.

PARTICLE 10

Even sermons become comprehensible in time as the world grows less so. Cousins to the nth degree arrive in Australia and speak English strangely. Two very old lady cousins who, as young brides, left Melbourne to marry Germans, now lisp their long-unspoken native language. Unbearably we are haunted by others who failed to make the journey . . . in time.

We are now "old enough to think for yourselves"—we do not go to synagogue.

SEASONING TO TASTE

Brown as the soil he tends all day in his retirement, beaky, thin, his beautiful hands cracked from early morning frost, he sets down his war-time newspaper and stares into the fire.

"A penny for your thoughts?"

". . . of all the trouble two illegitimate children have caused in this world."

"Whom do you mean?"

"Moses and Jesus Christ."

Nowadays all is very different. My fourth grade children are not in the least like we were. The "Community" is larger and more diverse. Religious teaching has greatly improved. Hebrew is taught with splendid textbooks and workbooks and charts and mere infants could visit Israel equipped to buy an apple or enquire the whereabouts of an airways office. Projects are popular—some of the girls worked out a family tree for Ruth which did them great credit.

Very different? I doubt it. Write a date or two on the blackboard and the squirming sets in, the fidgets, the requests to visit the washroom. At such a time we discovered the Indians.

A cold, wet morning and depressingly our modern, heated classroom drifted backwards in time and place until dreadfully it seemed my own voice was assuming the cadences of a forgotten dry old-man teacher. Yet he, then, was probably no older than I am now, and the Maccabean Hall basement not undusted. How to break this spell?

Like leaves of a trick mango, curled, compressed between the pages of a still-wrapped book in my basket, the Indians lay. I half-remembered them from the first appearance of their history in a magazine. The stories in the book, "The Time of the Peacock", were jointly written by Ray Mathew, a Sydney poet, and Mena Abdullah, descendant of camel-drivers and hawkers who (like many itinerant Jewish pedlars) plied the outback homesteads years ago. I looked for the tale called "Because of the Rusilla" and started reading to fourth grade.

Mena Abdullah tells of a Moslem Indian farmer and his Hindu wife and of their young family

whom they have enclosed with love and custom within the boundaries of their farm on the Gwydir river in the New England district. The house garden is planted with the fragrant flowers and herbs of Kashmir. The children—lonely without knowing of loneliness—find an injured parrot, a red, yellow and brilliant green rosella, and take it to their father who explains: "It will mostly die. It is a bird called Rusilla". It does not "mostly die" however, and becomes the friend from heaven of Lal, the delicate, over-cherished four-year-old only son. But one day its cage is left open and the cat eats the Rusilla. Lal is inconsolable and his sisters weep with him all night until, to distract them, the mother promises them their first trip to the nearby town. Thence Uncle Seyed, with farm business to attend, drives them in his wagon. Seyed leaves the children in the street while he visits an office and, lost in admiration of a statue carved on the side of what they decide is a "Jesus House", the Indian youngsters are taken by surprise by three white children and: "We stared at them. They stared at us. 'What y' wearin' y' pyjamas in the street fr'?' said the big boy . . ."

The Indian children fail to understand what is amiss with their usual, but freshly-laundered tunics and trousers. "Nigger", sang the big boy. "Nigger, nigger pull the trigger." Little Lal supposes the reiterated chant to be a game and runs forward to join in, when one of the white boys "caught him around the waist and gave him a throw that sent him backwards to the ground." Then Rashida, the eldest Indian girl, horrifies the others by screaming "Sur ka bucha", which means "son of a pig" and is the worst—and a prohibited—phrase in the children's vocabulary. Uncle Seyed returns to find a free-for-all in progress. The white urchins run away.

Seyed cannot take the children directly home—he still has banks to visit and business to conduct—but he sweeps the victims of a ruined day across town to the home of a discerning old white lady who knows and respects the Indian family. In her house they re-discover a sort of peace and after a while he boils a kettle to make tea. It is a whistling kettle, the first they have heard, and Lal immediately decides it is a Rusilla. When it is time for Seyed to take them home the old lady picks flowers for the girls. To Lal she presents the kettle and he arrives in his own kitchen proudly greeting his mother "Look Ama . . . Rusilla".

Fourth grade took the Indians to their hearts that day. They also came to love Joti, who was teased unkindly on her first day at school and ate her outlandish lunch of kababs in misery—but Joti makes many friends. Rashida's singing kite that was lost reminded us of the New Year cus-

toms of many lands—an eagle known as “The High Maharajah” of the skies led Rashida to her treasure. This Indian family is inexhaustible.

Fourth grade perceived analogies as well as the next person and with a good deal more logic than I have heard in the far-fetched comparisons of many sermons. These Australian-Indians live in our own country, attend recognisable schools, and call forth a response which none of the more usual religion-school figures have so far done. To fourth grade the great Judaic figures appear immensely old, often removed by unthinkable centuries, existing in topsy-turvy seasons—Jews, but not Australians. As for notable Australian Jews—most of them seem, to these children, to have been born old (as Sir Daniel seemed to me) or impossibly

brilliant. The one exception, and they love his story dearly, is Sir John Monash, but here their admiration cannot be separated from the old canard that he once held Ned Kelly’s horse.

This Sunday, I used to think, next Sunday, or some Sunday months ahead we may, by pure accident, alight upon some topic or personality or event which would supersede our Indians. I hoped this topic, personality or event might be of more particular Jewish relevance and reference. But meanwhile I continued to offer fourth grade food in great variety. Particles to dry slowly and settle gradually to a rich sediment inside those heads—the black, the brown, the red, the blonde, the brushed, the tousled.

“Woe to the man who was born without a star.”

THE ACADEMIC

balanced

between that

and this

he suave

talks in double-meanings

pensive resilient

the balls of his feet

are made of

mud, and he never muffs his lines

that his ego should grab his heart wherever he walks

that’s his cross, and he certainly understands both sides

and he can sympathise,

but he cannot understand one simple truth

and all the ambiguities in the world

will tear him apart

MARC RADZYNER

FOXIES' HANGOUT, MORNINGTON PENINSULA

Duco graced with chromium
rolls along the bitumen
The driver cased in glass and steel
accelerates and holds the wheel
caught in an amber bell of speed
comfortable danger his sole need

I too drive through this schizoid age
a pane between me and my rage
holding a notion sharp with doubt
to keep insidious comfort out
but warmth steals in and we relax
are barely conscious of attacks

Weekends now I pack the car
the routine to diminish care
leave behind Springvale Edithvale
and all the other plains of flats
and tears which are of no avail
gardens of pampered, murderous cats
leave factories and football grounds
and join my children singing rounds
while through the windscreen of blotched glass
our present sees the landscape passed
wattles and tea-tree and blonde grass
until we reach an intersection
where comfort's stabbed by intellection

Here nine feet up a box-gum tree
the bodies dangle swinging free
foxes and once I saw a sting-ray
stinking and teetering in the wind's way
They hang from a great iron circle
that rings the bole for all that's mortal
and bells the toll that shooters take
for every fox's fool mistake

The Koryaks hunt the fox for fur
they lay their victims by the fire
their routine to diminish fear
"Let the guest warm himself," they say
"before we take his coat away"

They fill his stiffening cheeks with roe
before they leave him in the snow
wrapped in a new coat of grass
and pray to his departing ghost
hailing his spirit full of grace
to send another willing guest

In comfortable times like these
the gentler ways of savages
seem just a quaint irrelevance
a childish dream of innocence

Now our sleek-winged whispering jets
wireless and television sets
the drugs that ease our suffering
the speed-boat and the telephone
sewerage and air-conditioning
the stainless steel replacing bone
the leisure won through automation
our hygiene and refrigeration
our rock our refuge our salvation
all fade to dream-stuff with this motion

We swing on this grotesque trapeze
suffer these present cruelties
the bastinado and the stake
the gas-chamber and napalm
in Germany in Viet Nam
on Tyburn Tree on London Gate

FRANK KELLAWAY



The Hand of Memory

Selected Stories and Verse

C. B. CHRISTESEN

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ROBERT CONNELL **the manipulators**

A discussion of Peter Coleman's "School Power in Australia" (no publisher, no printer, no date, but assumed to be 'Sydney, 1970'). Mr. Coleman is a Liberal Party member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, and an editor of the quarterly Quadrant. Dr. Connell, at present doing research in sociology at the University of Chicago, is a lecturer in Government at the University of Sydney.

When your editor sent me a copy of this yellow pamphlet, subtitled "Is Your Child being manipulated by Political Operators?", and suggested I comment on it, my first reaction was that it should be ignored, my second, to write a small satire of it, as a rational answer to such a thing is really impossible; but I find that Phillip Adams of the Australian has already done this, and done it better. And still—it is possible it might have some effect, and it does raise some questions, or rather illustrate them, of wider interest. So, begging your pardon, I will take it half-seriously for a while.

The pamphlet, forty pages long and selling for a cent a page, is dedicated to the idea that there is in Australia a dangerous conspiracy against the schools, which must be exposed and stopped before it gets any further. It is, of course, a communist conspiracy, jointly organised by the Communist Party and some other Marxist revolutionary groups. Like all such conspiracies, this one operates through front groups such as A.I.C.D., university labor clubs, free universities, S.D.S., and now a number of high-school students' clubs and groups such as the Secondary Students' Educational Union. The aim of the conspiracy is to agitate among high school students, mainly by means of roneoed newspapers, and stir them up against the Vietnam war, against teachers and headmasters, against duly constituted authority of all kinds, and thence, eventually, against religion, monarchy, capitalism, and everything else that Mr. Coleman and all right-thinking Australians hold dear.

Like all conspiracies, this one has to have an origin, and the author traces it back to a conference in Sydney in 1967, where the revolutionary

groups got their heads together in a smoke-filled back room and plotted the whole thing—the pamphlet even prints some extracts from the master plan devised by this sinister gathering. Much of the pamphlet is made up of extracts from the agitators' newspapers, intended to convict them out of their own mouths, so to speak; but the piece de resistance is a series of diagrams on the centre pages, looking rather like an engineer's plans for a hydraulic system, which lays out the organisation-chart of the conspiracy in each state, with boxes for all the different groups and arrows running from one to another, and sometimes back again.

The diagrams show, for instance, how communist influence goes through the Union of Australian Women and the A.I.C.D. to labor clubs in the universities, and through them to the Secondary Schools Students' Union which actually agitates in the schools. This is in Sydney; even more remarkable organisation structures appear to characterise the conspiracies in Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide, with all kinds of loops, feedbacks and crossed lines of communication that seem a little inefficient for an underground revolutionary machine, but perhaps just show the sheer deviousness of the communists. Perth and Hobart have very simple conspiracies in comparison; clearly they should apply for a special federal grant-in-aid to bring them up to scratch.

No, I shouldn't rubbish it; some people do believe this kind of thing. Presumably Coleman, a paid 'political operator' in his own right with some ambitions of his own, does not expect to appear a fool by letting it circulate in his name; he even may expect to gain some kudos by it in the byzantine politics of the Liberal Right. It is,

after all, appealing to a popular myth, the myth of sinister threats to Australia, that has a very wide currency. And it has just that germ of truth that propaganda needs to have. (It is a mistake to think that the Big Lie is the successful technique of propaganda; what really works best is the Big Distortion.)

The first point to be made is that the basic argument of the pamphlet is absolutely right. There is a massive campaign of political propaganda being conducted in Australian schools, one which should alarm everyone who has to put his children through them. It starts in the infants' school and goes right through, week after week, to high school, though it begins to lose its effectiveness there. It involves systematic indoctrination of those too young to know they are being fed a partisan line; it is mostly done by the paid staff of the schools but also involves the periodic importation of outside agitators, or political operators, to whom the children are forced to listen. The complaint in Coleman's pamphlet that the anti-war movement is trying to convert schools into "political centres" is a brilliant example of the selective blindness of the politician when faced with outward facts. The pamphlet simply and completely ignores the fact that ninety-nine per cent., perhaps more, of the political propaganda in schools is carried on by Coleman's side, in favor of the monarchy, the flag, the army, the Anzac tradition, and so forth.

What of the argument that there is a left-wing conspiracy in, or against, the schools? Here one must put the pamphlet in its context, a context that most teachers and parents who come across it will not be familiar with, the world of extreme-right political agitation. In Australia, as elsewhere, there is a small fringe of far-right groups who have an obsession about communism, who spend their time and money trying to alert the population to the imminent danger of a communist takeover, and showing how permissiveness in child-rearing, contemporary trends in education, television news commentaries, public medical insurances, etc., are all products of the communists' plans to soften up and take over our society. Some of them believe that the communist takeover has already occurred. The John Birch Society, the best-known of American fringe-right groups, publishes an annual "scoreboard" in which its experts estimate how far advanced the communist conspiracy is in every country of the world. I note in the August issue of their magazine that their experts reckon Australia is now 30-50 per cent. under the control of the communists. But we are lagging. The U.S.A. is 60-80 per cent. under communist control; Britain 70-80 per cent., New Zealand 40-50 per cent., and India really

bad, 80-100 per cent. Curiously, South Vietnam is reckoned as 80-90 per cent. communist—perhaps Marshal Ky is a double agent? Just now I am reading a hair-raising illustrated expose of connections between the witchcraft cult and the communist movement, which even in the days of Marx and Engels was "steeped in the Satanist occult of Eighteenth Century Illuminism . . ."

Coleman's little pamphlet, of course, is not in the same league as that, just as the Australian far right has never been in the same class, in terms of influence, money, malice, or inventiveness, as the American or German right. In fact many of the Australian groups rely on foreign sources for their ideas and copy for their red-scare publications. Magazines and pamphlets along these lines have been coming out intermittently in Australia for decades past; there was a small boom in them from 1962, reaching a peak about 1966 when the federal government itself was whipping up a scare of its own about Vietnam; and of course they will continue to appear till kingdom come. Occasionally they get a bit of aid from right-wing Liberals like Killen, Mackay, or Wentworth, though it is rare to see a member of parliament actually attach his name to such literature. There are, in fact, strong forces inside the Liberal Party which are hostile to the extreme right, and which have prevented it getting much of a hold within the party organisation.

This, then, is the genre within which the Coleman pamphlet is to be understood. To offer a scoreboard of our own, the claims of fact made in its text and diagrams are about 50 per cent. lies, 50 per cent. truth, and 99 per cent. misrepresentation. This is about par for the course in right-wing pamphleteering. I will not bother about the lies, which anyone who knows the peace movement can spot for himself, and which would be purely boring to anyone who doesn't. But I will talk about the truth in it, because this is interesting. Yes, the peace movement has tried to recruit support among high school students (and among housewives, plumbers, doctors, builders' laborers, pensioners, and solicitors' secretaries, though I think it has mostly given up hope for members of parliament). It does people of high-school age the courtesy of recognising that they can think for themselves on public issues, are interested and often very concerned with them, and need a forum for this concern which the schools traditionally—things are changing for the better—did not give them.

