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Vol. 14 No. 2 March 9, 1971

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GAS WAR IN VIETNAM

"One of the world's richest areas is open to the winner of Indochina," wrote U.S. News and World Report just before Dienbienphu, on April 16, 1954. "Tin, rubber, rice, key strategic raw materials are what the war is really about. The U.S. sees it as a place to hold—at any cost."

Speaking in Boston in 1965, LBJ's ambassador to Vietnam, Henry Cabot Lodge, went a step further: "He who holds or has influence in Vietnam can affect the future of the Philippines and Formosa to the east, Thailand and Burma with their huge rice surpluses to the west, and Malaysia and Indonesia with their rubber, oil, and tin to the south. Vietnam thus does not exist in a geographical vacuum—from it large storehouses of wealth and population can be influenced and undermined."

The American oil giants' stampede to Southeast Asia began after the 1965 coup in Indonesia by pro-American generals which left a half billion communists dead but opened the door wide to foreign investment. Southeast Asian oil's importance was heightened by the Six Day War in 1967 which cut off the Suez Canal to important Middle Eastern oil shipments.

"Major companies are eager to diversify their sources of petroleum because of political uncertainty in the Middle East, the world's major source of crude oil today," wrote Fortune magazine in March, 1970.

Now the oil rush in Southeast Asia has reached the shores of South Vietnam, where exploration for long-suspected offshore oil has been underway since 1969. Currently, sixteen American oil companies along with two Japanese firms and one Canadian company, expect to be negotiating with the Thu-Py regime in late February or early March for seventeen major oil concessions. The oil companies have a real interest in having Nixon hold on to Indochina at any cost.

But with the "friendly" governments of Indochina, the possibility is much higher for American oil companies to negotiate contracts on much better terms. The Vietnamese leases will give American companies a 45/55 split with the government, much higher than the 32 1/2/67 1/2 split they get now from Indonesia.

The importance of Southeast Asian oil stems from predictions that within the next ten years the industrial world will consume as much petroleum as was produced in the entire previous history of oil. A U.S. oil expert with fifteen years experience in Southeast Asia has said that in five years "the offshore oil fields of Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, South Vietnam, and Indonesia will be ready to produce...more than is now produced in the whole western world."

The Vietnamese oil discovery has been the more significant by the attempt of OPEC, the international cartel of oil-producing countries, to force the oil companies to grant them a larger cut of Middle Eastern oil revenues. The OPEC action will cost American oil companies at least $1.2 billion annually.

GINSBERG AT BARD

"In view of such haste, one is tempted to think so," he concludes. "The companies have already begun to invest, even though President Nixon has begun to use the slogan of "Vietnamization.""

The realization Ginsberg is a giant step toward the listener upon the finish of some of his characteristic long, copious, and exact lines. It was a great joy to be in his presence, to watch him, to hear his curiously deep, husky, gravelly voice which seems to echo within him, that turned beautiful when he read his poems. I noticed a gentleness, as of someone aware of a new finality to his time—either to his own life or to our furious era."

— Jonathan Kaplan

Instead of the cathartic poems he has been uncovering in himself and his experiences in HOWL, KADDISH, the drop poems, the poems from Mexico City and Havana and Lima, and the latest weird solipsisms, visions of universes within "PLANET NEWS," he read poems obviously written on his farm in upstate New York, "Elegua" for example. Still one noticed in such lucidities his late constant obsession with the government/Mafia heroin conspiracy. Apart from his own poems, with Peter Orlovsky he sang many of Blake's Songs he has happily put to his own music and recorded.
an alternative newsmedia project / phone (914) 758-3665

The Observer is an independent student publication of the Bard College community. Publication is weekly, during the Bard College academic year. Subscription rates are $5.00 per semester. Letters to the Editor and other inquiries should be directed to Box 76, Bard College, Annadale-on-Hudson, New York, 12504.

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VANDENBURG, Oliver Long. "Gene Vandenberg, 50, with a son, a place, a thing to do, was pretty well satisfied. He wasn't a very knockdown guy. I think he was a remarkable man. Then it happened. Nothing that important had happened in the United States in 195 years. Maybe it was inevitable."


"These are just a few of the stimulating topics covered in this handy layman's guide to surviving in New York City. It also includes a Survival Kit for City Living (in alphabetical order.)"

POETRY ORIGINS, A living anthology of Transml expression with readings by Rochella Ratner (March 1) and W. Blim Keren (March 3) and readings by Dajan and course 600:70 at the New School for Social Research (1978-79)." Ms. Ratner has been published in THE NATION, THE EAST VILLAGE OTHER, ANTA- EUS, SHERANDAH and THE NEW YORK QUARTERLY. Keren will publish a section of his long poem IN IT in the forthcoming issue of MEAL. He is working on his first novel.

STUDY IN RUSSIA THIS SUMMER The State University of New York at Potsdam is offering a combination language and travel experience this summer. Anyone willing to intensively study Russian this summer will be eligible for a five-week trip to the USSR which includes a language seminar in Oryun, on the Gulf of Finn- land, and a seminar at Sochi, on the Black Sea. The last week will include a trip to Kiev, Lenin's, Moscow, St. Petersburg and Suzdal. College credit is offered. For more information, write to Dr. Piers Francios, Director of International Studies at the State University College.

FRESH EXPERIMENT IN LEARNING Self expression through the discipline of art - drawing, painting, ceramics. For further information, write to Dr. F. Midwinter, Workshop, June 27-Aug. 7, Box 381, Lake Placid, N.Y. 12946. More information is also available in the Observer office.

Film dept arrives

At last! Bard College has a film department. On Wednesday, March 2, the faculty voted to support the recommendations of the Film Committee and implement a real live program of film study, to commence with the Fall '71 semester. President Kline in his opening remarks to the faculty concerning the state of the school, expressed his personal agreement with the committee's report. While discounting the vagaries of the Bard admissions situation, he noted that the student body is changing and Bard will look favorably upon the existence of a course in film study. Besides, Hufman, suggested a belief, shared by most of the faculty, that a school of any size should have a film program, so that a program of study could not hope to compete for top applicants.

The first aspect of the discussion concerned with Mrs. Domandi's statement of support, representing the Faculty Senate. Then, Dr. Wamg, the chairman of the Film Committee, stated some of the major principles in the Committee document. He suggested that film study at Bard would consist of more than independent film-making, that it would involve a wide-ranging approach toward the medium, going beyond studio work.

When the discussion commenced, a number of faculty members wondered out loud whether the current interest in film, on the part of the community, was simply a fad. Reference was made to the students' fleeting interest in Greek. Mr. Conard of AMDU suggested that the institution of film studies might drain funds from other departments, and he asked whether there had already demonstrated viability. Mr. Driver, also of AMDU, countered both arguments, I think, he commented, after alluding to his own studies in Greek, and his position in AMDU is "Greek is dead, and film is very much alive." This was the main argument of those who defended the proposal, that Bard's students had already provided ample evidence of the viability of a film department. The students' real enthusiasm for film was a felt presence, in the minds of most of the faculty.

Film-making during the 75 years since its inception has become a considerable and important art form, both as public communication and as private creativity, and their intimate interchange, its study and practice are both justified and feasible within the liberal arts program at Bard. We recommend a major of modest proportions, to be included within the AMDU Division.

We think that this program should be primarily, though not exclusively, oriented towards the film-maker rather than the spectator or critic; in this sense a Creative Art for majors at least. We recognize - and insist on - the opportunities of personal "experimental" film-making, and at the same time we believe that the program should engage the student with the further public possibilities of film.

We recommend a two-year period, as a test of both the viability of the program and of continuing student interest.

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Given two or three essentially responsible instructors, each of whom is a film-maker or closely concerned in film-making, we think that diversity should be sought for, not only in personality, but also in background, interests, point of view, and commitment to particular forms. Since knowledges, crafts and particular capabilities can be found in different combinations, it may be more useful to describe what we think the combined capabilities should be than to try to specify the qualities of each:

1. Background in the personal experimental film, with the capacity to encourage, but also to critique objectively, self-expression through the medium of film.

2. Background and interest in the film of wider public communication and point of view.


4. Considerable skill in the technical use of the camera, editors, optical printers, and other essential equipment, and its relation to the creative potentialities of the art.

5. Reasonably comprehensive knowledge of and interest in the historical development of film and its major movements, and the ability to communicate it through lecture, to large groups if necessary.

6. The ability to analyze and interpret such works so that their values may be instructive both to the critic and to the film-maker.

Phasing In Process:

1. Present juniors should be considered as majors, but may continue in courses according to experience.

2. Present sophomores with sufficient interest and experience should be allowed to transfer from their existing Trial Majors to Film. Spring moderations in 1971, with or without a film representa- tive on the board, might approve their transfer; or early moderations in the fall of 1971 with the then constituted department might review their backgrounds; we think both methods should be used.