I remember, when I was in my high school's debating team, proposing the relative merits of the communist and capitalist philosophies as a topic for an intra-mural debate, to be met with a rather

scandalised refusal from the master in charge on the grounds that it was too difficult and abstract a topic for school pupils. We debated instead, if I remember rightly, whether or not the pen was mightier than the sword. High school students now are more insistent than we were ten years ago on having the real issues treated, and some of the peace groups have shown them the way, and sometimes given them the use of duplicators and paper. **That** is the reason—and not a communist conspiracy—for the rash of high-school ‘underground’ sheets.

Students who are reasonably intelligent, as well-informed (through the mass media) about world politics as their parents, often better, and who are quite likely to have the knife stuck into them in the near future, by way of conscription, or the possible atomic war which they are decidedly conscious of—these are politically conscious people, like it or not, and their political consciousness is going to find some form of expression. If the high school students were not so, the peace groups would not have a prayer. As it happens, Australian high school students are not markedly favorable to the Left, though they could easily shift that way, given a little judicious repression and a bit more war.

And yes, Coleman’s pamphlet is quite correct, the Communist Party(ies) and other Marxist groups hope to control the arousal of political consciousness among youth, and talk loudly about their efforts and enterprises in that direction. Some of this talk is quoted in the pamphlet, with the implication, usual in right-wing pamphlets, that whatever communists say they would like to do, they must already secretly have done. In fact the Communist Party at the moment would love to control **anything**—it has gone steadily downhill for the past twenty years, despite desperate efforts at revival, and has split three or four ways. If it suddenly gained a fraction of the influence credited it in Coleman’s pamphlet and others of the kind, its National Committee would be down on their Marxist knees as one man, giving thanks. Not that there is any reason in law or logic why the Communist Party should not agitate among youth, just as does the Liberal Party (whose Young Liberals organisation is the largest and most successful political youth group in the country, by a long stretch). It is just that it has next to no success doing so.

And yes, there was a meeting in Sydney in 1967, from which issued the report quoted in the pamphlet. I happen to know about it, because I went to it myself. Far from being the sinister plotting-together of revolutionary organisations, it was an open public gathering, where anyone could walk in off the street and join in (as I did, and no doubt

various agents of the federal secret police, the state ‘red squad’, etc.). The people present at it ranged from members of the Liberal Party and the Labor Party to far-out fringe left groups, united only by their desire to get Australia out of the bloody bog that Vietnam was then and is still. The conference was a rather gloomy one, because if you think back to the summer of 1966-7, Australian troop commitments in Vietnam were rising, the government had just fought and won a national election on its support of the war, the public mood was as belligerent as it had ever been, the Labor Party was replacing its leader with a man believed much closer to the Liberals on foreign policy. The people at that conference were scratching around to think of some ways to counter the government’s highly successful scare campaign, and build up public awareness of the true character of the war. One, out of a dozen-and-a-half committee discussions on various topics, was concerned with youth; from this discussion emerged the few vague proposals for carrying peace literature and ideas to youth that the Coleman pamphlet, with its only real touch of virtuosity, builds up as the master blue-print for a conspiracy “to destroy our schools, our democracy, our way of life”. And that, I am afraid, is the whole story of the conference. It sounds rather flat and unheroic, but that is as it was.

And in fact the peace movement itself has had a rather negligible influence. So far as Australian public opinion has changed, and the government become more cautious, it is not because of what the peace movement has been saying, but simply because what the peace movement said, was right. Events themselves—among them the steady growth of the list of senseless Australian deaths—have been the educators. And they have educated youth, as well as adults. That is where Mr. Coleman should really look, if he wants to find the source of what anti-war sentiment exists in schools, and find out why some students do generalise their disgust with the war to a distrust of the social order that promotes and conducts it. There is a simple way to stop the peace movement, to stop it absolutely dead. But our government would never think of taking it.

Let me emphasise, especially for teachers and parents, that it would be a drastic, basic mistake to think that the political awakening of youth is due to outside agitation. For teenagers to become interested and concerned about politics is a natural part of growing up, in a time when political crises are so frequent, and when so much information about politics comes to them in the mass media. To take the step from mere spectator interest to practical involvement and protest is a step that

often requires a fair bit of moral courage; and since moral courage and concern with the great issues of contemporary life are certainly qualities that a good education develops, I think we can congratulate ourselves and our teachers that we have such people, however few they may be.

Of course every political movement in the country wants to benefit from this interest, by recruiting young supporters; none is very successful at it, though the Liberal Party does best. But there is one way in which parents and teachers could drive youth into the arms of the far left, and that is by believing the arguments of the Coleman pamphlet and acting on them. If the legitimate political interests, questionings and opinions of young people are treated as evidence of subversion, and repressed, then those young people are going to believe that what the far left says about the repressive nature of society is true. Conservatives have always wanted teachers to act as their catechists for communicating nationalist and militarist attitudes to the rising generation, and teachers, to their shame, have all too often done it. Now, in the United States, and as the Coleman pamphlet shows, it is beginning in Australia too, conservatives want teachers to act also as their political police.

Nothing, **nothing**, could be more dangerous to the cause of education than that because nothing would more rapidly alienate teachers from the best minds in their classrooms. The problem is not to repress the interest and involvement of youth: it is to meet it with an equal interest and involvement on the part of teachers and jointly make of it an educational experience. That can be done. No-one should pretend that it will be easy, but it can be done.

The Anti-Communist Mind

Reading over these notes, and the pamphlet itself, it strikes me how unlikely all this must seem to someone who is not acquainted with fringe politics. Where there is smoke, there is fire, one would think; particularly where there is a member of parliament pointing to the smoke and yelling "Fire!" This, of course, is what such pamphleteering relies on, that if its products do get a wide circulation, they are likely to be believed because their readers know no better. Not that this pamphlet is likely in itself to alarm many; rather that it puts into the air an easy and poisonous interpretation which can provide teachers and parents with a rationalisation and a scapegoat for any trouble that may in the future arise with their teenagers, or any serious challenge to their own authority.

This is one of the services that anti-communist ideology has long performed for those in positions

of authority, be it great or little. It is amusing to find that the same thing was happening on Australia's fair shores even before Karl Marx was born. In 1804 there was a rising, actually the most serious revolt in Australian history, among the convicts in the settlements a little north of Sydney. When it was suppressed, with the aid of a little official treachery during a parley, Governor King and his officers launched a witch-hunt for the subversives who they felt must have plotted it. They were quite convinced that the whole thing was inspired by secret French-revolutionary agitation. The subversive-conspiracy theory served to exonerate those in authority from any responsibility that might attach to them for having produced the conditions that led to the revolt. (In this case, it was the higher officials in England and Ireland who were basically responsible, but the conventions of the day did not permit the local officials to lay much stress on that.)

And the beauty of it is, that this interpretation takes away all authenticity from the act of revolt, or even the expression of radical ideas. To the anti-communist mind, those who actually do revolt are the puppets or dupes of the conspirators, who from behind the scenes are controlling, and hence are basically responsible for their actions. Similarly, those who argue against the Vietnam war, the prefect system, the profit system, or whatever, are not really arguing their own beliefs at all; they have had these ideas put into their heads by the conspirators, and are simply "mouthing" (a favorite word in extreme-right literature) the slogans the conspirators wish to push. In this adjudged inauthenticity, a constant theme in right-wing propaganda, lies one of the main clues to the nature of anti-communist thought.

It is interesting that this is quite like the characteristic flaw that Sartre finds in the thinking of communist intellectuals. Though these people do not, usually, have so crude a conspiracy theory as their opponents of the far right, Sartre notes that their theory of class conflict serves them in a similar way. When analysing literary products, political ideas, etc., they are always trying to show how the novelist, politician, etc., was (consciously or unconsciously) the agent of his class's class interest, and his literary or political work, fundamentally, not an expression of his own experience but an expression of his class interest. These mirror-image lines of thought on the far right and the far left both stem, as we might expect, from the one source. In both cases, the people concerned have locked themselves into an intellectual opposition which has come to dominate all their political thinking and define for them the very structure of political reality. More on this in a moment.

Psychologists have been speculating about the basis of extreme-right politics, and occasionally conducting research on it, for forty years now; and though they have come out with an awful lot of crap on the subject, they have also sometimes produced good ideas. The usual line of argument, as in most psychological studies of politics, is a debunking one, showing how the extreme anti-communist stance really traces back to, and expresses, something quite different—hostile personality traits, certain patterns of experience in childhood, etc. Far-right anti-communism, in this view, is basically a channel for impulses and sentiments of an originally unpolitical kind.

Now this argument has been subjected to heavy criticism, particularly in the Freudian form which it took in "The Authoritarian Personality" twenty years ago. Yet I am convinced that there is a good deal of truth in it. Extreme anti-communism does quite often serve as a channel through which other kinds of hostilities are expressed. This depends on a particular kind of environment, an environment where anti-communism of a moderate kind is more or less socially prescribed (as in the U.S., Australia, West Germany)—i.e. where communists constitute a socially-validated symbol of evil. This is what has happened to anti-semitism as a political movement. In the past twenty years it has all but disappeared, as political anti-semitism; but the same groups and agitators still exist, carrying on much the same kind of activity, with "communist" in their propaganda where "Jew" used to be. Sometimes the underlying strain breaks through in attempts to show the Jewish origins of communism or communist officials (a rather easy job in Australia, given the prominence of the Aarons family in the communist movement). We see the same kind of thing where anti-black sentiment, somewhat socially disapproved these days, finds an outlet in anti-communism with the particular kink of interpreting rebellious blacks as communists or communist dupes. This is now common in the United States; and it is found in Australia in the "Rhodesia Lobby", those (including a good many inside the Liberal Party) who support the white racist regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia but who argue the case on the grounds that these regimes are defending southern Africa and the trade routes (!) against communism.

In such cases anti-communism is a by-product of race prejudice. We also find it as a by-product of something rather different, stress and strain on authority. When people holding authority, or benefiting from a particular distribution of authority, find it rocking a bit through the discontent of those subject to it, then violent anti-communism provides an outlet for their anger, and an explanation of the threat to authority which absolves

themselves of any responsibility for it. This also is quite common in the United States, for instance among police forces, members of congress, and Vice-Presidents.

In these kinds of situations, extreme anti-communism serves as an outlet for fears and hostilities that originally have nothing to do with communism itself. Anti-communism focuses, brings to a political point, a much broader, less specific, background impulse. It is in this kind of anti-communism, I think, that the "conspiracy" theories find their roots. We see this as far back as the 1920's, where the famous anti-semitic "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" was put into worldwide circulation by 'White' Russian emigres and was taken up as an anti-communist document in the agitation against the then-new Bolshevik regime. (The "Protocols", for those who do not know it, is a rather crude but very widely circulated forgery which purports to be the minutes of a secret meeting of Jewish leaders planning to take over the world by subversion.) More generally, conspiracy theories are a natural resort for the anti-semitic trying to explain how Jews have the influence he thinks they have, for the Afrikaaner trying to explain why the Kaffirs resent the lowly position God has obviously assigned them, for the official trying to understand why such-and-such a population is discontented with the services he performs for them. Conspiracy theories, that is, are fundamentally **explanatory** ideas, fundamentally defensive weapons, ego-protectors. Their corollary is the smear, an offensive weapon.

Now while this line of interpretation, coming from the psychologists' study of prejudice and fascism, has truth in it, it is not a truth that applies to the whole of the extreme right. For, when we think carefully about it, it is obvious that this kind of anti-communism must be a derivative anti-communism, presupposing some other kind that already exists. There are, then, two basic kinds of extreme anti-communism. What we have just discussed is only one of them, and the more derivative at that; it is in fact an over-determined imitation of the second type.

Anti-communism of the second kind arises not from prejudice or anxiety, but from actual experience with communist regimes or with a social tradition defining communism as an enemy. The original sources of such anti-communism were the 'whites' who fought the Bolsheviks across the length and breadth of Russia in 1918-20, and after their defeat spread across the world forming little colonies of anti-communist fervor. Their ranks were swelled after the Second World War by a wave of emigres from eastern Europe, some of them genuine fascists, but many of them not, who fled the Red Army and the communist regimes

established there in the years following the war. Groups of this kind form a substantial part, numerically, of the extreme right in Australia, though they have little influence outside their own ethnic communities, and not always much influence there. Alongside them are people who have not directly fought communist regimes but who are responding to a social tradition which defines communism as incarnate evil, and which they take at face value. The John Birch Society in the United States seems to be the type case of this, largely made up of businessmen who take the cold-war rhetoric of their government as deadly serious political analysis, and, not surprisingly, draw from it some rather radical conclusions about why the U.S. Government is not living up to what it claims to be about. (They deduce that it must already be under communist control. Thank God there is no Karl Birch society in China wondering why the Chinese government does not live up to its rhetoric.)

Now the feature which distinguishes this variety of anti-communism from the run-of-the-mill anti-communism of the American and Australian governments, the Liberal Party mainstream, etc., is that for the people on the far right communism really is taken as the key fact of life. Starting from a personal or inherited experience with communism, they pivot the whole political world on that experience, and see the conflict of the age (and sometimes of the Ages) as that defined by their own opposition. It is a monstrous political solipsism—but one that has a certain grandeur, and a tremendous logical compulsion, once the first steps into it have been taken. For the world defined by this opposition becomes a world structured around the polarity of communism vs. anti-communism (communism vs. freedom, communist bloc vs. free world, etc.). In terms of this polarity, and only in these terms, everything finds its definition; all the multiplicity of the world is seen as in a kaleidoscope, one pattern reflected again and again and again in different mirrors.

Thus it is that to pure extreme-right anti-communism (and prejudice-based anti-communism copies it in this) the most incredible variety of issues are interpreted as part of the communist-anticommunist struggle. This is what appears most bizarre in the movement to a casual outside observer, but it can very readily be understood once we grasp the fixed polarity underlying extreme-right thinking. Opposition to mini-skirts becomes part of a struggle against the moral decay which is paving the way for a communist takeover. Opposition to fluoridation of water supplies becomes, for some, opposition to a chemical assault on the nation's fibre and its inborn capacity to resist the communists. (I remember reading a

Superman comic once which told of the hero's struggles against a wicked World Government that was controlling everybody's minds by means of drugs put in the world water supply. The potential popularity of this rather splendid myth is shown by the fact that the Chicago city government actually had troops thrown around the city water works in 1968 in response to a rumor that the hippies were going to put LSD in it.) Opposition to the income tax, basis of the expansion of centralised government, which is part of the communist scheme; opposition to free medical care for the aged, part of the same; opposition to the United Nations, an alternative device by which the communists are trying to take over the world—different groups have different specific themes, but the general rule, by which all kinds of issues are reduced to the one polarity, is common to them all. There is a fine example of it in the Coleman pamphlet, which argues that high school students' complaints about their school uniforms and the prefect system are to be seen in the same light as a campaign in support of the Viet Cong, because "in revolutionary theory and practice they are the same struggle".