3. Present Freshmen with sufficient interest and experience should be allowed to transfer to Film without special requirements of experience.

4. Transfers should be admitted to the Film program according to academic background and experience as above.

5. During the academic year 1971-72, the Advanced Aesthetics courses and the Major Conference groups will meet.

Major Conference groups will probably not be called for and it may be desirable to meet two sections of Film Aesthetics 201-2.

Lydia Ayers

Dear Dane Ahlgren,

Before I was finished with the first paragraph of "Government Trips on Wires," I knew you had written it. How? You stated in three sentences what was happening then plunged into an indictment of the system that left the most important factual questions either unanswered or answered by implication only. How did the bureaucracies know who should have done it? What did plodmmond, Fort- wayn and Suits know? What evidence is there on either side besides the tapped phone calls? You cer- tainly have enough information about the government's conspiracy to screw these people, so back off don't you have any of the basic facts?

Repression in this country should be ex- posed, but if the truth is distorted in the process, it appears as if you are empha- sized at the expense of the others, espec- ially at the expense of the basic facts, then the purpose is defeated.

Daniel Cantor
Bernadette Devlin is now completing her second speaking tour of the United States. She says she returned here as a revolutionary socialist, and wants to talk about the kind of Ireland she seeks to build. The money from her tour will be used to finance the operation of a factory in Northern Ireland to be run by workers, and to fund a socialist research center.

Miss Devlin spoke at the Vassar College Chapel last Saturday evening. Here are two impressions:

I have never been very much impressed with any particular ideology. I also have never been very much impressed with the rationalizations of any particular political figure. I religiously gave up listening to political figures a long time ago.

I gave up listening to gurus and priests and Captain Kangaroo and Mr. Wizard, and a host of other people who have answers to everything. I distrust people who claim to have answers to everything.

I mention all this so that you understand this author’s point of view.

Anyway, the other night I went down to Vassar to hear Bernadette Devlin. I really didn’t quite know what to expect. I knew very little about her politics, or anything else, for that matter. I knew she was Irish, I knew she was a revolutionary. From the little I had heard about her, I thought she was insane. Intensity interests me, which is why I was interested in hearing Bernadette Devlin.

The Great American Press was my only reference source on Bernadette Devlin. The Press never comes right out and calls someone “insane.” This term is like “eccentric” and “radical” instead. The American Public Listens attentively, salivates properly, and hears the word “insane,” having been trained correctly to the pseudo-subtleties of the Press. I guess I am not well-trained, for, if the truth be told, I harbored a suspicion that Bernadette Devlin was at least as sane as Walter Cronkite. That’s why I went to hear for myself.

I didn’t know quite what to expect and, quite unexpectedly, Bernadette Devlin impressed me. It is difficult, indeed, not to be impressed by her.

Miss Devlin is a quietly powerful speaker. Her power emanates from her soft-spoken approach, engaging the audience. Her voice is confident, strong, and clear-cut, like a beacon in the fog. This quality distinguishes the subject her audience to a barrage of empty-headings and meaningless generalizations. She does not play to the delusion of a demagogues addressing the inferior multitude. She speaks rationally and coherently, in one human being addressing another human being.

Bernadette Devlin does not claim to have answers to everything. I like that. She is quite certain of what she says, though, because she has lived it. Is she insane? No, unless genius may be called insanity.

Miss Devlin is, by her own definition, a “newswoman.” She separates the world into two categories of people: “Those who work, and those who exploit the workers.” As one might deduce from the statement Miss Devlin calls a “world-wide revolution of workers, to place the means of production, and thus, the means of removing the means of production in the hands of the workers.”

It should be emphasized that she makes no distinction between a “working” class and a “middle” class. Affluence does not define classes. As she explained it, the “middle” class, though it aspires to rise above the exploiting classes, is a part of the mass comprising who work.

With regard to the ruling class, Miss Devlin said: “It is understandable that these rational people should think they have a right to the wealthy they control... The money is theirs; the factories are theirs; America is theirs.”

It is Miss Devlin’s contention that the workers have a right to this wealth, a right to control the means of production in Great Britain, 5 per cent of the population. It is this absurd imbalance to which Miss Devlin addresses herself.

The workers in Belfast’s ghettos are starving. Their unemployment never falls below 28 per cent. In over 90 per cent of the homes, there are no sanitary facilities. The largest incidence of bronchial diseases in Great Britain occurs in the charming city of Belfast. Bernadette Devlin is not merely employing dramatic license when she says that the workers in Belfast are desperate.

The docks of Belfast, where most of these people work, are owned by the British Government and Aristotle Onassis.

Contrary to popular belief (popular American Press propaganda), Belfast’s workers are not rioting over religion, they are rioting about food. The Catholic Church, through her Black Hand and her underground revolutionaries, has been pressuring the workers to riot. Miss Devlin’s words: “If you think we’re fighting for the Catholic Church, you’re wrong. The Catholic Church has never done anything to help us.”

The current rioting in Northern Ireland is occurring, much of the time, between the workers themselves. Government propaganda, along with Press propaganda, serves to perpetuate a division between the workers, and conceal the actual reasons for the situations. This tactic of disinformation has been effective and serves to point up the adamant aggression which the ruling-class assumes in dealing with the problems of the working class. Rather than effecting a solution, the Government has sent 1,000 British troops (members of the working class being exploited by the British Government) to Northern Ireland to “maintain the peace.”

This move has, needless to say, only succeeded in increasing the tension of the frustrated citizens of Belfast.

Bernadette Devlin is no stranger to violence. She doesn’t endorse the Belfast riots, but violence is part of her philosophy. She feels violence is the only method available to the working class, simply because the ruling class will not relinquish the means of production peacefully.

Toward the end of the evening, one of the hecklers in the audience finally lost the chance to pose his earth-shattering question: “Are you a communist?”

First, Miss Devlin politely attempted to explain to the man that he didn’t understand the meaning of the word. When he wouldn’t stop talking, she finally said: “Yes, sir, I am a communist in the same way that Jesus Christ was a communist. And if Jesus Christ were alive today, he’d be электрифицирован for being an anarchist.”

Jesus Christ wasn’t insane either. And someone will probably shoot Bernadette Devlin before she ever reaches the age of 20 so it goes.

— Rich Tedesco

Bernadette Devlin spoke quietly and convincingly at Vassar College last week. She listened to her audience, and pressed not only by the clear vision of her political argument, but also by her own personal strength and brilliance. Her message was clear, her reason exacting. As the speaker answered questions, almost immediately, before they were asked. She has said that experience made her a revolutionary socialist, and it was clear that her ability to communicate this experience makes her a compelling speaker.

The emotional force with which she spoke was conveyed through content, she never raised her voice. She handled heckling and shallow questions with humor and ease. And she refused to compromise her audience: the working-class must gain control of the means of production before poverty and injustice can be eradicated, in Northern Ireland or anywhere else.

Even since the Londonderry riots began 18 months ago, the media has been treating the disturbances in Ulster as a religious war between the Catholic minority and the Protestant majority. Miss Devlin emphasized, as she has continually in the past, that the issue of religion has only been used to obscure what is really a class conflict. When the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland was growing in 1968, many Protestant workers joined with Catholics in a march from Belfast to Londonderry. It was only when the Catholic middle class entered the movement that Protestants became alienated from it. But this alienation is again giving way to common cause, and recent fighting in Ulster against the British army has taken place in Protestant as well as Catholic quarters. Miss Devlin now hopes that a united working-class movement can struggle to end both capitalism and British rule in Northern Ireland.

The poverty in which most of the Irish working class lives has been a unifying force. In both Protestant and Catholic ghettoes in Belfast 90% of the homes are without plumbing. The unemployment rate hovers near 30% of the workforce. Meanwhile, in Ireland, 9% of the population owns 85% of the wealth. To control the rebelliousness of the workers, the Ulster Government instituted its own Special Powers Act, which permits the imprisonment without trial of political dissenters. The number of prisoners in Northern Ireland has risen since 1940 by 400%.

photo by carolyn carlson

Addressing herself to the question of violence, Miss Devlin said: “We have lived with the violence of poverty, the violence of repression, the violence of imperialism, and you have the nerve to talk to us about violence?”

Miss Devlin’s critique of capitalism went beyond describing the poverty in which most of the Irish working-class lives. She spoke with profound directness to her American audience of the history of private property in the United States. Inheritance plays a major role in the ownership and control of American wealth, and when we look to its origins, for instance, that John D. Rockefeller began to amass his oil empire during the Civil War years, while the boy he had paid $100 to take his place in the Union army fought and died.

Today Miss Devlin finds that there are only two economic classes in capitalist countries, the working class and those who exploit the working class. This brought to mind some of the ambiguities in American society (e.g., race or income) which make such a class analysis more difficult. But Miss Devlin explained that in the United States 30% of this population lived below the government-established poverty line, and that poor and non-white people in this country comprise a majority. She also said that the middle class is actually a sector of the working class, though middle-class people try in vain to climb out of this position.