The argument that there are two rather different types of far-right anti-communism is based partly on the different sources of their commitment, but partly also on the fact that there are situations where the two diverge. There was an interesting case of this in Australia not long ago. When the Arab-Israeli conflict came to a head again in 1967, the extreme-right was placed in a very striking dilemma. The Arab side, of course, included socialist countries such as Egypt and Algeria; it was supported by the Russians and most other communist regimes; the Palestinian guerillas soon took on a revolutionary Marxist coloring; and the Israelis were supported, even if half-heartedly, by the United States. On every principle of cold-war anti-communism, then, you would expect the extreme-right to support the Israelis. But, on the other hand, the Israelis **were Jews**; and those far-rightists whose anti-communism in fact stemmed from underlying prejudices were thus placed in a direct conflict between being (openly) anti-communist and (covertly) anti-semitic. The interesting result was that the far right split, and a good proportion of it came down on the side of the Arabs—even though that was opposed to general public feeling in the case.

So much for the differences; what the two trends have in common is usually more important, and for most practical purposes they are in harmony. "Practical purposes" means carrying on the agitation against communism and its supposed sympathisers and dupes that is the far right's *raison d'être*.

And the chief weapon in this agitation is the smear, or what looks at first sight to be a smear.

The smear as a political weapon is an interesting thing, with more subtleties that appear at first sight. It depends, of course, on there being some collective symbol of evil which can be used to smear with. It is no use trying to smear Mr. Gorton as a dupe of the capitalists, because capitalists are not a symbol of evil in this country. In Russia, on the other hand, one can, and the government does, smear people such as dissident litterateurs as dupes of the capitalists. In America one can effectively smear a politician by associating him with organised crime, while this would hardly work at all in Australia where, though most people are certainly against organised crime, they also do not think it exists as a real force. Even if half Australia were in fact run by a mafia, the people do not believe it and so it is not a plausible smear. Communism is, however, a collective symbol of the right kind, and is thus the basis for most of the political smearing done in the country.

When establishment anti-communism, in the person of a Menzies, a Holt, or a Malcolm Fraser, decides to do a spot of smearing, it is a deliberate action based on a perfectly rational calculation. Such people know quite well that the Labor Party, the peace movement, the student demonstrators, etc., are not under communist influence, let alone communist control; they also know that if they can be represented as under communist control, political advantage will accrue to themselves. "Kicking the communist can", in Holt's immortal phrase, is a conscious tactic.

But the smears that are the staple of extreme-right propaganda are something rather different. It is the difference between a tactic and a principle of thought. We have noted already that the leading feature of extreme-right thought is the reduction of the political world to a polar opposition. Every movement and event in politics is assimilated to this opposition, is "placed" on the communist-anticommunist dimension. It follows from this that persons and movements disliked by the extreme-right, for whatever reason, are placed by it on the other half of this dimension and are thus necessarily assimilated to communism. Note that this is somewhat different from a conspiracy theory of clandestine control by the communists (though the two are commonly combined). It is rather that such persons and movements are **defined** as communistic. Thus an allegation that to anyone else appears to be a smear, and that coming from the Liberal leadership would be a smear, is, to the extreme right, literal truth.

Murray Havens, an American political scientist who was teaching in Sydney a few years ago, tells the story of a John Birch Society member he was

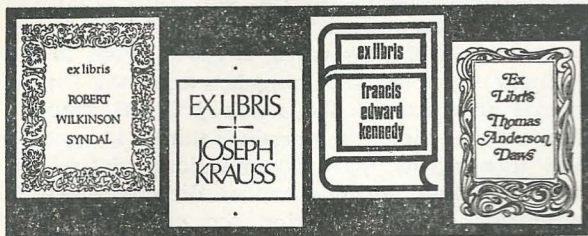
interviewing, very hostile to the "Eastern establishment" of financiers and big company executives in that country, who at one point broke out in imprecations against "those damned Wall Street communists"! This, you see, is not a smear in the ordinary sense; it is nothing less than the fundamental structure of the man's political thought. The extreme-right, if you like, thinks in smears. And this is why there is no rational defence to its propaganda, for one cannot directly meet its arguments without entering the one-dimensional political universe in which alone they make good sense.

What is true of the extreme-right is of course not peculiar to it. Many of these observations could be paralleled in other political movements. I suspect that the main features of extreme-right thought are nothing other than the general consequences of political thought that becomes locked in an opposition of any kind. As I noted before, Sartre in his "Search for a Method" identifies features of thought among party-line French communists that parallel what we can see here; if my reading of rather ambiguous trends is right, a good part of the New Left in America is getting itself into the same kind of position. That is, what we are talking about is a projection onto the plane of ideology of militancy per se. And however one may react against the lies and distortion in a particular product like the Coleman pamphlet, or, on the other side, the Black Panther newspaper in America (which contains some of the most revolting propaganda I have ever seen), it is a different thing to argue against militancy itself, and to take the stand for middle-of-the-road decency and moderation.

Great evils demand great commitments to eradicate them, and militancy is precisely that. To be moderate about things like the atomic bomb and the war in Vietnam is simply to abdicate from the condition of being human. It seems to me that one of the most critical issues of method in politics at the present time—the issues of substance are well enough known—is whether it is possible to have a genuine militancy without falling into the trap of the stereotyping and ultimately self-defeating ideological rigidity which has seized the movements we have been discussing.

It seems to me also that there are some people who have really made progress in defining and working out such a politics. One of them is being kicked out of England at the moment. Some others have just been sent to gaol in the United States on—believe it—framed-up conspiracy charges. And I hope and trust that some more are coming out of Australia's poor politically-manipulated high schools right now. Because if there aren't any, we are in real trouble.

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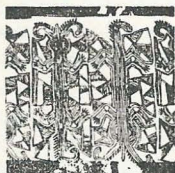


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The Jacaranda Press is proud to announce the first novel by a Papuan to be published— THE CROCODILE by Vincent Eri

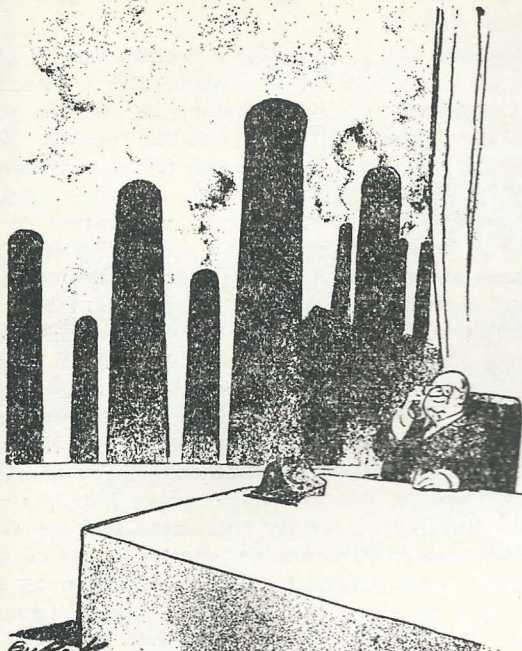
We are enthusiastic about it not because of its uniqueness, but because we believe it to be a novel of depth and perception, and a worthy contribution to New Guinea literature. Hoiri Sevese is a Papuan villager, educated in a mission school and married in a church. Yet he saw events as his people saw them. Through Hoiri's eyes we see the white expatriate—his attitude to his servants and employees, to the village people, to women, to the harsh facts of life and death, and to the environment in which he was a stranger. For the first time in fiction we are given a clear insight into how a Papuan thinks and what he thinks of most Australians. Reading **The Crocodile** should be a salutary experience for all Australians concerned about New Guinea. **\$3.50**

and the beginning of New Guinea Theatre FIVE NEW GUINEA PLAYS



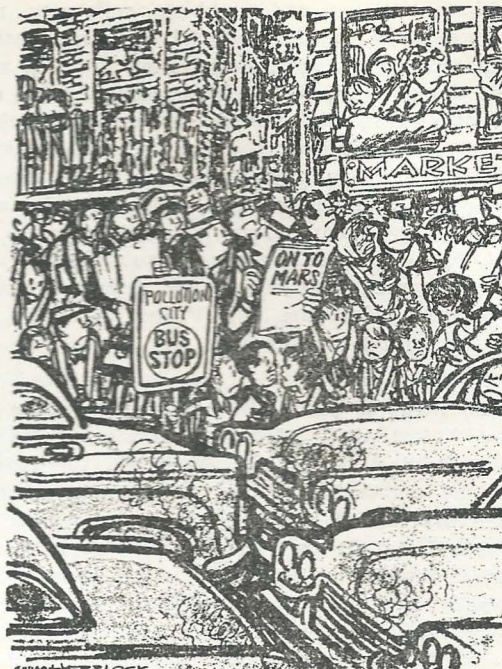
These five plays stand at the beginning of theatre in New Guinea in the Western sense. Produced by students in the creative writing class of the University of Papua New Guinea, only the theme of one of them, **Alive**, is based on a legendary tale. The other four, which all deal with cultural or political conflict on some level or other, reflect more truly the mood of the first generation of New Guinean writers.

THE JACARANDA PRESS, 46 Douglas St., Milton, Q'ld., 4064



Burck in Chicago Sun-Times

"It will be a privilege and an honor to serve on the anti-air pollution committee"



Herblock in The Washington Post

"It says here we're winning the space race"

JOHN FISCHER **how I got radicalized**

The making of an agitator for Zero

To my astonishment, the political convictions that I had cherished for most of my life have suddenly deserted me. Like my children, these were convictions I loved dearly and had nurtured at considerable expense. When last seen they were—like all of us—somewhat battered by the events of the last decade, but they looked durable enough to last out my time. So I was disconcerted when I found that somehow, during the past winter,

they sort of melted away, without my consent and while I was looking somewhere else.

Their place has been usurped by a new set of convictions so radical that they alarm me. If the opposite kind of thing had happened, I would have felt a little melancholy but not surprised, since people traditionally grow more conservative as they get older. But to discover that one has suddenly turned into a militant subversive is downright embarrassing; at times I wonder whether it signals the onset of second childhood.

Except that I seem to be a lot more radical than the children. Those SDS youngsters who go around

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breaking windows and clubbing policemen now merely depress me with their frivolous irrelevance. So do most older varieties of New Leftists, such as the Women's Liberation Movement; if some dire accident should, God forbid, throw one of those ladies into my clutches, she can be sure of instant liberation. I am equally out of tune with those old fogies, the communists. The differences between capitalism and communism no longer seem to me worth fighting about, or even arguing, since they are both wrong and beside the point. Or so it seems to me, since the New Vision hit me on my own small road to Damascus.

Let me make it plain that none of this was my doing. I feel as Charles Darwin must have felt during the last leg of his voyage on the Beagle. When he embarked he had been a conventional (if slightly lackadaisical) Christian, who took the literal truth of Genesis for granted. He had been raised in that faith, as I was raised a Brass Collar Democrat, and had no thought of forsaking it. Only gradually, while he examined fossil shellfish high in the Andes and measured the growth of coral deposits and the bills of Galapagos finches, did he begin to doubt that the earth and all its inhabitants had been created in six days of October, 4004 B.C., according to the pious calculations of Archbishop James Ussher. By the time he got back to England, he found himself a reluctant evolutionist, soon to be damned as a heretic and underminer of the Established Church. This was not his fault. It was the fault of those damned finches.

Recently I too have been looking at finches, so to speak, although mine are mostly statistical and not nearly as pretty as Darwin's. His gave him a hint about the way the earth's creatures came into being; mine, to my terror, seem to hint at the way they may go out. While I am by no means an uncritical admirer of the human race, I have become rather fond of it, and would hate to see it disappear. Finding ways to save it—if we are not too late already—now strikes me as the political issue which takes precedence over all others.

One of the events which led to my conversion was my unexpected appointment to a committee set up by Governor John Dempsey of Connecticut to work out an environmental policy for our state. Now I had been fretting for quite a while about what is happening to our environment—who hasn't?—but until the work of the committee forced me into systematic study, I had not realised that my political convictions were in danger. Then after looking at certain hairy facts for a few months, I found myself convinced that the Democratic Party, and most of our institutions of government, and even the American Way of Life are no damned good. In their present forms, at least, they will

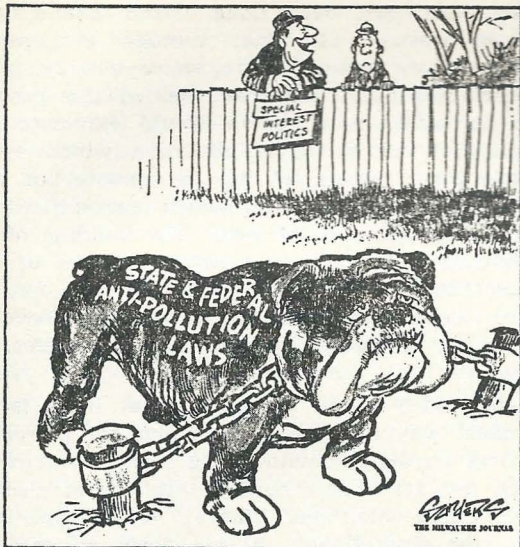
have to go. Either that, or everybody goes—and sooner than we think.

To begin with, look at the American Way of Life. Its essence is a belief in growth. Every Chamber of Commerce is bent on making its Podunk grow into the Biggest Little City in the country. Wall Street is dedicated to its search for growth stocks, so that Xerox has become the American ideal—superseding George Washington, who expressed his faith in growth by speculating in land. Each year Detroit prays for a bigger car market. Businessmen spend their lives in pursuit of an annual increase in sales, assets and net profits. All housewives—except for a few slatterns without ambition—yearn for bigger houses, bigger cars, and bigger salary cheques. The one national goal that everybody agrees on is an ever-growing Gross National Product. Our modern priesthood—the economists who reassure us that our mystic impulses are moral and holy—recently announced that the GNP would reach a trillion dollars early in this decade. I don't really understand what a trillion is, but when I read the news I rejoiced, along with everybody else. Surely that means that we were in sight of ending poverty, for the first time in human history, so that nobody would ever again need to go hungry or live in a slum.

Now I know better. In these past months I have come to understand that a zooming Gross National Product leads not to salvation, but to suicide. So does a continuing growth in population, highway mileage, kilowatts, plane travel, steel tonnage, or anything else you care to name.

The most important lesson of my life—learned shamefully late—was that non-stop growth just isn't possible, for Americans or anybody else. For we live in what I've learned to recognise as a tight ecological system: a smallish planet with a strictly limited supply of everything, including air, water, and places to dump sewage. There is no conceivable way in which it can be made bigger. If Homo sapiens insists on constant growth, within this system's inelastic walls, something has to pop, or smother. Already the United States is an overpopulated country: not so hopelessly overcrowded as Japan or India, of course, but well beyond the limits which would make a good life attainable for everybody. Stewart Udall, former Secretary of Interior and now a practising ecologist, has estimated that the optimum population for America would be about 100 million, or half of our present numbers. And unless we do something, drastic and fast, we can expect another 100 million within the next thirty years.

So our prime national goal, I am now convinced, should be to reach Zero Growth Rate as soon as possible. Zero growth in people, in GNP, and in



Sanders in The Milwaukee Journal

"Why, he's an excellent watch dog. Someday we may even unleash him"

our consumption of everything. That is the only hope of attaining a stable ecology: that is of halting the deterioration of the environment on which our lives depend.

This of course is a profoundly subversive notion. It runs squarely against the grain of both capitalism and the American dream. It is equally subversive of communism, since the communists are just as hooked on the idea of perpetual growth as any American businessman. Indeed, when Khrushchev was top man in the Kremlin, he proclaimed that 1970 would be the year in which the Russians would surpass the United States in output of goods. They didn't make it: a fact for which their future generations may be grateful, because their environment is just as fragile as ours, and as easily damaged by headlong expansion. If you think the Hudson River and Lake Erie are unique examples of pollution, take a look at the Volga and Lake Baikal.

No political party, here or abroad, has yet even considered adopting Zero Growth Rate as the chief plank in its platform. Neither has any politician dared to speak out aloud about what "protection of the environment" really means—although practically all of them seem to have realised, all of a sudden, that it is becoming an issue they can't ignore. So far, most of them have tried to handle it with gingerly platitudes, while keeping their eyes tightly closed to the implications of what they say. In his January State of the Union message, for instance, President Nixon made the customary noises about pollution; but he never even men-

tioned the population explosion, and he specifically denied that there is any "fundamental contradiction between economic growth and the quality of life". He sounded about as convincing as a doctor telling a cancer patient not to worry about the growth of his tumor.

The Democrats are no better. I have not heard any of them demanding a halt to all immigration, or a steeply progressive income tax on each child beyond two, or an annual bounty to every woman between the ages of fifteen and forty-five who gets through the year without becoming pregnant. Neither Ted Sorensen nor any of the other Kennedy henchmen has yet suggested that a politician with a big family is a spacehog and a hypocrite, unworthy of public trust. No Democrat, to my knowledge, has even endorsed the views of Dr. Rene Dubos of Rockefeller University, one of the truly wise men of our time. In an editorial in the 14 November, 1969, issue of *Science* he predicted that in order to survive, "mankind will have to develop what might be called a steady state . . . a nearly closed system" in which most materials from tin cans to sewage would be "recycled instead of discarded". His conclusion—that a viable future depends on the creation of "social and economic systems different from the ones in which we live today"—apparently is too radical for any politicians I know.

Consequently, I feel a little lonesome in my newfound political convictions. The only organisation which seems to share them is a tiny one, founded only a few months ago: Zero Population Growth, Inc., with headquarters at 367 State Street, Los Altos, California, 94022. Yet I have a hunch that I may not be lonesome for long. Among college students a concern with ecology has become, almost overnight, nearly as popular as sideburns. On many campuses it seems to be succeeding civil rights and Vietnam as The Movement. For example, when the University of Oregon announced last January a new course, "Can Man Survive?", it drew six thousand students, the biggest class in the University's history. They had to meet in the basketball court because no classroom would hold them.

Who knows? Maybe we agitators for Zero may yet turn out to be the wave of the future.

At the same time I was losing my faith in the virtues of growth, I began to doubt two other articles of the American credo.

One of them is the belief that technology can fix anything. Like most of us, I had always taken it for granted that any problem could be solved if we just applied enough science, money and good old American know-how. Is the world's population outrunning its food supply? Well, then, let's put

the laboratories to work inventing high-yield strains of rice and wheat, better fertilizers, ways to harvest seaweed, hydroponic methods for growing food without soil. If the air is becoming unbreathable, surely the technologists can find ways to clean it up. If our transportation system is a national disgrace, all we have to do is call in the miracle men who built a shuttle service to the moon; certainly they should be able to figure out some way to get a train from New York to New Haven on time.

I was in East Haddam, Connecticut, looking at an atomic power plant, when I began to suspect that technology might not be the answer after all. While I can't go along with the young Luddites who have decided that science is evil and that all inventions since the wheel ought to be destroyed, I am persuaded that technology is a servant of only limited usefulness, and highly unreliable. When it does solve a problem, it often creates two new ones—and their side effects are usually hard to foresee.

One of the things that brought me to East Haddam was curiosity about the automobile. Since the gasoline engine is the main polluter of the air, maybe it should be replaced with some kind of electric motor? That of course would require an immense increase in our production of electric power, in order to recharge ten million batteries every night. Where would it come from? Virtually all waterpower sites already are in use. More coal- and oil-fired power stations don't sound like a good idea, since they too pour smoke into the atmosphere—and coal mining already has ruined countless streams and hundreds of thousands of acres of irreplaceable land. Atomic power, then?

At first glance, the East Haddam plant, which is fairly typical of the new technology, looked encouraging. It is not as painful an eyesore as coal-burning stations, and not a wisp of smoke was in sight. When I began to ask questions, however, the company's public relations man admitted that there are a few little problems. For one thing, the plant's innards are cooled with water pumped out of the Connecticut River. When it flows back in, this water raises the river's temperature by about twenty degrees, for a considerable distance. Apparently this has not yet done any serious damage to the shad, the only fish kept under careful surveillance; but its effect on other fish and algae, fish eggs, micro-organism, and the general ecology of the river is substantial though still unmeasured.

It would be possible, though expensive, for the company to build cooling towers, where the water would trickle over a series of baffles before returning to the river. In the process it would lose its heat to the atmosphere. But this, in turn, threatens climatic changes, such as banks of artificial fog

rolling eastward over Long Island Sound, and serious wastage of water through evaporation from a river system where water already is in precarious supply. Moreover, neither this process nor any other now known would eliminate the slight, but not negligible, radiation which every atomic plant throws off, nor the remote but still omnipresent chance of a nuclear accident which could take thousands of lives. The building of an additional twenty plants along the banks of the Connecticut—which some estimates call for, in order to meet future demand for electricity—would be a clear invitation to an ecological disaster.

In the end I began to suspect that there is no harmless way to meet the demands for power of a rising population, with rising living standards—much less for a new herd of millions of electric cars. Every additional kilowatt levies some tax upon the environment, in one form or another. The Fourth Law of Thermodynamics seems to be: "There is no free lunch".

Every time you look at one of the marvels of modern technology, you find a by-product—unintended, unpredictable, and often lethal. Since World War II American agriculture has performed miracles in increasing production. One result was that we were able for years to send a shipload of free wheat every day to India, saving millions from starvation. The by-products were: (1) a steady rise in India's population; (2) the poisoning of our streams and lakes with insecticides and chemical fertilizers; (3) the forced migration of some ten million people from the countryside to city slums, as agriculture became so efficient it no longer needed their labor.

Again the jet plane is an unquestionable convenience, capable of whisking a New Yorker, say, to either the French Riviera or Southern California in a tenth of the time he could travel by ship or car, and at lower cost. But when he reaches his destination, the passenger finds the beaches coated with oil (intended to fuel planes, if it hadn't spilled) and the air thick with smog (thanks in good part to the jets, each of which spews out as much hydrocarbon as ten thousand automobiles).

Moreover, technology works best on things nobody really needs, such as collecting moon rocks or building supersonic transport planes. Whenever we try to apply it to something serious, it usually falls on its face.

An obvious case in point is the railroads. We already have the technology to build fast, comfortable passenger trains. Such trains are, in fact, already in operation in Japan, Italy, and a few other countries. Experimental samples—the Metroliners and Turbo trains—also are running with spectacular success between Washington and

Boston. If we had enough of them to handle commuter and middle-distance traffic throughout the country, we could stop building the highways and airports which disfigure our countryside, reduce the number of automobiles contaminating the air, and solve many problems of urban congestion. But so far we have not been able to apply the relatively simple technology needed to accomplish these aims, because some tough political decisions have to be made before we can unleash the scientists and engineers. We would have to divert to the railroads many of the billions in subsidy which we now lavish on highways and air routes. We would have to get rid of our present railway management—in general, the most incompetent in American industry—and retire the doddering old codgers of the Railway Brotherhoods who make such a mess out of running our trains. This might mean public ownership of a good many rail lines. It certainly would mean all-out war with the unions, the auto and aviation industries, and the highway lobby. It would mean ruthless application of the No Growth principle to roads, cars and planes, while we make sensible use instead, of something we already have: some 20,000 miles of railways.

All this requires political action, of the most radical kind. Until our Great Slob Society is willing to take it, technology is helpless.

My final apostasy from the American Creed was loss of faith in private property. I am now persuaded that there no longer is such a thing as truly private property, at least in land. That was a luxury we could afford only when the continent was sparsely settled. Today the use a man makes of his land cannot be left to his private decision alone, since eventually it is bound to affect everybody else. This conclusion I reached in anguish, since I own a tiny patch of land and value its privacy above anything money can buy.

What radicalised me on this score was the Department of Agriculture and Dr. Ian McHarg. From those dull volumes of statistics which the Department publishes from time to time, I discovered that usable land is fast becoming a scarce resource—and that we are wasting it with an almost criminal lack of foresight. Every year, more than a million acres of farm and forest land is being eaten up by highways, airports, reservoirs, and real-estate developments. The best, too, in most cases, since the rich flat bottom lands are the most tempting to developers.

Since America is, for the moment, producing a surplus of many crops, this destruction of farmland has not yet caused much public alarm. But some day, not too far off, the rising curve of population and the falling curve of food-growing land inevit-

ably are going to intersect. That is the day when we may begin to understand what hunger means.

Long before that, however, we may be gasping for breath. For green plants are our only source of oxygen. They also are the great purifiers of the atmosphere, since in the process of photosynthesis they absorb carbon dioxide—an assignment which gets harder every day, as our chimneys and exhaust pipes spew out ever-bigger tonnage of carbon gases. This is a function not only of trees and grass, but also of the tiny micro-organisms in the sea. Indeed, its phytoplankton produces some seventy per cent. of all the oxygen on which life depends. These are delicate little creatures, easily killed by the sewage chemicals and oil wastes which already are contaminating every ocean in the world. Nobody knows when the scale will tip: when there are no longer enough green growing things to preserve the finely balanced mixture of gases in the atmosphere, by absorbing carbon dioxide and generating oxygen. All we know is that man is pressing down hard on the lethal end of the scale.

The Survivable Society, if we are able to construct it, will no longer permit a farmer to convert his meadow into a parking lot any time he likes. He will have to understand that his quick profit may, quite literally, take the bread out of his grandchildren's mouths, and the oxygen from their lungs. For the same reasons, housing developments will not be located where they suit the whim of a real estate speculator or even the convenience of the residents. They will have to go those few carefully chosen sites where they will do the least damage to the landscape, and to the life-giving greenery which it supports.

This is one of the lessons taught by Ian McHarg in his extraordinary book, "Design With Nature", recently published by Natural History Press. Alas, its price, \$19.95, will keep it from reaching the people who need it most. It ought to be excerpted into a pocket-size volume—entitled, perhaps, "The Thoughts of McHarg"—and distributed free in every school and supermarket.

The current excitement about the environment will not come to much, I am afraid, unless it radicalises millions of Americans. The conservative ideas put forth by President Nixon—spending a few billion for sewage-treatment plants and abatement of air pollution—will not even begin to create the Survivable Society. That can be brought about only by radical political action—radical enough to change the whole structure of government, the economy, and our national goals.

How the Survivable State will work is something I cannot guess: its design is a job for the coming generation of political scientists. The rad-

ical vision can, however, give us a glimpse of what it might look like. It will measure every new law, every dollar of investment by a cardinal yardstick: Will this help us accomplish a zero rate of growth and a stabilised environment? It will be sceptical of technology, including those inventions which purport to help clean up our earthly mess. Accordingly it will have an Anti-Patent Office, which will forbid the use of any technological discovery until the Office figures out fairly precisely what its side effects might be. (If they can't be foreseen, then the invention goes into deep freeze.) The use of

land, water and air will not be left to private decision, since their preservation will be recognised as a public trust. The landlord whose incinerator smokes will be pilloried; the tanker skipper who flushes his oil tanks at sea will be hanged at the nearest yardarm for the capital crime of oxygen destruction. On the other hand, the gardener will stand at the top of the social hierarchy, and the citizen who razes a supermarket and plants its acreage in trees will be proclaimed a Hero of the Republic. I won't live to see the day, of course; but I hope somebody will.

The politicians, not sure whether concern over deterioration of the environment is a craze or a crusade, have elected, predictably, to play it safe . . . The polluters, too, want their share of the action. Some of them are buying four-color advertisements in the slicks to assure us that they too love the land and water and woods they go on polluting for profit . . .

The sudden and spectacular emergence of the environmental issue poses a host of problems. Perhaps the most important is that involvement in ecological concerns could readily serve—and to some extent may have already served—to divert public attention . . . from the continuing tragedy in Vietnam, from an imperialistic foreign policy that invites more Vietnams, from a catastrophic arms race that could gut our planet more rapidly than the many-sided process of pollution, from a callous neglect of persistent poverty and racism in the United States . . .

Crusaders for a genuinely fundamental program to clean up the environment will know they are on the right track when the spokesmen for the corporate establishment switch from their present purring approval of something they call conservation to roars of recrimination against those who, in the process of combatting pollution, would disturb their corporate profits and power . . .

For the struggle for survival will demand a degree of public spending and public management and control that will constitute a political and social revolution . . .

From the special 'Crisis of Survival' issue
of the Progressive (U.S.A.), April 1970.