To her college audience, Miss Devlin added: “The ruling class buys your minds in the hope that you will forget you have hands, just as they buy the workers’ hands in the hope that they will forget they have minds.”

The working class revolution Bernadette Devlin advocates is an international one. She has no illusions about Ireland surviving as an ”island of socialism” — a world socialist community must be created in order for socialism to succeed as anywhere. As a member of the Irish working class, Miss Devlin is prepared to work for the final victory of “the international majority of working people.” This victory, she says, may or may not occur in her generation, but it can be won by one to one to stop us, and no one will.”

— Bruce Warshawsky
Steve Gerald will present Eugene Ionesco’s "THE VICIOMS OF DUTY" in the Chest on March 20 (8:30), along with several other shows directed by play. From discussions with the cast, this play seems to be about people victimized in various ways by their responsibilities to society.

The cast includes Mark Cohen as Choubert, Roberta Powell as Madeleine, Tim Kennedy as the Detective, David Ebersole as the Judge, Gail Ann Darmody as Lady, and Malto as himself (with a t.

photo by carolyn carlson

Steve is using some interesting games to try to establish certain relationships between the characters in his play. At one rehearsal, he sets Roberta up as a mother ignoring her five-year-old son. She was reading a newspaper while Mark watched her play with him. He was ripping up toilet paper all over the floor, and calling her to make a bow for him from it. She kept reading the newspaper with barely a response. The exercise helps define Choubert’s character in the play.

As they got into the exercise, Steve made various remarks, such as "On top of that, I want you to characterize everything you do. Don’t let it get bogged down. Start from the beginning. Keep it light. More character. Feel it in your body. Feel it in your foot.

In another exercise, Steve set Roberta (Madeleine) up as the nagging wife who only makes matters worse for Mark (Choubert), her husband, who is confused by the interrogation by Tim, the detective.

"What do you know about sex, Mark? Tell us what you know." The detective’s part in this game was to keep hammering, to try to confuse Mark, to make him answer.

Tim described his feeling as he did this exercise, "I didn’t feel like hammering at all the time. I didn’t want to repeat it so much." Steve gave a demonstration of how someone, who is confused by the interrogator, listens to someone else who doesn’t know to give one. He mimicked a high school teacher, investigating the strange non-appearance of homework. "Did you do it? Yes or no? Did you? Why? Explain it to me. Can you explain it? Why?

At the same time that Tim was hammering Mark with his questions, Roberta was screaming, "You are a liar, Mark! A liar!" This helped to develop the character of Madeleine, who is one of the play’s victims from a good supporting wife to a shrew. She constantly looks at Choubert, as though bored with the whole procedure and wishing he would just finally say where Malto is, and get on with it. (Malto, by the way, may not even exist.)

In the middle of this harassment, Choubert interrupted. "I don’t know, I don’t remember. Maybe I was his best man. I don’t know."

His reaction to the game was "I am just sort of digging. I don’t have any of the answers. It was too easy at first, but after a while I began to start feeling it."

In the play itself, Choubert goes through several confusing scenes, some of them remembering his childhood, as the detective and Madeleine seen in a conspiracy against him in trying to make him find Malto. They stuff the whole full of food "to plug the gaps in his memory" - but she still doesn’t remember, and the harassment continues.

Nicole D’ave (David Ebersole) is a great actor, but it is a mistake for, by the way, the Czar of Russia. He contributes to making the play more absurd than it already is by talking to the audience and ignoring the harassment of Choubert.

At the entrance of Nicole during this scene, Steve yelled, "What do you mean, ‘hello’? Do you know what it is to be a great person? When you come in, you are Nicole D’ave, the Czar of Russia and the Czar of Russia doesn’t say ‘hello’!"

For the 10th, Nicole assumed a more dignified air, as he gave his monologue on the theater improvement (setting down, crossing his foot on his heel).

There is a great deal of work going into this play, and it’s heading toward an impossible amount of humor, enjoyable in the seriousness of its absurdity.

Joe Aponi began his rehearsal of Jean Genet’s "THE BALCONY" (which he will present in the same program as VICTIMS OF DUTY) outside Belfer with folks sitting around playing chess, banjo, and frisbee, like a bunch of traveling minstrels. They stuff the whole full of food for a few more people to come.

"Shall we play outside today?" The sunny weather had made everyone cheerful and gay. "No, we won’t. The weather gets warmer."

The warm-ups began with a circle of jumping jack people, which turned into a caricatured track team to a military air on Jim Putney’s trumpet.

The cast includes Aline Mayer playing Mme. Michel Zeussman playing the Bishop, Jim Putney playing the General, Claudia Choubert as the Judge, Linda Bernstein as the Girl, Sylvia Taub as the Fitting Woman, Sandra Coleman as the Executioner, Karen Wallinger as Carmen, Louis Silver as the first photographer, John Juhi as the bagger and "screeches" and Edra Zies as the Thief. Also, the variety of musical instruments includes Erik Karlin on guitar, Jim Putney on violin, Sandra Coleman and Michael Zeussman on recorder. Louis Silver on a cymbal.

Aline Mayer on jews harp, John Juhi on horn, and Claudia Choubert on banjo.

Michael Zeussman uses incredible facial and body expressions to play the role of the Bishop, who preens himself with a hairbrush in front of a mirror. The Bishop is a plump prima donna, mocked by the two women who are attending upon him, Irma and the Woman. He banishes them for a time, carrying on a monologue with his own majesty: "Do I look clear, mirror, gilded image, ornate as a box of Mexican cigar? And I wish to be bishop in solitude, for appearance alone... And in order to destroy all function, I want to cause a scene so you feel you up, you slut, you bitch, you trollip... Then, the ladies come into try to see that he’s properly dressed and he ignores them as he continues his monologue with the mirror.

The second scene opens. The judge crawls towards the foot of the scowling thief, who wants her foot licked. This photo by carolyn carlson

I will ask myself a question which the Observer reviewers never consider: am I writing this for? I am not writing it for the drama-dance department, for whose serious members already understand that - while often nasty and painful - the Observer review account for nothing. I am writing this for whoever wishes to confront the theatrical experience and wants to find a vocabulary for dealing with it.

Another question: does Bard need reviews? Is, as in no sense, in a Broadway or West End review tells the special interest group which a given paper speaks to whether or not it wants to see them play "X". The special interest group served by the Observer is (1) not especially interested in the Observer, and (2) not homogeneous in taste. Further, Bard productions don’t cost anything to see and, to give the issue last rites, the reviews don’t appear until after the play is closed, anyhow. The Observer reviews have followed the tradition of unscrupulous newspapers by making up in bitchiness what they lack in meaning. They serve only to turn off or upset the people who want to watch a show in the theater since it is the snobbery of whoever didn’t see the whole play but who hates the drama-dance department anyway.

The only possible use a late review can serve for any one early one, for that matter is to analyze what happened on the stage, not in the reviewer’s head. Experience-as-fact, not judgement, is the source of theatre and a decent review comes to terms with the experience. This means the reviewer must age, the production as done; she must put aside preconceptions about theatre in general and the play in particular. Unless you begin here, the entire review must fail as, in fact, every Bard review has failed since I arrived here in 1987. For example, "After the Rain" by John Bowen was used by a reviewer in 1969 to vent his notions about politics and theater. That his whine to tally blocked the human workings at the center of the play did not disturb him.

Last semester, Dott’s "Awake and Sing", a Marxist play which got its company blacklisted, was turned into a Jewish "I Remember Mama" by the reviewer. To anyone doing or seeing Bard plays, Observer reviews have seemed to be well or poorly written slanders of some alien event. And sadder it is. Reviewers have talked about acting, directing and set design as if people like Stanislavsky and Meyerhold never existed. Their thinking lies in the backwaters of theater’s stagnation. They don’t understand that over a century

photo by carolyn carlson

In the premiers of a production have been set by the director. Those premiers must be geared for valid analysis to take place. The mystically instant expectation of acting as voice and gesture control is likewise a huge perversion from aristocratic chamber-drama. Acting, unless enslaved by some theater, has always been a matter of physical response and real intentions. The center of acting is involvement and freedom, not devised gimmickry. Set design is no longer limited by the structure of art as imitation; the set, like everything else in theater, lives to make a statement. It is therefore inexcusable to demand that a play conform to your particular view; the director has moldered his view out of work. The play can, of course, live by another vision - but at the moment of experience it relies for its conceptual life on the particular director. To know the play as done, you must accept the director as the director. Later, you can offer another view, but it must always come as an honest reaction to the script. The director’s function is to breathe his life into the play without sucking out the author’s. That’s how you know and judge him.

To demand a "smooth" delivery from an actor is to live in fear of a real performance. The stage demands trust from all around and on it; the audience must trust as art what the actor trusts as natural instinct. The test of an actor is the extent to which he can give, not the hypothesis of his style. Criticise him for that, if you must criticise, not for having a frog in his throat. Each actor must play each character his own way - if he has any honesty at all. It is his business to

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courtroom scene is easily related to other modern courtroom farces.

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Part of the particular joy of watching a film is the on-screen Wellington enthus-
iasm you get just sitting in the theatre. The opening of his film "Touch of Evil," made in 1950, is one of the most exciting tracking camera movements in the history of the cinema. It is a movement so out-
rageous and compelling, that it seems to sweep all else away in a grip which this first sequence holds us up. It is not released until the final frame of the movie.

His whole body is a microcosm of the dis-
order which the film projects. He mana-
ges to earn our compassion despite his actions. His habit of extracting "confes-
sions" and securing convictions, is a varia-
tion on Welles’s own ambivalent attitude to
willing obduracy and the corruption attach-
ed to it. For the police chief seeks noble ends, he simply has lost perspective on his own. This is distinctly the predica-
ment of the hero.

The entire affair had an unreal quality
about it. They got lost on the way here, to
begin with, and ended up in a room with
a floor plan. On Thursday, February 23, 1971, the sched-
uled Afternoon and Evening of Compos-
ers and Faculty from Bennington College
Performing Music by Charles Ives. A century
and a half later, a concert of his music timpanist I have seen (go nuts, you old
chauvinist pop out there). The Bar-
tok is a wild piece that uses every con-
ceivable effect, and the players played it like they enjoyed it, which they prob-
ably did. The audience enjoyed it, too—
a noise-cancelling system in the hall, the
middle of the dinner hour.

This was followed by student cellist
Michael Finckel playing Mario Daviddo-
sky’s Synchronies No. 3 for cello and magnetic tape. Finckel acted like there was nothing hard about the technically difficult cello part, which blends surpris-
ingly well with Davidovsky’s imaginative-
ly prepared tape. The afternoon concert concluded with another student, Carolyn
Bonde, conducting her own "Herm Gordan"
for two cellos, clarinet, and vibes, in four short movements whose report won far
ther from brevity.
HEAR THE SOUND OF MY FEET WALKING... DROWN THE SOUND OF MY VOICE TALKING...

“Fred... where is God?”

“What wants to know?”

begins “Hear the Sound of My Feet Walking... Drown the Sound of My Voice Talking...” a new comic book by Dan O’Neill, creator of “Odd Bodkins.” And in these two short questions is contained the core of the “Odd Bodkins” strip; more of that presently.

Dan O’Neill was born April 21 - “six hours off Hitler’s chart” - in 1942, and, like the unfortunate Jim Morrison, was the son of a Navy career officer. Always into sketching and cartooning, Dan attended 17 schools in 16 years, one of which left an influence upon him that he is still trying to deal with - a Catholic seminary in Los Altos, California, run by the Maryknoll missionary fathers. “They get you in puberty, make you feel guilty, then you join up and fight it all your life. They sold me that immortality, that real hard. Now, I’m trying to find mortality.”

Through a lucky break O’Neill got a job with the San Francisco Chronicle. His original strip featured nice people who discussed politics and philosophy after the Falker formula. The influence is still there. O’Neill describes it as “mindless media apparatus” just what the straight press wanted. He was syndicated through forty papers. Over the years, however, O’Neill’s strip started getting strange and later “retired,” in the words of the Chronicle.

Some people said the strip was too political, although O’Neill was “Politics is pig shit.” He takes a somewhat heretical political and religious stand that comes close to a universal rejection of political and social religious extremes: “I gave up the good and evil archetypes. We have the ability to become identical. Good needs evil, evil needs good. But if you’re good all the time, you waste your life fighting evil. I can’t deal with something if all my energy goes into hating it. Everyone is so willing to go out and throw a rock. I’m much more interested in my personal self. I’m trying to find an alternative.”

This, emphatically, is what “Hear the Sound...” and “Odd Bodkins” in general, is all about. O’Neill is searching for answers many of us feel pressed to find. The somewhat negative tone of the strip is merely a personal reflection of what is happening in America, and the world. Only a positive action can turn the tides of all the negativism going down. Says O’Neill: “The reason no one in the strip has assumed a positive role yet is because that’s what they have to learn. It’s what I have to learn, you have to be responsible.” The strip often evokes a sense of impending doom, and recently O’Neill illustrated an article about the rash of Apocalyptic prophecy in “Rolling Stone.”

O’Neill is preoccupied with violence, its manifestations and effects: “I’m a violent American,” he says. One of his most truly heavy characters is a violent, anonymous nihilist, who re-echoes these words: “I belong to a violent nation in a violent species. So I exercise my violence... punishes me physically. I use noise and action to harass human energy that my birthright as a human being.” But the nihilist’s way is a defeat, and he ends up on the road of despair, automatically “the road of hope.” The terrible violence O’Neill fears is summed up in a single image, the Bomb, an unthinkable menace, ominous in its hidden, brooding presence.

“Odd Bodkins” is an extension of O’Neill’s personality, like a scowling party of sedated clowns. “Humor is the only thing that raps off violence and hostility. And fantasy. It’s too hard to get a grip on reality, but I can walk my characters up to a bottomless cliff, look over and see it’s not as bad as I thought. Then maybe I can believe it.” Just as often, the abyss proves to be too much; the premise of humor is twisted into a deject climactic.

“Odd Bodkins,” itself, is played across a bleak plain ringed by distant volcanic peaks, above which, a leering sun, and sympathetic, helpless moon peer down. The sun, says O’Neill, “is hungry for humanity. As soon as we destroy ourselves, we’re going to release a lot of energy and it can be picked up by the sun. To get it really evil, I put a Disney face on it. The sun is indifferent to me as a human being. But I can learn from it. I should be getting warmth from it, and not let it get warmth from me.” O’Neill’s personal war with the malevolent sun is in contrast to his feelings about the moon who “belongs to earth, to men and women. It is much concerned with humanity, because the moon is dead.”

The two protagonists are a vaguely-shaped, bespectacled human named Hugh, and a bird of indeterminate name named Fred, both really projections of O’Neill himself. As he describes them: Hugh is “where I used to be. He’s got a lot to learn. Fred is the greatest American. He has all the answers, but he’s asking the wrong questions. Cyclos is a bad premise.” Dichotomy, a self-di-vided, Hugh is given to acrid ruminations that wind up in assured frightening absurdities, while Fred muses to himself, reminds himself he’s a Jesuit, but will run off saying “I can’t cope...” when psychically menaced.

Running through the stark landscape is the endless road along which Hugh and Fred encounter the 100% America Dog (read Splo 7), Corky Marks, the Commissary, the Bet-winged Hamburger Snatcheb, devoted to the one thing that justifies his existence, the creature in the glass box, and so on. O’Neill cuts to the quick, politics, dope, sex and revolution are stripped of glamour, both the 100% Dog, and Corky’s are flattened. Sometimes the moral is so ambient, one doesn’t know where O’Neill stands. Like the moon says, “Some of us think it’s a sign of mental health if you don’t understand this comic strip.” Equivocal, and devastating, watchwords of the game.

O’Neill’s future is uncertain. He’d like to move toward an underground comic book format, but hates to give up the straight audience. Himself, he’d like to take to the Canadian woods, “I highly resent civilization,” but he admits he’d like to have a lot of money. In any event he’s sure to keep writing until he reaches the destination to which he is “traveling.”

Incidentally, “Hear the Sound of My Feet Walking... Drown the Sound of My Voice Talking...” can be ordered from Globe Urban Center Publications, a Methodist-affiliated good Samaritan group, for $2.95 postpaid, at 330 Ellis St., S.F., California, 94102.

- Eric Arnow
“Bard has changed. It’s so different now...”

"Remember the good old days when...?" Seniors, returning graduates, returning Bard students, all sorts of juniors who were freshmen at the tail-end of the Old Bard -- everyone shared the vague sense of something missing. Bard is not what it used to be. And the question that inevitably accompanies this awareness is "Why?"

As with everything that makes up the collective experience of a class -- whether it is the reasons for the change are hard to pinpoint. But here are a few attempts at answering the question, gathered from coffee shops and down the road conversations wherever those who remember the Old Bard conglomerate and reminisce... reminder because the New Bard offers nothing that can compete with "the good of days."

First there are the superficial changes -- the new dining Commons, the new dorms, the disappearance of the D.U.’s -- periods of the old campus's bucolic mystique, the exhilarating sense of a community "out here in the middle of the woods." This is due to Bard's general expansion, a fact which horrified Old Bard when the first giggle freshmen class descended on the campus, and it was very depressing to realize that after half a semester there still were people wandering around whom you didn't know or at least know of.