LUNCH FOR THOUGHT

i said
why not
 let's have some
of that
quick the strawberries
 are eating up
the cream
and she said
 no let's not
let's send them
with yokubu gowon
 to biafra
go on i said
how absurd
 it's like asking
spite
to bite
 its own head
but we could always
eat snails
 then the birds
might weep
she said
 i believe they're eating
dogs in india
how absurd
 who will chase
the cats
the rats?
 and i said
lunch is over
the strawberries
 have melted
into thin air
is air
 thin she said
it must be hungry too
oh no its too thick skinned i said

MAL MORGAN

J. M. HARCOURT

the banning of "Upsurge"

Two or three years ago "Upsurge", the second of three novels I wrote in my salad days, was released from the Index Expurgatorius Australianus within the devious maze of which it had languished, out of print and out of mind, since October 1934. Announcing the event the press informed me that "Upsurge" was the first novel by an Australian writer to be put on the Index. This was news to me. I had been under the impression for many years that the honor belonged to Norman Lindsay's "The Cautious Amorisist". I still am. I think "The Cautious Amorisist" was banned in 1933. However, Norman Lindsay, God rest his pagan soul, is no longer in any position to write an account of the banning of "The Cautious Amorisist". I, therefore, as Martyr Number Two, substitute for him with an account of the banning of "Upsurge".

The book was published in the spring of 1934 by John Long Ltd., a subsidiary of Hutchinson Ltd., of London, in an edition of one thousand copies. On publication the publishers paid to my agent, Curtis Brown, an advance of £30 against prospective royalties. Curtis Brown deducted his 10 per cent. commission, paid British income tax on my behalf on the balance, and remitted the rest to me. I can't remember what the amount was, but it was appreciably less than £30. I mention this to show what a very large and untidy fowl can be hatched from a very small egg.

Some time in April 1934 copies of the book reached Australia and went on sale.

"Upsurge" had had a reasonably good press in Great Britain, of which the following review from The Times Literary Supplement of 26 April 1934 was about average:

UPSURGE. By J. M. Harcourt, 7½ x 5, 286 pp. John Long. 7s. 6d. n.

James Riddle, magistrate, found himself making successful love to a girl whom a few days before he had sentenced for indecent exposure on a bathing-beach. He wondered whether the law had got out of touch with modern manners; and was this amoral and promiscuous

society of which he had suddenly got a glimpse really a sign of approaching revolution, as a Communist friend had told him? Perhaps it was best to admit that the law was not always justice, and not to falter meanwhile in dealing out the penalties the law provided for those whom unemployment and hunger had driven to violence. But there was no penalty for the philandering employer who brought tragedy and death to one of his shop-girls, except the penalty of crowd justice; and who was finally to blame when the magistrate's mistress was killed by a police truncheon in an unemployed riot that might have been the beginning of the revolution if it had not been checked? Checked, it was merely a rather pitiful demonstration by workers whom the petty discipline of a labour camp had goaded to desperation. In such a way does Mr. Harcourt suggest the confusing social background of the worst days of the depression in an Australian city. The moral laxity which he describes with candour is not necessarily peculiar to modern Australian youth, but the impact he shows of the ideals of Communism on the sordid and unruly truthfully illustrates a critical phase through which more than one Australian community has recently passed.

The reviewer must actually have read the book to have been able to write it.

But the reviews in Australia, particularly in Western Australia, were of a different order. The first to appear was in the Daily News of 28 April 1934, under the initials R.L.H., which stood for Roland (otherwise Roley) L. Hoffman, a former colleague of mine. It was headed OFFENSIVE, BUT WELL WRITTEN STORY ABOUT PERTH, and ran in part thus:

"Upsurge" . . . brings forward, primarily, the question of the relationship of pornography to art. Mr Harcourt . . . has taken the misguidedly bold course of giving his story an overpowering taint of the sexual . . .

The sort of stuff in "Upsurge" may have provided excitement of some sort to the author in the writing of it . . . there are still limits to sexual emphasis to which a writer may go, and I hardly think that any reader of "Up-

surge" will disagree with me when I say that Mr Harcourt has here exceeded them.

. . . he has ruined what would otherwise have been a very good and very readable story.

. . . I almost suspect that he sent his script off to the publishers cherishing the fond hope of so many young authors that his book would have the good fortune of getting itself banned.

In view of the fact that Roley Hoffmann was quite a few years younger than I (I thought him hardly dry behind the ears) I was not pleased to read this review when a copy of it reached me. None of the notices "Upsurge" got in Great Britain had as much as hinted that it was sexually overloaded. Nor did I have any idea that the concluding words of Hoffmann's impertinence were the first bubbles in a little brew that had been planned for me. The pot still had to simmer for a while.

A month later, on 2 June, the West Australian's review appeared:

. . . indeed it would be hard to imagine a more thoroughly unpleasant set of people than are to be found in the pages of Mr Harcourt's immature narrative of "petting-parties", shop-girls' strikes, street-rioting—in which the police are made to behave like a lot of Bashi-Bazouks—Communist agitators, crude caricatures of magistrates and business magnates—the whole extraordinary conglomeration being liberally spiced with frankly erotic situations and choice specimens of schoolboy obscenities. Apart from this, the author occasionally, but only occasionally, reveals a certain grim power in his descriptive pieces . . .

Despite these and similar comments, or perhaps because of them, "Upsurge" was now selling briskly. Not long afterwards it was announced that the book had been held up for Customs investigation in South Australia and Victoria. In both cases it was soon released for distribution.

On 17 July the Dublin Gazette announced the banning of the book in the Irish Free State, together with three other books by Australian authors: "Two Minutes" by Ken Attiwill, "Companionate Marriage" by J. A. Goldsmid, and "Encyclopaedia of Sexual Knowledge", edited by Norman Haire, Ch.M., M.B. This was, more or less, an announcement of the impending banning of "Upsurge" in Australia. Despite the fact that it had been read and released by Customs officers in two different States, the then Minister for Customs, Sir Thomas White, felt that he had a higher criterion than his underlings of what was right and proper for the Australian public to read; and this higher criterion led him to believe that he could best keep the public mind pure by banning anything that was banned in Ireland. So "Upsurge" was presumably doomed anyway. But it did not happen as simply as that. There was that little brew a-bubbling in Perth.

Towards the end of July or in early August I got a tip-off in a letter from a friend who wrote, inter alia: "Your book is selling like hot cakes in Perth . . . Congratulations . . . But there is a rumor abroad that you can shortly expect a real boost as a result of something that's being cooked up by Roley Hoffmann and his pal Dave Hunter that can't come off until Douglas goes on holidays. While he's away Dave Hunter will be Acting Commissioner, and I imagine that may have something to do with it . . ."

Dave Hunter was Chief Inspector David Hunter of the Western Australian Police and a friend of mine. "Douglas" was Mr. W. Douglas, Commissioner of Police, whom I did not know and who, as far as I am aware, did not know me. But of what was being "cooked up" between Roley Hoffmann and Chief Inspector Hunter I still had no idea.

I found out soon enough. The brew boiled over. It was a conspiracy (no libel: they are both defunct) to give me a leg up the ratlines to the masthead of the Ship of Literary Fame. Acting Commissioner of Police David Hunter crowded on sail while Roley Hoffmann worked the bilge-pump of publicity.

On 15 August 1934 the Daily News (Roley's paper) published the following item:

W.A. AUTHOR'S BOOK TAKEN FROM SHOPS
POLICE MOVE UNDER INDECENT PUBLICATIONS ACT

It was learned today that police had visited book-selling shops in Perth and had taken possession of a number of copies of the book "Upsurge" by the Western Australian writer, Mr J. M. Harcourt.

This action, it is understood, was taken under the authority of the Indecent Publications Act . . .

"Upsurge" has been sold in Perth since April last. One bookseller has sold about 50 copies, and it is believed the total sales in the city have been considerably more than 100.

During recent months the book has been the subject of much comment here. The setting of the story is confined to Perth and suburbs, and much of it relates to the author's ideas of existing social conditions . . .

Mr Harcourt is now engaged in journalism in Melbourne.

Nice timing! They waited until those booksellers who were stocking the book were practically out of stock.

This, of course, was not long after the much publicised bannings in England of such books as: "Ulysses", "The Well of Loneliness", "The Colonel's Daughter", "Farewell to Arms", "Brave New World" and others, all the authors of which undoubtedly did very well out of the publicity. There

was a general impression abroad and in Australia that all that was necessary to set an author on the highway to success was to have a book banned. The 'general impression' took no cognizance of the fact that bannings in Britain were not so frenetic, ill-considered and all-embracing as bannings in Ireland and Australia; nor of the fact that there were lots of Continental publishers anxious to cash-in on the publicity given to the authors of such books by publishing European editions in the English language as well as in their own; nor of the fact that very much less publicity would have accrued to authors less well-established and respected.

In so far as I know, the banning of "Upsurge" in Australia, although it got considerable publicity here, was never even mentioned overseas. And no European publisher cabled me offering a substantial advance to allow him to publish a Paris edition of 100,000.

The Daily News of 17 August reported that the seizure was the result of an instruction received from the Crown Law Department, and that the police made no secret of the fact that I should have been prosecuted had I been a resident of Western Australia. In my defence spoke up one 'Philos' in the West Australian ("Even an author has some elementary rights, and a star chamber decision by some unnamed person, or persons, hardly squares with the generally accepted ideas of justice"), and also my publishers, quoting English critics. "The opinion of the publishers has nothing to do with us", said Mr Hunter. A struggling Sunday paper, the Mirror, asserted that "We can do without muck of this nature—but what a rush there'll be for Harcourt's next book!"

Alas, the rush failed to materialise. My next and last book, "It Never Fails", did not appear until 1937, by which time the "Upsurge" furore had been forgotten, and "It Never Fails" was quietly ignored.

Instead of writing, or attempting to write, novels, perhaps I should have concentrated on something in the Dale Carnegie manner entitled, say, "How to Make Enemies and Annoy People". For some of the townfolk of Broome, having erroneously identified themselves with some of the less ethical characters in my first book, "The Pearlers", made a public bonfire of such copies of it as they could find in that then Port of Pearls. And I was informed that, before the seizure of "Upsurge" by the Perth police, a well-known and respected Perth businessman consulted his solicitors with a view to taking action against me for libel on the ground that he had been portrayed as a disreputable character. He doubtless recovered from his annoyance when his solicitors pointed out to him how profit-

less would such an action have been against a man of straw. As for another Perth businessman whom I actually did use as a model for the disreputable character, it never entered his head that he bore the slightest resemblance to him.

There is little more to relate of the banning of "Upsurge". The police in New South Wales, a few days later, trod in the footsteps of the police in Perth and prosecuted Dymock's for offering the book for sale. The information was withdrawn after Dymock's gave an undertaking not to sell any more copies and agreed to pay eight shillings costs. Then, towards the end of the year, came the brief announcement from Canberra that the Customs Department had forbidden importation of the book, and that was the end of it. After the Perth raid, I doubt if a dozen copies of the book were sold throughout Australia.

But there were a few subsequent repercussions to explain which I must emphasise the fantastic insistence by all parties on the 'indecent' of "Upsurge". By current-day standards it would be held to be innocuous on that score. But I, like so many of us in those days, was a 'fellow-traveller', and the book was a book about the early years of what is now called "The Great Depression", and was written from a 'fellow-traveller's' point of view. Katharine Susannah Prichard, then as until recently an Australian mouth-piece of the Third International, declared it to be the first "truly 'working-class' novel" ever written in Australia. Katharine Susannah hurried to Victoria (this was the year of the Victorian Centenary Celebrations) just in advance of the shadow of Egon Kisch, dispatched by the Third International on a lecture tour of Australia in the hope of uniting workers and liberals generally to resist the threat of war and fascism. After electing me to the Kisch Reception Committee, Katharine Susannah scurried round among Melbourne literati, formed the "Revolutionary Writers' League" from them, elected me president of it, and, with a giggle, informed me that my name was on the political Black List as a "member of the United Front against War and Fascism", which was not a subversive organisation but a slogan. The Revolutionary Writers' League, as I recall it, passed a number of resolutions disapproving of Hitler, Mussolini, the Emperor of Japan, and Chiang Kai-shek for their unkindness to the communists, and organised a short-story competition for 'proletarian' writers of which, being president, I was naturally one of the judges. When I got fed up with this childishness and resigned the presidency the League fizzled out, Katharine Susannah being no longer in Melbourne to elect another president.

Meanwhile there was a slow stirring, egged on by the communists, of liberal resentment about the arbitrary banning of books, which coagulated when Mervyn Skipper, then editing the mouthpiece of Jorgensonian philosophy, Pandemonium, called a meeting at his house of interested parties. At this it was decided to form the "Book Censorship Abolition League" and to call a public meeting at which to launch it. I was offered the presidency of the League but refused (very wisely) to accept it on the ground that I had too big an axe to grind. But I did agree to chair the meeting, at which, by acclamation, the Book Censorship Abolition League was formed and W. Macmahon Ball (then

a senior lecturer at Melbourne University) elected President.

The brief history of the League, as related by the press, appeared to consist of a series of dialogues between Mr Ball and Sir Thomas White about "Upsurge", the ground being invariably cut from beneath Mac Ball's feet because he privately disapproved of "Upsurge" as much as Sir Thomas White did.

In conclusion, I may say of "Upsurge" that, despite its literary shortcomings, and God knows they were many, it was an honest fictional account of the Western Australian State of Denmark at that time.

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miscellany

TRIBUTE TO ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN

JOHN McLAREN

Politics may have influenced the committee which awarded the 1970 Nobel Prize for literature to Alexander Solzhenitsyn. Politics undoubtedly produced the denunciation of the award from the Soviet Writers' Union. Solzhenitsyn's novels, however, will outlast the present political squabbling to do honor to the committee which has given him the award, and to condemn the apparatchiks who have been too blinded by their own ideas of what literature should do to recognise the achievements of this man—a man who has survived some of the worst horrors of the twentieth century to give witness to the endurance of the human spirit.

Solzhenitsyn's works may continue to be turned to offensive purposes by those who are more interested in continuing a cold war than in seeing the Russian people escape their yoke. His books, however, are not addressed primarily to western anti-communists, but to those of his own people who have betrayed the hopes which led to the Revolution. If they would listen to his words, and trust the people to find their own way, the novels would lose their force as propaganda.

The unlikelihood of the tyrant ever loosening his own tyranny is, however, shown all too clearly in Solzhenitsyn's novels. With the exception of Stalin, against whom his bitterness is unbounded, most of the oppressors in these works are not really evil men, despite the evil they do. They have been made what they are by a system which rests finally on fear. But their ideological blinkers not only make them unable to recognise the truth of the system, they also blind them to the objective reality of their own actions. Having identified themselves by definition with the vanguard of the working class, everything they do becomes automatically right, and their opponents, by virtue of the same definition, are automatically evil. In the ultimate transformation of newspeak, the original Marxist distinction of objective and subjective becomes reversed. Finally the only perceived reality is a projection of a completely internalised ideology which provides a ready-made classification for every phenomenon.