There were, for the first time, freshman clichés -- a real distinction existed between classes. And why not? There were just too many freshmen. In the good old days, being a freshman at Bard meant checking out and being checked out by the older students during the first two weeks -- then suddenly, you were part of them, and by June you were typing your closest friend's senior project and wondering how you would survive after he left. Now the seniors are off campus. The great exodus away from Bard was responsible for much of Old Bard's decline and fall. Why put up with the rather adolescent politics and the all the new people you don't know -- when you can live the good life in Tivoli or on the Upper West Side. So Old Bard scatters, and New Bard takes over... seniors become nameless faces hurrying to their cars after class, the Bard Mystery, the oral tradition that was handed down from one class to the next, is broken. The new students have to find out about Bard on their own, and so Bard changes.

There is only one human being who has been a part of the entire history of Bard... "It's just boring now..." sighs one senior. Why? Thoughtful silence. Then another senior suggests a reason: "There aren't any characters here anymore." True... in the good old days, every class had its characters, and they belonged to all of Bard. They were notorious because they were freaky, or funny, or obnoxious, but they all had that uniqueness that made them stand out. You loved them or you hated them; you never understood them, or tried; to be in your class or the class ahead of you or behind you, it didn’t matter. They simply existed, and if you were in the Bard College crowd, you knew who they were, and you knew that they were a major part of what Bard was all about. And if they weren't in the Bard College crowd, they didn’t matter. They simply existed. They simply existed.

Now Bard has relevant courses: ecology, black studies, women's studies, film... now students are teaching courses at Bard. That's what it means to be a "Bard experience," now you know that your "Bard experience," that’s what you’re supposed to walk away from Bard with.

The New Bard is trying to be meaningful, up to date. It is something very hard for those who knew Old Bard to understand. It is a good try, they agree -- but it is also sad, somehow...

Institutions function at the New Bard, too. Maybe, one senior suggests, because there is little to struggle against, so little left to improve. There are organizations now that Old Bard would never have thought of, much less dedicated students might be due partly to Bard's physical growth, and partly to the new kind of student at Bard... "In high school," they say, "they went through what we didn’t go through until we came here -- Bard really had nothing new to offer them, no real discoveries." Sex, drugs, political activism, all those elements of Bard that made Bard unique long before it had even a university label -- long before "youth culture" became an accepted term -- the new students brought those things with them. "Remember how every semester mail got longer?" you watched the transformation of your classmates from prep-schools into dirty hippos -- you realized one day, with a certain amount of surprise, that you yourself were a dirty hippie, and you couldn’t believe that a time existed when you weren’t "Bardian" in every sense of the word. But the freshmen were already Bardian in high school.

The New Bard is, strangely, a better place, a better school than the Old Bard was -- it has none of the troubles that characterized the good old days -- but the New Bard suffers from the same weakness as the old Bard struggles with much of its flavor.

There were social regulations and protocols and intervention violations -- please -- don’t ask what they were called, say others... Second, shock waves of unemployment, pollution, protests, and policy repression from the War in Asia into the Spring is just beginning to occur to Americans that this disaster is not temporary, not accidental -- and not under control. It is slowly becoming necessary to live with disaster and to live with ourselves in anticipation of worse yet to come.

Why is the campus quiet? Certainly, not because all is well with the world. The War proceeds from the Japanese and French to the American aggression, escalation of colonial violence and ruthless imperialism toward technological holocaust, and the venomous violence of Asia overflow into America where there is no sanctuary. Certainly not because we have confidence in the poetry of Gene McCarthy or the opportunities of Bobby Kennedy or the Lincolnlike profile of Edmund Muskie. Nor does the wrath of Dick Nixon or the uncouth growl of Spiro Agnew inspire confidence. It is not a contented quiet.

Is it a calm fear? Have the murders at Kent State or the killings at Wisconsin sobered and frightened us? Are we afraid of clubs and jocks? I doubt it. Certainly, though repression is real, it was no less real when students rallied against police dogs and the KKK for Civil Rights.

Is it bribery? Relaxation of the draft will take pressure from middle-class college boys; but they could escape the New Bard in the past. Unemployment, if anything, reduces the "pay-off" of conformity yet.

The campus is quiet. Interest seems to have turned from activist involvement to mysticism, and from mysticism to safety on the battlefront than the streets; you can only see the bell bottoms held this way to the seniors of spring a year ago? Where is the great red fist of student consciousness and rebellion? Where are the joyful obsequies and the wild rhetoric and the dancing in the streets? The question is asked without a trace of nostalgia.

I don’t know the answer. Perhaps some students will wake up to the point that the question makes sense to them. I will probably be 80 years old before that happens... First, the quiet is deceptive. It is always easy subjectivity to distinguish death from life, splendor from chaos, romanticism from historical correctness (Kant, Spinoza, Hegel)... Secondly, it is not yet that the scars run very deep, the scars will endure. The lesson goes beyond a discreted LBJ. Since it would be a short action, soon won, the consciousness of politics will change in a new time frame. Vietnam is less shrill because they have more to say. Just possibly the energies not yet heard (by those whose hearing aids are turned off) are building a new generation of Bard consciousness.

This might be a good time for teachers and students to talk to each other and reflect on the relevance of what we have been taught. I’d like to suggest a forum to examine where we are and to make this a less silent spring.

Robert Kobiitz

Seymour, a sense of something missing.
I should be writing this in Algeria. I should be in the middle of a Griffin Lib-eration News Service photo. "Holocaust, in exile in Algeria, writing his Notes on the 1969 Spring Games Revolution at Woodson High School." And you'll see this bearded young man, intense, grim, wearing steel-rimmed spectacles and green fatigue, feverishly writing away at his desk, flanked by Arab guards with machine pistols to protect him from the CIA.

I could have been the Jack Kerouac of the Woodstock Generation. Reminiscing to David Frost about the good old days with Joan and Cesar at Delano. Posters of me speaking to thousands of students at Snopaul Hall, Berkeley: "Create one, two, three, many Woodson!" Disrupting the Woodson Conspiracy Trial by throw- ing a pie in Judge Hoffman's face.

However, destiny has tried to deny me my proper place in the vanguard of the Revolution. I am not writing this in Algeria. I star at a drowsy college cam-pus from behind double headgears of science fiction paperbacks. Still unfazed by the CIA. Still virgin. Classic.

The Spring Games incident in my senior year remains my sole revolutionary action.

We called ourselves the Anarchist Club.

We were the cream of Woodson's senior class. All of us were intense grim young men. All of us wore glasses. All of us read science fiction paperbacks and stayed virgin, except for Phil the Jewish intellectual. His Anarchist name was Che Felipe. He said he went through his science fiction phase back in junior high. He was the only Anarchist who had a girl friend. He was also the only Anarchist who never took part in our subversive activities.

I have better things to do," he Felipe said. And he showed us a box of Trojan rubbers.

Every morning we gathered at the same table in the cafeteria, munching Breakfast Club doughnuts and discussing dark Anarchist topics. Each of us had an Anarchist name. I was Horrays, which is James pronounced by Spanish rules, the legacy of my third year Spanish teacher, I was Minister of Ideology. Our founder, Dommy the Red, was acknowledged leader at first, but he lost that when he made a bid for dedication. We built up a complex mythology based on Lenny Bruce midget jokes, Diet Smith technology from Dick Tracy, and archetypes from the Joe Pyne show. Doing Joe Pyne archetypes was my specialty, characters like the little old man ("I no like a dice people who criticize da po-lease, like da Walka Report!"") and the young girl ("Ah dan't laugh dese boys who look lake girls. They DISGUST me.")

Our ore grew so esoteric and elaborate that no outsider could understand our conversations. This made us more omin- ous.

Virginia public high schools lacked some-what as hermits of radical turmoil. We Anarchists mixed passionate hatred of school with utter terror at the thought of a threat to our future college careers. Aand McCarthy liberalism served us for politics. We were all clean-cut, straight, National Honor Society members and

Merrill Scholars. In the eyes of most of our comrades, we were Communists.

We put out an underground newspaper. The principal sponsored it. He sent copies to the School Board to show them how innocuous student newspapers could be. Classic.

Our principal was Mr. Lados, an old fart with a face and voice like Gerald Ford who wore brown and white shoes. Once when the Anarchist editors of the school literary magazine had a censorship debate with the faculty sponsors, we went to him and offered to resign and start our own magazine. "What?" He pointed an accusing finger. "I take that as a personal threat!" His eyes narrowed. "Only one man on this earth has ever threatened me and got away with it—and he was a priest!"

Henceforth the Anarchist dream was to walk into Lados' office wearing clerical collars and threaten him to death.

The censorship debate centered on an essay exposing Popeye the Sailor as a Communist. The essay raised the question of the possible motives behind Popeye and Brutus fighting over olive Oyl. The faculty sponsors felt this would corrupt the minds of freshmen from sheltered homes.

Mr. Lados said, "If they don't know about it, why tell them?"

The Anarchist Club carried on the struggle. We consumed thousands of doughnuts. We devised blueprints for insidious ma-chines that would have staggered Diet Smith. Lados took issues of our under-ground newspaper with him to School Board meetings and personally handed them out amid general applause.

One May morning we were holding court in our usual fashion. An outsider, faring furtive glances around him, walked over and whispered, "Past! Hey you! Rad-icals!"

Flattered to be so addressed, we looked up from our doughnuts.

"What are you radicals going to do to de-stroy the Spring Games?" The Spring Games were one of those annual student government orgies when class teams vie in chariot races and throw eggs at each other.

"What? Destroy the Spring Games?"

"Come on! Everyone knows you've got something planned to disrupt Friday."

We were astonished. Further queries during the day established that Woodson High School did indeed believe that the Anarchist Club would man the barricades on the day of Spring Games. Investigation traced this rumor to student government.

Thus the Anarchist Club found a revolu-tionary situation thrust upon it. Not since Saint Petersburg in 1917 had there been an atmosphere like the one at Woodson High School.

Whips White stood up on a chair to speak. He had given himself the Anarchist name Anarchist guerrillas attack school.

"Whips as an alleged clue to his sexual practices.

"Brothers, the time for the Revolution at hand! The student protest must rise up against the oppressors! The rulersclasses tremble as they await the Spring Games! Everyone expects us to do some thing—then let's do SOMETHING!"

At this point in the narrative, through the courtesy of the Attorney General's office, I insert a captured document:

SECRET ANARCHIST CLUB PLAN FOR THE DAY OF SPRING GAME!

Phase One: During the preceding we notes will be made up of individual letters cut from magazines so no identifi-
tions can be made by handwriting. Enote will carry a warning to Wooden about the impending apocalypse on I day and will be signed "A.". Said note will be posted daily in several locatio to maximum exposure. This campa is calculated to build up expectation a few pitch of suggestibility that wi paralyze any counter-revolutionary e- ments among the masses.

Phase Two: During the lunch period Friday, the Masked Anarchist will al an arrow into the English teachers! It said arrow will be fired at the wall will have a radical manifesto wrapper around it. This will both terrorize at divert the ruling classes.
Friday came. The sun rose over Fairfax County, bathing Woodson High School in a blood-red glow.

The Anarchist Club assembled in the parking lot and loaded up with firearms.

"Where's our flag?" I said. Whips White handed me a cane pole sheathed in red cloth.

"This is a red flag," I said. "We're Anarchists. Anarchists are supposed to have a black flag."

"Fuck you," Whips said. "I couldn't get any black material. Red stands for revolutions. That's close enough."

We crept to our lockers and deposited our weapons. The red flag would not fit into a locker. I volunteered to carry it until the time to strike.

The Anarchist Club swaggered through the halls with their tightly furled banner. We also had arm bands, narrow strips of red cloth. Most of the students ignored us. A few whack-offs made some tasteless jokes. Some teachers who were our friends grinned and saluted. One teacher was very indignant. He stood in the door of his classroom and waved his fists.

"Brownshirts!" he said. "Brownshirts! Brownshirts!

In first period, my journalism class, I confronted Steve Gaunt, a member of student government. I placed the cane stick on top of the bulletin board frame.

"Jones! What is this red flag shit?" My eyes glared like burning churches.

"Ze Revolution!"

"What!" He sprang back. "If there's a revolution, it'll be over my dead body."

"Fuck you."

"Put it on the floor. Don't put that thing at the same height as the flag of my country."

"Gaunt, you are too classic."

Three more periods passed by without incident. At the end of fourth period I picked up my books, retrieved the flag from the corner of the room, and walked out the door into the arms of Billak.

Every high school has one vice-principal who serves as Resident Ogre. Such was Billak. A drawn grinning with the personality of Joe Friday from "Dragnet," he stood with arms big as thumbs folded in front of him and chilled me to the marrow.

"Come to my office," he growled through the students and I trailed in the vacuum behind him. A group of Anarchists saw me in the corridors of the Beest and their jaws dropped in dismay.

In his office Billak waved me to a chair. Two more vice-principals walked in, Lina and Cunningham. Lina was a paunchy girl with bulging paws. Cunningham looked like an evil ventriloquist's dummy.

The mares of Woodson High School seethe with expectation. (UPI)

The three of them surrounded my chair and stared down at me. I cringed, waiting for the blinding light and the rubber truncheons. Please, seniors, I am only a poor peon.

"What does this flag mean?" Joe Fisher asked.

"Well, uh, revolution."

"What revolution?"

"Just, uh, change, you know, in this case it symbolizes the, uh, contemporary revolution in our education system. We, uh, want to help people think about the innovations in process around them."

I could not explain about the fifth period raid. It would bring shit upon the head of the teacher who had agreed to be executed.

"Do you know that there have been - misunderstandings - about this flag? That some people have thought you were carrying - a Communist flag?"

"It's not a Communist flag."

"There have been misunderstandings. You don't want misunderstandings, do you?"

Vice-principals Lina, Cunningham and Billak study Anarchist Club warning notes (AP)

969 Spring Games. (LNS)

all fascist assaults. Revisionists, including the teacher present, will be duly tried and shot. The teacher selected as target has given his permission beforehand for the Anarchist Club to carry out the Revolution in the last five minutes of fifth period.

Thinking of bourgeois blood, the Anarchist Club made its preparations for its finest hour. Whips White volunteered to be the Masked Anarchist. He obtained a bow and arrows with warheads of rubber suction cups, and night and day practiced shooting at walls. Other Anarchists stockpiled guns, rifles and machine pistols from the armories of Mattel and Remco. Phase One was carried out successfully. Every morning, portly vice-principals paled at the sight of new portraits of revolt on the bulletin board.

And as the days ticked by, the emblazoned masses smothered and rattled their chains, waiting for the day when they would rise from their desks and have their ven-
Somehow the Masked Anarchist made his way to the lounge and his bowstring sang. The manifesto fell off the arrow. The arrow itself bounced off the wall to the floor. The teachers, preoccupied with the unaccountable horde visiting them, never had a chance to be properly terrorized by the Anarchist Club. The Anarchists abandoned the field of action to their spectators, sowing confusion and chaos.

"What's happening?"

"I can't see anything."

"Why are all you students here?"

"Someone shot an arrow."

"An arrow? Big shit!"

This left us with Phase Three, our classroom takeover. On schedule we marched to the target, black berets tilted at cocky angles, machine guns held poised to spew death. Again the Masked Anarchist sent an arrow whirling, with the same results.

"I thought you practiced," I said.

"Forget it, Honors. Lead the hijacking."

"Okay, but while I'm dictator of the proletariat, address me as Beast."

We leaped into the classroom. I got up on a chair and brandished a pistol. "Senor! You are the prisoner of the Anarchist Club! We proclaim this classroom to be the People's Democratic Republic of Woodson."

The teacher sat down. The class looked up in mild interest. No doubt a revolution would be more diverting than fourth year Spanish.

Two Anarchists stacked chairs in the door way as a barricade. After a hasty trial, the teacher was convicted of crimes against the people and ruthlessly gunned down. An Anarchist wearing a football helmet and swinging a club made an appearance as a Fascist Pig. He charged through the barricade, only to be brought down by the ensuing aim of Beast.

At this point all the provisions of Phase Three were annulled. The bell remained silent; the school schedule was screwed up somehow. Boredom threatened the revolution. The masses grew restless.

"Hey, Beast!" The other Anarchists called me outside. "We have the classroom. What'll we do?"

"I don't know. Where's the bell?"

"You're dictator of the proletariat. Make a speech."

"I didn't come prepared to make a speech."

"Say anything to them. Stall for time. Make promises to them."

I remounted my chair and announced that until 12:30 tomorrow we held all classes. I would negotiate with the students. If the administration seen sense, the Anarchist Club would grant them the right to form a student union.

I sat in the literary magazine office, frustrated. A delegation of Anarchists and sympathizers bustled in, led by a kid wearing sandals. The kid wearing sandals had just been apprehended by Bilkaf for violating the dress code. But the kid talked him down with a salvo of recent Supreme Court decisions. Furthermore, the Anarchists told me, I too had the backing of this august body. Bilkaf had done me dirt.

Thus fortified, I rushed to Bilkaf's office as soon as the bell rang to reclaim our perfidiously pinched flag. Finding no one there, I seized it and left.

Our group went out side in back of the school. Several hundred yards away, cheers rang out in the bleachers as Spring Games began. I inserted the cane stick into a ring at the base of the flagpole. The first time that day, the red flag waved.

Then we looked across the field and saw Bilkaf. Like in a Japanese movie when the artillery crews look across the field and see Godzilla.

He walked toward us casually but warily.

Marshall Billik of Dodge City, ready to confront this new Kremlin-spawned menace to Woodson High School.