It is not, however, Solzhenitsyn's negative analysis which is a most important feature of his works, although it is this element which is probably responsible for a great deal of the attention he has received in the West. Rather, it is the picture he gives of men who are able to live and work together by values which transcend not only their physical environment but even the ideologies which they profess. The most important figure in his work is the black-bearded Rubin in "The First Circle". This physical and intellectual giant of a man has been imprisoned for venturing to express the opinion that some Germans may be human. In prison, his spirit of compassion leads him simultaneously to side with his fellow-victims of Stalin's oppression and to defend passionately the system which has made them victims.

At the time of writing, it is not known whether the shabby bureaucrats of Stalin's successor state will allow Solzhenitsyn to leave his country to receive his prize. Whatever they do, however, his novels will survive as a tribute to human nature which is too resilient to yield to the pettiness of suburbia and too contradictory to be confined within any ideology. Like the greatest works of art, his books pass judgment on their readers.

PASTORAL

JOHN MORRISON

I remember waiting for a bus one spring evening in the Dandenong Ranges. The weather was warm and dry and calm, and I sat down among the grass and ferns at the roadside. The tall timber which had once lined the other side had long ago been cleared by berry growers, opening up a fine view of the distant and bigger hills of a spur of the Great Dividing Range. They were a soft, dark, smoky blue, in the way of our Australian hills when the light leaves them. Behind them the sun was setting in a blaze of red, a great curtain of

color that faded gradually through several shades of pink and orange to a steely grey overhead.

After awhile I became aware that something was taking place against this backdrop. A large flock of swifts was flying to and fro in a great oval extending for several hundred yards. There were probably fifty of them, and they seemed to be playing some kind of game. They were just over the paddock at the other side of the road, and easy to pick out against the sunset. I became absorbed in watching them, and soon noticed that each bird kept within the roughly shaped oval, back and forth, back and forth. They flew with great speed and not much wing beating, in the way of swifts. Often two of them passed so close to each other that I thought a collision unavoidable. I thought also that they were exchanging some kind of greeting among themselves, particularly near the centre of the area they were performing in. There came to me a haphazard but constant succession of little tapping sounds which I could identify only as the clicking of beaks.

That seemed to be all: a quiet evening, and a flock of birds wheeling and clicking against the sunset.

After awhile, perhaps because my eyes became tired, I fell to studying the earth around me. It was the kind of thin, disorderly covering you get under eucalypts and wild cherry trees: a few tufts of harsh grass, a few ferns, a few tendrils of hovea and sarsaparilla, a few patches where nothing grew, all littered with fallen leaves and twigs. At first glance no more interesting than any other square yard of the roadside all the way from Mount Evelyn to Monbulk.

Then I realised that something odd was happening here also. One of the patches of bare earth was giving birth to life. There was a hole, clean and deep, as if someone had shot a small-calibre bullet into the ground, and out of the hole was pouring a stream of insects. Flying ants. They came out continuously, sometimes two crowding together. What arrested me was the frantic eagerness which seemed to possess them all. Each one, gleaming with newness, did exactly the same thing: emerged into the light, paused for split second on the lip of the hole, scurried away for a distance of twelve or fifteen inches, paused again with rapidly vibrating wings, then took off straight into the sunset. I watched them for many minutes, wondering how long the procession would keep up, what kind of secret chamber it was in which they had taken form, what extraordinary promise it was that drew them with such crazy haste into the evening sky. I began to follow their flight. It wasn't easy at first, because the light was fail-

ing, but with great concentration I soon found I was able to keep up with individual insects, go along with them one by one into the fatal oval—where, one by one, they were picked up by the speeding swifts.

It became a game for me too, hoping and hoping to see just one get through, fade out of sight while still flying. But it never happened. Always, sometimes as soon as it entered the oval, sometimes when I was just beginning to think it would win through, one of the speeding birds would flash by, and the tiny black dot would vanish at the click of a beak.

Not one survived. There came a time when the little hole in the ground ceased to give forth, and within seconds the swifts also were gone.

No reasonable person disputes the need for intelligent control of both insect and bird populations, but I would like to see this little story printed on the label of every drum of insecticide, and plastered—hot with glue—on the backside of every person who shoots a wild bird just for the hell of it.

UNASHAMED NOSTALGIA

JIM NELSON

The year somewhere about 1911 or 1912. The period of time: schooldays. The scene: a country town in South Gippsland, Victoria, and a deserted shop.

The old shop had been isolated when the new shopping centre spread to the other side of the railway line. It was built on a corner and had a lofty verandah built over the gravelly footpath, and to us as kids it was a bit of a mystery. Mostly it was unoccupied, but now and again some optimist opened up a business, but inevitably went broke.

On this occasion, a Mr. Pyle opened it up as a sort of cafe—soft drinks, lollies, etc. His (no doubt) desperate wife served a few meals and afternoon teas to supplement the meagre takings, supporting a large family of attractive, red-headed kids.

Ultimately, and inevitably, Mr. Pyle went broke, and did a "moonlight flit", as it was called in those days.

Walking home from school one day with some of the 'talent' I shared the miseries of school with, one, Frank, who was rather an astute lad with a nose for finding things out, whispered to me that old Pyle had whizzed off and left the shop full



of goods; he thought he knew a way to get in. With another trusted accomplice we three kept the news and plan, though excitedly, a secret.

To hop the picket fence surrounding the shop and living quarters was, of course, no problem to us sprightly lads. (Frank had already done some reconnoitering.) We found the living quarters to be half a story higher than the shop itself; also discovered a sort of cellar which ended up under the short stairway leading down into the shop. With lighted matches we made our way to underneath the stairs and found little difficulty in prising the lining boards off the side and stepping into the bonanza. With drooling mouths, we gazed at the shelves of full lolly bottles and soft drinks—all ours.

Every so often we stuffed our elastic-waisted shirts, made of galatea, with chocolates, licorice straps, milk poles, boiled lollies, aniseed balls (you oldies will remember those not mentioned), Marchant's new drink, ginger beer, lemonade, raspberry vinegar, sarsparella—the lot. The loot was hidden in a big hollow log in the thick, lush bush and undergrowth near the school and we collected some each morning for the day's consumption, becoming favorites with the girls, who thought our parents must be very rich to allow so much money to spend on sweets.

We got a scare one day, when Frank popped a big aniseed ball into his mouth in class. Our lady teacher, who had a dislike for Frank, demanded to know what he was sucking. With some difficulty, he muttered through a distended mouth and dribble that he had a gum boil. Teacher, incensed by the obvious lie, hooked her finger into his mouth and out from blackened lips shot the 'gum boil'. During the struggle which ensued, Frank's shirt burst open and aniseed balls bounced all over the floor, to be swiftly pounced on by the quick-wits of the class.

Surprisingly, no questions were asked as to why some of the class were always chewing lollies. I don't remember if any of us got sick with so much indulgence, but maybe the otherwise good plain food we ate at home in those days stood us in good stead.

Fate dealt us a foul blow when a bush fire burnt out our cache and destroyed our supply. Further to this, the sergeant of police, who used to sit atop of the high trucking yards fence overlooking that part of the town, yarning to the stockmen, spied Frank—playing a lone hand and wagging it from school—scrambling over the shop fence. On investigating, he copped Frank red-handed.

It seemed an ordinary tea-time at home that night, although Dad did seem a bit quiet and thoughtful. When tea was finished, he beckoned me outside and, to the question "Were you in Pyle's?", I stuttered and mumbled a shocked "No!" "Well," he said, "you were—they've been caught and said you were one of them!"

My father was a kindly and understanding man and seldom used violence on me but, on this occasion, he threatened to "take it out of my hide" if he had to pay for any of the stolen goods. Mother shook her head sadly and predicted worse trouble from me in the future.

Luck was with us and the whole thing blew over. The police took no action, nor did the stock owner claim recompense. It appeared that police and special agents used to sit up at night watching for the late shopkeeper sneaking back and taking the goods, little dreaming that kids were doing it in daylight after school.

Although many admonishing fingers were wagged at us by grim-faced adults, I'm sure they had a good laugh between themselves, remembering some of their own shady escapades of young boyhood.

NOTICES

For the tidily-minded, two corrections to Overland 45. On page 3, "Autumn 1970" should of course read "Spring 1970", and on page 24, third last line, for "not" read "only".

*

Amongst many other courses, a Poetry Writing Workshop will be held at the Monash Summer School on six days between 2 February and 18 February 1971. The workshop is intended for both beginners and practising poets and will involve the writing, criticism and discussion of poetry. Fee \$7 and details from Activities Officer, The Union, Monash University, Clayton, V.

BOOKS

SEARCH FOR TRUTH

JOHN McLAREN

Patrick White: "The Vivisector" (Cape, \$4.70).

Patrick White's latest novel revolves once more around the twin questions 'Who is God?' and 'Who is man?' The answer to both may be the title, "The Vivisector".

This time White has taken the artist as his central figure. Hurtle Duffield is born to a washer-woman and a bottle-oh who sell him at the age of six to an honest but dense pastoralist and his affected wife, who becomes Hurtle's 'Maman' of gentility. During his career, he "sympathised with the passionate illusions of several women, and could hardly be held responsible for their impulse to destroy themselves through what they misunderstood as love". Finally, under the influence of a 'psychopomp', part illusion, part memory of his last, his child-mistress, he dies in the act of reaching his ultimate vision.

In telling his story White achieves the most difficult of technical feats in making the fictitious artist a credible character. We not only share his struggle to find and capture the truths he feels about him, but also believe in the degree of success which he attains. This is because White's own vision of reality takes shape in painterly images of form and color which arise from the events of the story but crystallise in the acts of creation which give Duffield's life its meaning.

White achieves a similar technical feat in his description of the music which is the medium of Duffield's final mistress, the schoolgirl who becomes a concert pianist. In her recital their love is defined, as she plays "to delight her lover in a room empty except for themselves; or . . . the golden chicken-notes, in danger of scattering too far, scuttled fluttering for protection under the flounce of her swelling black". Then, in the slow movement, he "recognised the milky lustre, the spurts of black fire as theirs: dark tragedies hinted at resolved themselves in limpid strength". Then, however, he is cast aside in the final movement where she takes up again "the fussy business of life which she couldn't ignore". It is after this concert that she changes into the mystic inspiration of his search for God.

This concert embodies many of the concerns of the novel. At it we see the artist set against the ranks of the philistines, the "intellectual public servants and unassimilated Europeans", "Lady folliott Morgan and a trio of satellites", "the too suave (elderly) Dutch conductor", "the unnecessary orchestra of husbands and housewives and

raw boys and tired spinsters". These are everyday realities which hamper the artist in his search for truth, although they may also provide him at times with raw material. But beyond both artist and audience is the art itself, in this case the music of Mozart which is reached only after working through the vulgarities of the Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoffs. In the book as a whole it is the art of the painter, the ultimate work which takes him into the Elysian fields of pure being, but which can be reached only by the artist who will drive himself through deserts of effort until the presumptuous body is dumped in favor of the creation.

Yet this is not the whole of White's picture. Against the efforts of the spirit to free itself he places the equally demanding needs of the body. "As if he could ever wish to renounce his memories of the flesh even when renounced by its pleasures: the human body, unbroken by its own will, leaping and bucking to unseat, but rapturously, the longed-for, the chosen, though finally abstract, rider; yellow light licking as voluptuously as tongues; green shade dribbled like saliva on nakedness; all the stickinesses: honey, sap, semen, sweat melting into sweat; the velvets of rose-flesh threatened by teeth; exhausted, ugly, human furniture, bulging with an accumulation of experience acquired in years or by a stroke of lightning".

It is worth noting that this celebration of the body itself forms into an artefact which works as a description both of the kind of life shown in the novel and of the way in which paintings form in Hurtle Duffield's mind. White's immediate subject is the way the artist makes sense of the contradictory reality of life, but his real subject is his own attempt to embrace the whole range of life. In some ways the book gives more attention to the sordid and disgusting elements of living than did earlier works. This is, however, merely a part of the author's attempt to see everything in his attempt to discover the value of the whole. This value is discovered by his artist in the last brush-stroke of his life, when he finally achieves the shade of pure indigo which he has been seeking all his life. For White, however, the vision still eludes. All he can capture in words is the broken "end-less obvi indi-ggoddd".

Yet the failure to define Duffield's final vision does not flaw the novel, for the implication is that this vision is one which can only be captured in the final moment of life. For the rest of the time, it must remain, like art, something implicit in but always beyond the daily reality we can comprehend. In the image of painting, White seems to have found a more satisfactory vehicle for his understanding of truth than he had in the

mystique of "Voss", the chariot of "Riders", or even the self-enclosed dance of "The Solid Mandala".

I do not wish to give the impression that White has just written another version of a single great novel. Certainly, his concerns are similar to those which have appeared through all his novels. But the style of the prose is simpler now, so that the sharp distinctions of earlier works do not appear. There is more compassion for the ordinary person, and even for such phonies as the masturbating grocer and the fornicating music critic. The imagery of the novel seems to arise naturally from the events in the story, and is consequently both more comprehensive and less definitively explicit. He has created an entirely new world of places and characters. He has also had the confidence to allow his own personality to show through, not only in the style but in the range of knowledge and prejudice, and at one point in the apparent role of recipient for a conversational barb at Hurtle Duffield's reception, when one of the guests is heard to remark "If you want me to tell you why you're a misfit, Patrick, it's because you hate everybody".

Patrick White does not, of course, hate everybody, not even the queer old painter who is at the centre of this novel. The book would be much better described as an exercise in love, a love which demands to embrace everything and for this reason will probably upset those readers whose love of humanity is rather more selective. But whatever the final judgment may be, there can be no doubt that White has again written a most vivid, moving and important novel.

POETRY — THE PRESENT SCENE

FRANK KELLAWAY

- Charles Buckmaster: "Deep Blue and Green" (Crosscurrents, 90c).
 Tim Thorne: "Tense Mood and Voice" (Lyrebird, \$1).
 A. D. Hope: "New Poems 1965-1969" (A. & R., \$2.95).
 Rodney Hall: "The Law of Karma" (A.N.U. Press, \$2.75).
 Randolph Stow: "A Counterfeit Silence" (A. & R., \$2.95).
 Les A. Murray: "The Weatherboard Cathedral" (A. & R., \$2.25).
 Thomas W. Shapcott: "Inwards to the Sun" (Uni. of Qld., \$3.25).
 Bruce Dawe: "Beyond the Subdivisions" (Cheshire, \$1.95).
 Robert Clark: "Segments of the Bowl" (Cheshire, \$2.25).
 Vivian Smith (ed.): "Australian Poetry 1969" (A. & R., \$2.50).