"Who took the flag from my office?"

"I did. Sixth period was over."

"School isn't over until after Spring Games. What about my rights? You violated the privacy of my office."

I waited for the legalists around me to strike back with the Supreme Court. Nothing happened.

Bilkaf took the flag. "I want to see you in my office Monday," he told me.

Thus the Spring Games Revolution came to an ignominious end. When I entered Bilkaf's office on Monday, I found him looking out the window. "I know I was safe. Whichever a vice-principal looks out the window, it means he's using the benevolent paternal approach. He told me he knew how bored the Anarchists were, and how this knowledge ate at his heart, but he had his responsibilities, and we didn't want misunderstandings and so forth. I flipped away a tear, shook hands and left to join the Anarchists eating doughnuts in the cafeteria.

"Shit," I said.

Two years later I looked back on the Spring Games Revolution with disgust. What a buummer. What straightens we were. What chickenhawks. The Anarchist Club. A bunch of fuck-ups who plastered on in a bleak year sustained by a few crumbs of high spirits and humor which went sour in our one action, one futile display of feeble theatrics. What a fiasco. So pathetic. So classic.

Home on vacation, my little brother, a Woodson student now, showed me a mimeographed newspaper.

"What's this?"

"An underground newspaper some friends of mine put out at Woodson. It's all built around one big article."

They had reprinted an article of mine from the old Anarchist paper. The last and only decent article I wrote, in which I compared Woodson to a boot camp.

"I said it would be okay," my little brother said.

"Sure. They can have anything of mine that they want."

"When they told Laddon they were reprinting an article by you, he got all upset. He said, 'If you're going to print the writings of Brit Jones, you should know what kind of a person he is.' When he was here two years ago, before you came to Woodson, he tried to take over the whole school in a student revolution and run a Viet Cong flag up the flagpole."

"Laddon said that?"

I went back to Woodson. Not as a student. Now, after only two years, I was a legend. Classic.

I put on my mean motherfucker denim jacket with the red on the collars and walked once more through Woodson's halls. All around me students whispered, "That's him." "Is it really him?" "Wow, it's him." "He's come back." "What's he going to do?"

"It's him all right," my little brother pointed with pride. "It's my radical brother. From his radical college."

Students gathered in crowds to gape at this figure who had stepped out of the mists of myth to once again strike terror into every fascist heart. Girls reached out to touch me. Internal grim young men wearing glasses craned forward to hear me say something radical.

"Brothers and sisters," I said. "I envy you your part in the struggle. You live in the belly of the beast." I put a doughnut in my pocket, straightened my belt, shouldered my machine gun, and vanished into the Bolivian countryside.

The Spring Games Revolution marches on.

by Brit Jones
Last month a friend and I spent a weekend backpacking in the Catskills. We were up the Old Overlook Road on snowshoers toward the Devil's Kitchen Lookout. This forest preserve offers footpath runs south to north the length of the two mountains you can see directly across the river. It was very quiet, and we were not in the least afraid of anything on our trail: fox, whitetailed mouse, raccoon, porcupine, snowshoe hare. This refreshment in the wild peace of the forest is a beautiful and necessary part of my life. You can imagine our feeling when two snowmobiles came at us down the trail. Two days later at the trailhead regrettably we saw where another winter hiker had written a plea to the Conservation Department to keep snowmobiles off the trail; "...we pick up our garbage...they stick, roar, and scatter animals..."

Many Bard people have complained to me about snowmobiles on the transport and Cruger Island Road. I really share those feelings. It would be a pleasure to speak to the President so he would know I am not only one concerned. In January I often walked by a sign that says "Pedestrians" and "No Motor Vehicles" with a snowmobile track right behind it. I feel hurt and angry when I am out on the snow and hear the noise of the big machine, and a snowmobile roars by. If that is not enough, there are a number of important arguments against snowmobiles (I try to remember to direct my anger at snowmobiles and not at snowshoers either, but it’s hard to talk about the road):

1) There is the danger of a pedestrian being struck by a snowmobile. I do not cross the road that crossway about that one too much, though I remember that being hit by a car was a pretty unpleasant experience.

2) Snowmobiles do stick, which suggests that exhaust emissions are way out of proportion to the size of the engine. Pollution by the combustion products of fossil fuels is now well known to be a global atmospheric problem with far-reaching consequences in weather modification, not to mention health of people, other animals, and plants. It’s bad enough that we have
dogs can kill many deer because they are more mobile on crusty snow. Snowmobile noise may add to this problem by spooking and scattering the deer.

3) Noise. Medical research has shown that frequent or continued exposure to high noise levels can induce or aggragate pre-existing loss of hearing, circulatory disease, mental illness, and nervous tension in human beings. No one knows what damage they do to the animals. For description of the physiological mechanisms involved, see footnote. Even though one can be acoustically sensitized to loud noises, the subtle damage still occurs.

4) Less obvious potential effects: these have not been observed by ecologists but thoroughly studied yet. Snowmobiles used on lakes may speed the decapitation of the ice/snow cover in early winter, thus hastening aquatic oxygen depletion when plants cease photosynthesis from lack of light. This would increase the danger of "wintertime" of fish.

Snowmobile use on lakes interferes with winter food-getting activity of meadow moles which cannot burrow through the compacted snow of the tracks. This mouse feeds on accretions of grasses and is the only burrower of pipes; they tend to stay under the snow in winter and figure importantly in the diet of many predators.

Dogs may utilize snowmobile tracks to gain easier access to the sheltered woodland areas where deer spend the winter. House

Modern civilization’s self-rationalization that only by settling down into permanent cities and farms with division of labor can you have the refined consciousness and abstract thought that have been seriously challenged in the last month. Stories, archetypes, and images of the archaic Ice-Age men as old as 34,000 years have been discovered all over Europe and Asia carved with detailed lunar records extending sometimes for a year.

Alexander Marshack of Harvard University, who deciphered these ancient calendars, speculates that the hand-sized calendars were used as hunting aids, to anticipate phases of the moon for which special rites and sacrifices were prescribed, or to follow female menstruation. As the Fields of Yorks passed by, they not only became more complex, but were accompanied by a variety of animal or female figures – suggesting symbolism whose meaning is obscure and may never be known.

In another archeological research died, announced last week, the age of early man has been extended to a period of 11,500,000 years. In Kenya, Africa, a fragment of a jawbone with one molar still in place was unearthed, belonging to a female closely related to Homo erectus. Australopithecus was a five-foot creature, looked like a big chimpanzee, upright about 1.76 million years ago with a thick, heavy jawbone and that eventually evolved into Homo Sapiens or modern man about 40,000 years ago.

This bone, now the oldest member of the human family ever found, indicates man was developing before the Ice Age, in the Pliocene period which began 13 million years ago. To comprehend this time-expanse is impossible. To try to imagine that the human family has been on earth for one calendar year. Thus, the woman described above was born on January 1st. The Ice Age began on April 7th. Australopithecus was born on September 1st; Homo Sapiens first emerged on December 29th at 10 a.m.; the bones described above were first carved December 29th at 6 p.m.; the last glacial age ended December 31st at 4 p.m.; Christ was born on the last day at 8:56 in the evening; and the Declaration of Independence was written only 18 minutes before the end of the year.

The calendar markings on artifacts, some of which have been in museums for over a hundred years, had been regarded with a certain pause or nervousness to improve the grip on a slippery handle. Most of the objects are small enough to be held in the palm of one hand while being carved or polished by the other hand.

The Long Range Planning Committee has emphasized that the Office of Preston Hall to the Psychology Department is merely their recommendation and does not represent their final decision. At the present time they are anxious to receive plans from students, but the Psychology Department has given them the best thought not plan so far. Plans can be submitted to both the President’s Office or members of the Long Range Planning Committee.

The 30,000 year old schematic symbols of the Ice Age people show how time progression of the moon highlight the nature of the markings on the bone. They are arranged

low under modern indicators of lunar cycle: new moon (black), covered by crescent moons and full moon (white), flanked by quarter moons.
WASHINGTON, March 1 — A bomb, apparently planted by a group or person protesting against the Vietnam war, exploded early this morning in the Senate wing of the Capitol, causing extensive damage but no injuries. The powerful explosion occurred in an unmarked out-of-the-way men's lavatory on the ground floor of the building. It damaged seven rooms, knocking plaster off walls, jarring chandeliers and blowing doors off their hinges. Mario E. Campoli, the Acting Architect of the Capitol, said the explosion might also have caused some structural damage as it lifted some of the original brick supports of the building.

HOT DOG USE ESTIMATED
More than 6 billion frankfurters and approximately 1.5 billion servings of sauerkraut were consumed by Americans during 1970, according to the National Knack Packers Association.

GOLDEN, Colo. (AP) — Bud Schloffman's red-rared turtle eats and sleeps at the same time, and can almost see where it is going and where it has been simultaneously.