These publications, even though the selection is more or less random, give a good idea of the vigor and variety of current Australian poetry. The majority are by established poets, though there is one exciting new voice—Tim Thorne—among the conventionally presented publications. The writers who publish in the roneoed magazines are represented by one of their best poets, Charles Buckmaster.

"Deep Blue and Green" by Buckmaster is roneoed on quarto pages. The poems have striking phrases and fresh imagery and render actual experience with urgency and honesty. The quality of cool candor is often very moving, particularly in "Unemployment". The first poem "In the Stomach of the White Sea" is resonant and suggestive, expressing a vision of men being slowly digested by a vast, indifferent, destructive force. "Sun/Park Poem", the last poem, is lyrical with a strong awareness of the interpenetration of life and death. "After the dust/ in your hair/ becomes dirt/ and you/are unwashed . . ./the sea/will rinse/us all". None of these poems has a strong sense of form, but that is a characteristic of writing in the 'beat' manner.

Although the tradition of forms and measures in English poetry dating back to Chaucer is far richer and more varied, the danger for poets who draw copiously on it is that they may lose touch with the rhythms and language of their own day. This does not always happen. Most of the time Tim Thorne is traditional and formal in this sense, but apart from a few pieces at the beginning of "Tense Mood and Voice" which rely too heavily on Eliot's twentieth century versions of seventeenth century measures (and even in these he is witty and elegant), he is entirely original and modern within the tradition. "Proem" and "Crystal Palace" show what he can do in a looser style, combining freely fluctuating rhythms with mad doggerel rhyming. The book begins with more and ends with less 'respectable' poems, but nearly always it is when he uses the vernacular, and natural speech rhythms predominate, that Thorne is at his best. "The Old Bloke" expresses compassion directly and simply. ". . . What is there in it for him now?/The stretch of a mini-skirt climbing in a taxi—/I somehow couldn't see him merely leering". He captures the bikey conflict between violence and tenderness very beautifully in "Big Triumph". "I'll be a winner still, because I know/They'll ask to see my licence, not my heart".

A. D. Hope's "New Poems 1965-1969" is a fresh, deliberately shocking, exuberant, larrikin performance informed by scholarship and inventive intellect and controlled by traditional techniques. It is so simply enjoyable that the reader is likely to feel indulgent to its many faults. "The Great Baboons", for example, is so vigorous and amusing that we may be inclined to feel we are being pompous if we object that its content as social satire is banal and superficial. Again there is so much wit and eloquence in "Vivaldi, Bird and Angel" that it seems churlish to complain that the coda strikes a personal note which is difficult to reconcile with the main body of the poem.

Hope identifies himself with Baudelaire in a series of sonnets in which he addresses the French poet directly. The third of these jeers at the critics who misjudged "Fleurs du Mal". The identification breaks down in such lines as "Time should leave both to welter in the pooh". Even though the nursery equivalent of the proper colloquial word, "shit", seems to be used simply for the sake of rhyme, the balance is upset and for a moment we glimpse a school-boy sniggering behind the poet's mask.

As always in Hope's poetry there is a disturbing disparity between the vividness of his images and ideas and his deliberate recourse to poetical cliché, inversion for the sake of rhyme and quaint, obsolete diction. "The masterwork of ancient days . . ." "And all your charms I then rehearse . . ." ". . . and learned the spell aright . . .". However, in spite of objections there are splendid things in the collection. The "Songs for Chloe" contain some of Hope's most brilliantly funny poems. "A Visit to the Ruins" is a moving conceit about a young girl exploring the ruins which are the poet, and there are memorable lyrics like "Lieder ohne Buchstaben" and "When like the sun".

Rodney Hall has brought out a sixth book of poetry, "The Law of Karma". It is based on the Hindu idea of the transmigration of souls, and traces the life of an Indian holy man who becomes a Persian prince, then a Maltese lady, then a Venetian statesman, a countess from Trieste, an Austrian woodsman, a Russian doctor, a Guinea slave-trader, a French cavalry officer and finally a German Reichskommissar in Poland. This covers in all a period from 1344-1944. The holy man commits the intellectual sin of rejecting people and in each successive incarnation the sin changes and is intensified until it becomes sadism in the Russian doctor, the torturing and selling of human-beings in the case of the Guinea merchant, and finally dedication to mass extermination in the case of the German. The poem has a simple design which works well, though at times the shades of difference between the stages of degeneration are so fine as to be open to question. Hall has a good grasp of the historical scene in each case and uses it unobtrusively to give color. In spite of occasional eloquence, slackness of rhythm and lack of form spoil an ambitious academic enterprise.

This kind of semi-narrative-reflective poem sequence is done at shorter length with far greater variety of form and movement by Randolph Stow. His selected poems, "A Counterfeit Silence", contains one incomplete and two complete sequences of this kind. None of these is completely successful, looked at as a single poem, but each one contains units which are satisfactory in their context and deeply satisfying as poems in their own right.

Stow is a countryman and nearly all his poems sing of a mysticism in which man and landscape are fused. He sees the body in terms of landscape and landscape in terms of the body. An intense poetical vision of man and the land dominates the book. It is complex and passionate enough to make even the least successful poems interesting.

Les Murray is also a countryman who now lives in Canberra as a public servant. "The Weatherboard Cathedral" shows great variety of technique and flexibility of mind. Like Stow, Murray is deeply involved in country life, but he is also continually aware of perils to civilisation, to the individual, to animal and vegetable life in the modern world. Even a personal poem about the catharsis he experienced by setting fire to swamp trees is overlit by shooting galaxies of satellites in poems on either side. His best straight descriptive poems have not only a suggestive resonance but an awareness of haunting extra-terrestrial forces.

A similar preoccupation is seen at its simplest in two of Murray's finest poems, "The Count of the Simple Shore" and "The Barranong Angel Case". In the latter a country character gives an ironical account of an angel's attempt to take the Word of God to a small Australian country town. The angel couldn't win! Whatever he did was wrong.

There is wit and sympathy for ordinary people, there is journalistic expertise in verse, there is a groping for significance (as in "The Fire Autumn"), where vision runs beyond technique), there is intelligence and day-to-day ordinariness in this 77-page book of verse. The book contains half a dozen poems as good as any of those under review.

Bruce Dawe, by contrast, is very much an urban poet. "Beyond the Subdivisions" is his fourth book. His is one of the most original of contemporary voices, combining irony with a genuinely warm Australian humor and compassionate concern for people. He is often referred to as a satirist, but he is a satirist whose anger is usually tempered by amusement, and who is too mature and benign ever to get hysterical.

In his new book, in spite of the God-like belly laughter that bursts from so many poems, in spite of his awareness of suffering, Bruce Dawe has achieved a serenity which breaks down only occasionally in savagely funny poems like "Bloody Hopeless". The basic tone of voice is cheerful, in spite of his grief for the lonely and the lost. There is some justifiable anger but there is no sourness here. He sees the life of suburban man as rich in spite of his own criticism.

"Inwards to the Sun" is Thomas Shapcott's fifth book of poems. It is a generous selection on a wide variety of topics. Shapcott is a poet with a lively interest in the world around him and he has genuine insights into a wide variety of experiences. There is, however, more than a hint here of the professional looking too deliberately for "material".

If there is a unifying preoccupation it is the sense of the individual aloneness which can be terrifying ("Souvenirs for Bernie", "Haunted", "Minotaur" and others), but is also the source of creation, the sun towards which each must turn inwards to find himself ("Dried Apricots", "Borrow the Whole Air").

Shapcott's favorite technique is to shift the focus from one topic to another, giving a deliberate sense of irrelevance which challenges the reader to make meaningful connections. At its best this produces a sense of mysterious resonance; elsewhere one is left with a sense of a non-sequitur.

"Segments of the Bowl" is Robert Clark's second book of poems. Like many recent books it contains a hostile address to a critic. "You found my verses common-place./I bow to your superior wit./My hope was to express with grace/What all men feel and few transmit". The trouble is not so much that what Clark says is common-place, but that it is often tendentious, having what Auden calls "the preacher's loose, immodest stance". The price is frequent bathos. However, and this is the important thing, the best poems show him as a real poet who is able to combine direct statement with complex overtones of thought and feeling. These poems are often witty and concerned.

"Meditation on the Flesh", "Girl in Every Port", "The Broken Cup" and "Containment" are among the best.

"Australian Poetry 1969" represents most of the poets and contains many of the poems mentioned in this review. As usual it ignores those younger poets who are trying to break from accepted traditions into those which are less acceptable. Do editors now merely wait for submissions, or do they, as some used to, look out for what is new and good in the journals, big and small, and write to ask for permission to use the poems they think most worth while?

ANGER IN THE ACADEMY

LINDSAY SMITH

An Editorial Committee: "Up the Right Channels" (published at the University of Queensland, price "from each according to his ability").

Last year, in an open letter to the students and staff of Notre Dame University, Father Hesburgh, the President of that institution, wrote: "... without the law you may well lose the university—and beyond that the larger society that supports it and is most deeply wounded when law is no longer respected". A short time later, as chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Father Hesburgh stated: "If this nation truly respected the rule of law . . . the last vestiges of segregation would have disappeared years ago". Obviously, Father Hesburgh's conflicting view as to the American public's respect for the law was really an expression of his deeper feelings of conservatism on university matters and support for the Negroes.

What might be called the "Hesburgh syndrome"—liberalism on social matters, conservatism on issues affecting their own position—is frequently seen among authority figures in Australian campuses.

"Up the Right Channels" is a major, critical assault on the present structure of Australian universities, their internal and external relations, curriculum, methods of assessment and research. It is written mostly by members of the Queensland University "New Left", and discusses that university in some detail. The standard of contributions varies, and some are weak, superfluous, startlingly authoritarian and overstated. There is no systematic viewpoint, and there are criticisms of this in the best and most provocative contribution, the concluding chapter by Peter Thompson. Predictably, the book is strongest on the internal structure on the university, and weakest on the relationship between the university in its surrounding society, and on that society itself.

However, this is one of those rare occasions when members from all sections of a university contribute to an overall project, and not only come to a greater appreciation of one another's problems, but also to see how similar those problems are. One hopes that this will be the first of many such projects, in Queensland and elsewhere.

My suggestions for future ones would include more detailed discussion of the relations and tensions between a university and any society. What should be the actual relationship between university reformers and the working class? What need be the conflicts between an academic's research and political activities? What is really the relationship between capitalism and Vietnam? Countries with substantial American investments, such as Canada and France, have opposed America's Vietnam policy. To what extent is it up to the "Third World" to develop adequate institutions for the establishment of mutually satisfactory relations with America and other economically developed countries, as has apparently happened with Algeria and France. It seemed that many contributors were not clear whether they were attacking capitalism, or undertaking a Mailer-Luddite onslaught on industrialisation. Certainly the criticisms of the 'liberal democratic' position seemed to be often wildly over-stated. What is the actual situation in the mass media? And so on.

Despite the ever-increasing importance of universities in Australia the only book with which this can be compared is A. P. Rowe's "If the Gown Fits", and, despite their use of the term "professor-god", few contributors seem to have read Rowe's work. Rowe was a conservative, non-university trained, defence-research scientist, and vice-chancellor of another university (Adelaide), but his criticisms of Australian universities are, in essence, the themes of this book—rigid departmentalism, overspecialisation, inadequate and irrelevant research, a too narrow conception of a university education, particularly in the sciences, the inadequacies of the lecture system, "an atmosphere of unhealthy uniformity and stubborn resistance to change . . . Deficient in self-criticism, universities are almost pathologically sensitive to the criticism of others". These last remarks are borne out by Vice-Chancellor Zelman Cowen's public reception of this book. Rowe, however, also believed Australian students to be overly conservative—a charge which would not be so readily made today.

The major theme of Rowe's book is also the theme of this, namely the professorial system of controlling departments and the influence of "the Professorial Mutual Support and Protection Society" in the university. Rowe wrote of the "incongruity" of men being "laws unto themselves" within their departments: "it is as though only professors are entitled to the benefits of democracy . . . the Australian pattern is a relic of a Scottish system that is dead".

The editors of this book see the conflict in Australian universities as between the present possessors of the sacred spirit of "Ned Kelly and his Cobbers" and "Zelmo and his Wombats". There is much truth in this, although the description is overly disrespectful to the wombat, a commendable and inoffensive animal. But in the schizophrenic atmosphere of Queensland, strange things happen. Seemingly overnight, conservation as a public issue goes from being the concern of the "rat-bag fringe" to defeat the most powerful and boorish of ministers. The university administration calls for suggestions for reform and publishes everything received. These included the suggestions which emerged from the seemingly dormant Staff Association, which described as "urgently

necessary" the early abandonment of the professorial head-of-department system, and its replacement by committees composed of departmental staff and representatives of students, with elected, rotating headships.

The defenders of the present system seem able publicly only to produce arguments based on narrow legalistic or quasi-fascist assumptions. There are wide variations among professors, and major reforms possible within the present system. As the Staff Association has stated and as this book clearly demonstrates, the present system almost inherently leads to irrationalities, absurdities, petty politicking, discrimination and plain injustices, based on the often unconscious assumptions of professors, and the fear of many of the staff to do more than tell one privately that the professors are not all that they should be.

One of the more authoritarian of Queensland professors was involved in a heated argument with a local militant, during which he asked "For whom do you speak?" That is a good question, but an even better one would be to ask the professor for whom and what did he speak. In a discussion of this book with one staff member I was asked "What possible effect can that book have?", which seems to me to be the best question of all.

DRINKUM AUSSIE

DAVID MARTIN

W. S. Ramson (ed.): "English Transported"
(A.N.U. Press, \$3.95 and \$6.00).

Alexander Marjoribanks, travelling in the outback, once met a bullocky who used "bloody" twenty-five times in fifteen minutes. He calculated that, with eight hours a day off for sleep and six for silence, the fellow would, in the course of the fifty years of his natural swearing life, "have pronounced this disgusting word no less than 18,200,000 times".

He observed that a son of the country could say that he had "married a bloody young wife, another, a bloody old one". Which is of course true. In this general area the only contribution I myself can make to the science of Australian speech is to state that I recently talked to a truckie who, using the term both as an adjective and an adverb, described the conditions of the Hume Highway near Picton as bloody bloody.

I am afraid that a perusal of "English Transported" has left me with a kind of irreverent joy, which is not the effect it would have on a serious student of the subject. But the introduction rightly claims that this is also a book for the general reader, and there's no question that it would bring him delight, as well as new knowledge. It is, in fact, a most welcome collection for professionals and amateurs alike.

Lack of expertise prevents me getting the most out of contributions which deal with "Informal English in the Torres Straits" and "A Comparison

of Spoken and Written English: Towards an Integrated Method of Linguistic Description", but even I can appreciate their importance to a still developing discipline, and I am glad that there is an excellent bibliography covering an already impressive range of research.

To one like me the chief value of the book lies in the stimulation which it provides almost incidentally. I am charmed by the thought that in Shakespeare's day a word like "hay" seems to have been pronounced as "high", as we tend to pronounce it, reassured that only nine per cent. of Australians speak the broadest of the broad, and I am neither astonished nor disturbed to discover that there is really no such thing as a regional speech in this country, except possibly some minor variations in South Australia. But then it must be rather an odd state, if it is true that primary school children there do not gobble down a play lunch but "eat recess".

One can accept without demur that, basically, Australian English, or that part of it not inherited from Ireland, is a mixture of various dialects from the United Kingdom, though I am not fully convinced that "creek"—at least as we use it—derives from there, and not from America. It appears that in Britain people still have no trouble in understanding Australian, or not much, whereas "The Summer of the Seventeenth Doll" flopped in New York simply because audiences could not grasp the lingo: one critic said that by the time he realised that Bonnie was not a girl but a man called Barney, the plot had moved on so that he could not catch up.

One agrees with the editor that the patriotic approach to Australian as a language has made us too subjectively uncritical, and can hardly deny that no native writer, Lawson and Furphy included, has been able to use Australian as Mark Twain used (and helped to create as a literary tool) idiomatic American. This theme, our still remaining dependence on nineteenth century English English traditions, also appears powerfully in Professor Johnston's essay, "The Language of Australian Literature", one of the best here.

Words which most people regard as of local vintage, even some as localissimo as squatter or bushranger, turn out to be nothing of the sort: both these are from America. As to borrowing from the Aborigines, one tenth of the 250 words which Governor Hunter wrote down as belonging to the Port Jackson tribes are still in 'white' use. And who would have guessed that 'budgerigar' comes from a black source? Or that 'rosella' is a latinisation of 'rosehiller', the rosehill parrot?

To modern new Australian influence we owe very little, outside the kitchen world, but this may change in time. New forms are continually being created. "I dunna me block and I gonna crook" is not the only novel usage with currency among my neighbors.

At the risk of being charged with shameless raisin-picking I cannot stop myself from quoting quotables. In Professor Gunn's lively piece on "Twentieth Century Australian Idiom" in a footnote which makes the good point that some of our excretory imagery, much of it drawn from England, would suffer badly if it were ever to be cleaned up, appear such fine specimens as "up to shit bonzer" (can that still be heard?), "farting around" (which certainly can) and "I

wouldn't piss on him if he was on fire", which I have come across only once, at Putty in New South Wales, where, I dare say, "up to Putty" hails from.

On a somewhat related topic, it is interesting that New Zealanders, who on the whole seem to be rather less inventive than we in the field of language, have nevertheless managed to come up with an item of soldiers' slang which improves on the unimprovable. When Tommies and Diggers march up for a short-arm inspection, Kiwis are summoned to a dangle parade!

But again I find myself differing from the experts when we come to bum brusher, supposedly a term common among Anzacs and standing for an officer's servant, a batman. It's suitable, no doubt, but I would swear it is much older and has been used for generations by English kids to describe school masters, especially those overfond of the strap.

Don Laycock's essay, "Pidgin English in New Guinea", seems to me to be particularly timely. It touches on current controversies into which I will not buy, but it also provides fundamental information which everyone should have. The thing is quite fascinating. The pre-history of the tongue goes back to the late Middle Ages, when "Sabir", a primitive compound of Italian and Spanish, was known throughout the lands of the Mediterranean. I think Moliere must have been using snatches of it in some of the funniest passages in "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme".

What Pidgin, any Pidgin, is and is not is learnedly but brightly investigated in these pages. The anthropologist, F. E. Williams, writing just after World War I, commented that "at present the means of communication (in Papua and New Guinea) are Pidgin Motu, Pidgin English, telepathy and swearing", which I believe still holds, but there could be more to it than that. I should be surprised if, after reading him, you did not concur with Mr. Laycock that the relative paucity of a literature in, as well as on, Pidgin English is something to be regretted.

The chapter devoted to "Migrant English in Australia" is another one entirely accessible to the non-specialist. The references in it to mother-language "interference" are well taken by this reviewer who still recalls, with muted sadness, the period, not so long ago, when, applied to him, it amounted to a kind of permanent static.

Susan Kaldor, lecturer in anthropological linguistics at the University of Western Australia, surveys the problem of "Asian Students and Australian English". It is the more thorny for the students concerned because most of them, before they come here, are taught a fossilised form of English by teachers who did not learn it in England, and because they sometimes have to master first the rudiments of several unrelated Asian languages, which they need to get by in their homelands. This is more a hindrance than a help when they settle down amongst us, not to speak of culture patterns which can inhibit verbal communication.

That colloquialisms specific to Australian English can be stumbling blocks too is shown by the case of a Tamil-speaking student from Malaysia who, in a written sample, records: "I have yet to get used to Australian phrases such as 'drinkum'."

I guess it's a phrase to which we who are not from Malaysia could become used quickly enough; at any rate I have known plenty of drinkum Aussies. Many a similar nugget has been found by men who did not go looking for them. Just to show what I mean, I add that, the other day, I heard an A.B.C. news reader say that Sir Henry Bolte has refused to inquire into complaints made by students from LaTrobe University against members of the Victoria Police Force.

If it was a slip of the tongue he did not correct it. And why should he have corrected it? Australian is a living and growing language. It even has room, rather too much room, for the drinkum Police.

BOOK CHRONICLE

(A number of factors prevent our reviewing all the books we receive, and, of these, even all the books we would like to review. The following are brief mentions of books of special interest we wish to draw to the attention of our readers.)

Heinemann and Bodley Head are jointly publishing an attractive uniform edition of the novels of Graham Greene. Prices are \$4.55 each volume, and titles to date are "Our Man in Havana", "England Made Me", "Brighton Rock" and "It's a Battlefield".

The Department of German at Monash University has published an attractive and interesting "Short-title Catalogue of German Imprints in Australia from 1501-1800". Compiled by J. E. Fletcher, and priced at \$6, this bibliography is not only an indispensable scholarly aid in its field but, with its lively introduction, is of more than limited interest.

James Flett's "The History of Gold Discovery in Victoria" (Hawthorn Press, \$8.50) is an absorbing epitome of Victorian diggings between 1841 and 1906, extensively reprinting evidence before government committees and providing a basic documentary record of the golden age. Special features are the illustrations and the splendidly informative maps. A cornerstone item in any serious collection of Australiana.

In the biographical field important recent publications include W. G. McMinn's "Allan Cunningham: Botanist and Explorer" (M.U.P., \$4.20), Richard Pennington's "Christopher Brennan: Some Recollections" (Angus & Robertson, \$2.50), "The Last Letters 1868-1870" of Adam Lindsay Gordon, edited by Hugh Anderson (Hawthorn Press, \$3.95), and "A Yankee Merchant in Goldrush Australia", the letters of the colorful George Francis Train, edited with a biographical sketch by Daniel and Annette Potts, and published by Heinemann at \$6.75. Norman Lindsay's autobiography "My Mask" (Angus & Robertson, \$4.95) covers the first and most hectic part of his career. These recollections are lively and opinionated and provide further important material for arguments on the nature, or indeed on the existence, of Lindsay's genius.

J. A. Talent's "Minerals, Rocks and Gems: A Handbook for Australia" (Jacaranda, \$10.50) is virtually an encyclopaedia angled to the needs of the amateur prospector, paying special attention to problems of locating and identifying minerals. There are many helpful color illustrations.

Grahame Johnston's "Annals of Australian Literature" (O.U.P., \$3.75) is an ingenious and useful instrument. Year by year from 1789 the important books published in a number of categories are listed, together with the births and deaths of authors and periodicals. An elaborate index draws together, under the names of individual authors, the works associated with their names. More than just a dictionary, for the juxtapositions we find here have a stimulus of their own.

One of the great works of modern scholarship is E. H. Carr's history of Soviet Russia, and it is a notable event that Penguin have published two volumes in this series, "Socialism in One Country 1924-1926", at \$2.55 each. Penguin have also issued that naughty and delightful scientific thriller "The Double Helix" (85c), written by Nobel Prize-winner James D. Watson, and giving his highly personal account of the discovery of the structure of DNA. Another exhilarating work of scientific popularisation just published by Penguin is Martin Gardner's "The Ambidextrous Universe" (\$1.20), an account of some of the exciting and teasing developments in modern physics.

The South Australian Public Libraries Board continues its magnificent program of facsimile reprints with the two-volume "Discoveries in Australia" (\$13.50) by J. Lort Stokes, the account of his remarkable surveys of the Australian coasts in the Beagle during the years 1837-1843. The same publishers have also re-issued an important source on the early history of Broken Hill, "The Barrier Silver and Tin Fields in 1888" (\$3.60).

Much of the early history of the Labor movement centres on the Queensland struggles, and "Prelude to Power: The Rise of the Labour Party in Queensland 1885-1915" (Jacaranda, \$6.95) is the first satisfactory work not only on its topic and period but also, and sadly, in the whole field of Queensland's political history. Edited by D. J. Murphy, R. B. Joyce and Colin Hughes, this well-constructed book is the work of a number of historians and other scholars.

A notable contribution to the popular field of natural history is "Birds in the Australian High Country" (Reed, \$9.50), an admirable and surely definitive work on the birds of south-eastern highlands edited by H. J. Frith, and combining the work and knowledge of fourteen Canberra ornithologists, mostly professionals. The illustrations are excellent. On a more modest level thousands of bird-lovers and garden-lovers will welcome Barbara Salter's intelligent and informative little Jacaranda Pocket Guide, "Australian Native Gardens and Birds" (\$1.95).

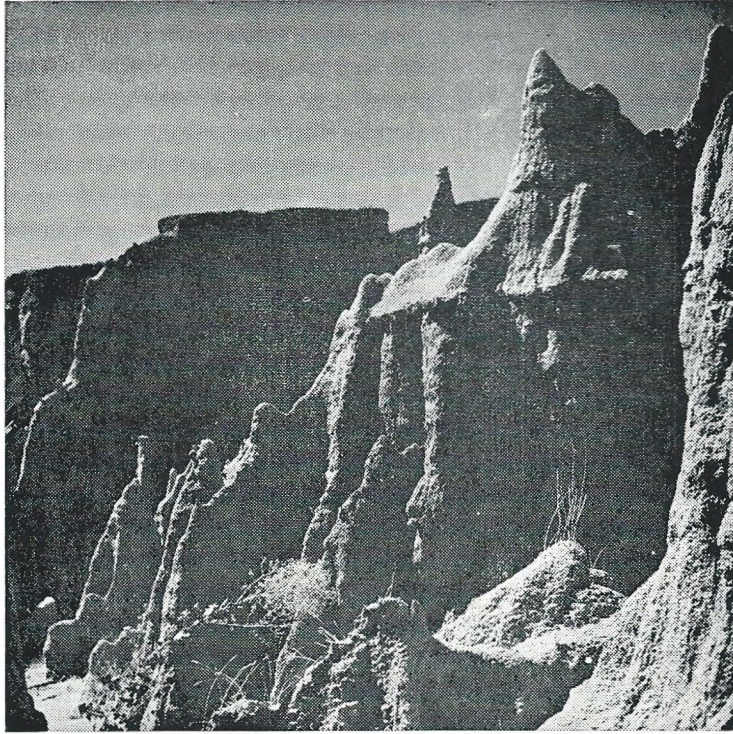
Sydney University Press have re-issued W. M. Hughes's rare and important early pamphlet, "The Case for Labor" (\$1.75), while Angus & Robertson have published "Ten Essays on Patrick White" (3.95), edited by G. A. Wilkes, and "Witnesses of Spring", unpublished poems by Shaw Neilson, edited by Judith Wright (\$2.95). Hawthorn Press, which of late has emerged very strongly into the field of historical and reprint publishing, have issued an important series of articles on South Australia which first appeared in 1851: "Colonists, Copper and Corn", edited by E. M. Yelland (\$4.95). A pleasant, anecdotal and well illustrated little local history from the same publishers is "A History of Point Lonsdale" by N. A. Dunn (3.95).

FLOATING FUND

Our two previous issues have omitted the customary acknowledgment of donations, not because we didn't have any but because we were too inefficient and too busy. Both the editor and his wife (she runs the business side of Overland, but carries no responsibility for the non-appearance of the 'Floating Fund') will be in England next year, and have been pre-occupied this year with plans for getting away. While away Overland will be run by a consortium, the leading members of which will be John McLaren, Ian Turner and Barrie Reid. They very nastily state that they will get out four issues in the year, for a change. Anyway, all this has nothing to do with the fact that we are very grateful for these donations, amounting to \$623.14 if our adding machine is working properly, without which Overland would NOT be able to appear. Now, how about giving Overland to your mates for Christmas? We will send the current issue and inform them of your beautiful thought.

RM \$100; FM \$28; BR \$25; NM \$18; IF \$15; JB \$10.50; JRL IP \$10; AC LB GP HS J&EW ML MG JR \$8; FJ PI RS \$6; IG HH DP BH \$5; TK LadyL RE \$4; RI TT JD FD MC AL BR DD AE PvonM PR TS CS MW DD KF LR BS BB EM JH JH DD EJ EF HS LM JH JC MM LC AM DG MR PO'C PA PF DM DG WC JH DMcL JM EW JMcD PM JV RS JB \$3; RH NM \$2.80; RD NMcP RM BN-S DA ER BP OH NS JD MT BR MC LW GM AB

MM JC PM LB GL MG VMcK CR JL JB GM GS PM CJ W WEC JG HW EJ \$2; SS \$1.91; JMcG GK JC MC RB HM MB DG SC SB PP DD SM IT SA WY JA JK JH JW EM HG GS JR JH RF JN AB NA WK JC AM PT RP KB LB RS CP RR EJ LMcK RW AS JS JT WMcD GA NK RW ME SK JT GF JS MB HH ER JS RdeB BM HF AvonB RW \$1; FR JN LF TR CG FA LF LL MF HY JG RG JC JS 50c; WS 25c.



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