Gas War
from page 1
For many underdeveloped countries, American control of their energy sources is a major obstacle to industrialization. To develop these sources for themselves is made even more difficult by the oil giants' stranglehold on exploration and drilling technology, shipping, refining, and distribution.

What frightens the major international oil companies is the prospect of an independent Southeast Asia, developing its own resources for the needs of its own people. As Southeast Asia's important natural resources include not only oil, but also tin, tungsten, iron, bauxite, copper, nickel, and rubber, Southeast Asia development is not only possible, but likely, if current independence movements achieve victory.

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Feb. 21 — The Saigon Government's disapproval of published articles calling for an end to the war resulted last week in the sentencing of two Roman Catholic priests to nine-month prison sentences.

They are the Rev. Nguyen Tin, since 1969 the publisher of the monthly magazine Face to Face, and the Rev. Truong Ba Can, one of the magazine's contributors. Father Truong Ba Can is the author of two articles considered to be corrupting under the Vietnamese press law.

Some Vietnamese in publishing and in politics feel that the severity of the sentences is a signal that criticism of the Government will not be permitted now that the presidential election is approaching. President Nguyen Van Thieu is seeking re-election this October.

GENEVA, Feb. 28 — Male voters in the tiny mountain principality of Liechtenstein, sandwiched between Switzerland and Austria, narrowly rejected women's suffrage today.

The proposal, which was approved decisively last December by the Liechtenstein Parliament, was defeated 1,697 to 1,817 in a referendum.

As a result, Liechtenstein, which has a pop.ulation of 19,000, remains the only area in the Western world where women cannot vote. Except for Liechtenstein, men retain a monopoly over political affairs only in a few Arab countries.

FRISKING COURT SPECTATORS YIELDS 200 KNIVES IN DAY
Chicago (AP) — Sheriff's police have been instructed to search spectators entering Holiday Court in the Criminal Courts Building. One day, 200 knives and 20 cans of disabling spray were confiscated from 1,000 people.

The searches began after a prisoner, Gene Lewis, was killed in a shootout with police after a gun was smuggled into the building by a woman friend.

POLICE PINUPS BANNED
Bangkok, Thailand (UPI) — Police Commissioner Monchai Phaknongphuen has banned "pornographic and obscene pictures," in cladding calendars with nude, from police booths, to make them look more official.

UTSONOMIYA, Japan (AP) — Yukioke Uno, a 25-year-old night watchman, telephone the police to report that robbers had struck him and that he had taken the equivalent of $28 and a car from a garage he was guarding. Later, he said it was a hoax he had perpetrated "because it's housework to be a night watchman" and he wanted company.

COAT HANGER OPENS CELL
Troy, Ohio (UPI) — Richard Rice, awaiting trial himself, used a bent coat hanger to open a stuck cell door at the Miami County jail in less than two minutes. Mr. Rice volunteered for the job after maintenance men had failed to open the door with tools.

But American's great oil families, who stand to lose most if Southeast Asian oil comes under Southeast Asian control, have a strong ally in the White House. The Mellons (Giff), the Rockefeller's (who have large interests in all oil companies that grew out of the Standard Oil trust), and other oil families contributed some $600,000 to Nixon's 1968 presidential campaign. They need only remind him that his political fortunes rest upon the continued expansion of American corporatist capitalism — an expansion fueled by Asian oil and Asian oil revenues.

The reasons for the U.S. presence in Indo-China go much deeper than the control of raw materials in Southeast Asia. The extent of the petroleum reserves is really not yet known. The disproportionate influence that the oil industry has over U.S. foreign policy, however, should make it clear that "black gold" will be an important factor in the U.S. decision to escalate or accept defeat.

LNS
The Laos invasion is entering its fourth week. Since Feb. 2, when the operation was launched, South Vietnamese troops have not been able to get more than 17 miles into that country, despite the most massive air support of any engagement of the war. Combat operations this week centered around Hill 31, a strategic fire base six miles inside the Lao border, midway between the American stronghold at Khe Sanh, and the North Vietnamese Pathet Lao base at Lung Khi. Hill 31 is receiving treatment similar to that given a South Vietnamese 2nd Ranger battalion last week, in which 300 of the 400 man force were either killed or wounded when the Pathet Lao captured their position.

A South Vietnamese marine battalion, consisting of an estimated 600 men, crossed into Laos Tuesday, joining the 14,000 troops already in the field. The battalion is part of an advance guard of 18,000 Saigon troops, which may be deployed within the next few days.

South Vietnamese forces, supported by American air and artillery, are scheduled to begin a westward drive along Route 9 within the next few days. Although they will be traveling toward Thakhek, military planners are certain that the advance will be limited to gaining only an additional five or six miles of territory.

Washington claims that the invasion has already succeeded in securing "vital portions" of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and expects the new advance to bring even better results.

Last week, military officials admitted that traffic along the Trail had increased from normal flow of 1,000 to 2,000 supply trucks per day. This week, the traffic had been cut to about 30 per cent. If the new report is indeed accurate, then the only thing the invasion has "accomplished" has been to reduce traffic to pre-invasion figures. A rather dubious accomplishment, to say the least.

Perhaps the single most important reason why the Saigon forces have not been completely routed — the 14,000 South Vietnamese forces face an estimated 30,000 revolutionary troops — has been the role played by American air power.

With the cessation of the bombing on North Vietnam, in the spring of 1968, many individuals felt that further demoralization, a possible prelude toward American disengagement in Asia, would follow. These hopes were shattered when U.S. negotiations at the Paris "peace talks" made it clear that they would oppose any semblance of a Vietnamese reunification unless the Vietnamese any meaningful rights to self-determination.

At the same time, this air armada was turned against the Pathet Lao in support of Prince Souvanna Phouma, who has allowed American forces to bomb the Ho Chi Minh Trail for seven years, and has permitted U.S. forces to use Laos territory to further its imperialist aggression in Indochina.

Before 1968, most U.S. targets had been limited to sections of the Trail in Laos and South Vietnam, the headquarters area of the Pathet Lao. Since that time, however, Washington has declared most of northern Laos a "free-fire" zone, and has subjected its population to attacks of 30 and 200 fighter-bombers a day (27,000 missions a month). This policy has resulted in the most intense, vicious bombardment suffered by any people in military history.

The bombardment has caused hundreds of thousands of refugees (perhaps as many as 1.5 million in a nation where the total population is a mere 3 million). American military experts, basing their estimates on data from the Vietnamese precedent, have apparently decided that the only way to defeat a revolutionary force which derives its strength and support from the population, is to physically remove this population by bombing, thus denying the revolutionaries manpower, recruits, food and intelligence.

The effects are devastating. The Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars, for example, reports that "The result of this policy of population removal and 'sweeping' the earth is that in the Plain of Jars, which formerly supported 200,000 people, now has a population and reproduction of zero, and its ecosystem has been destroyed beyond recognition.

Those few who remain in these 'free-fire' zones have been forced to dig trenches or underground shelters where they must spend the daylight hours to avoid the bombing. Farming activities must be carried out only at night, when air attacks are not a threat.

Yet, if anything, this strategy is backfiring in Laos just as it has in Vietnam. It has had the effect of spreading the revolution throughout the region. As a Christian Science Monitor correspondent recently wrote, "One refugee said that as the bomb ing increased, the Pathet Lao forces in his district started getting more volunteers, whose attitude was 'better to die like a soldier than at home waiting for the bombs to kill you.'"

Lans, therefore, offers one a preview of what 'Vietnamization' is designed to accomplish — a technological war in which puppet troops, supported by massive U.S. firepower, attempt to defeat indigenous liberation movements without direct American combat involvement.

In his Feb. 25 "State of the World" ad dress, President Nixon emphasized for the first time, the protracted nature of "Vietnamization." According to Nixon, while "Vietnamization" fulfills our objective of reducing American involvement "is, cannot except over a long period, end the war altogether."

Nixon insisted that if "Vietnamization leads to perpetuating the war it is not by our design, but because the other side refuses to settle for anything less than a guaranteed take-over."

It is clear what the President means. If we are "the other side" (Nixon has for the national liberation forces of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos) "refuses to settle for anything less than a guaranteed take-over" (i.e., refuses to settle for anything less than real self-determination) Americans must be willing to continue to support military operations which are genocidal in nature.

The American people, however, have another alternative — holding a massive anti war movement, independent of the parties of war, demanding the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Indochina.

Kurt Hill

The United States Government has induced 71 nations of the world to write and sign an inter national drug treaty designed to stop illegal traffic in 32 drugs, including acid, mescaline, tranquilizers, and stimulants. The treaty prescribes that all nations mete out severe prison sentences for dealers and state treatment and rehabilitation for users. If the United Nations considers a country lax in enforcement, the agreement allows intervention by other governments, presumably the United States with its drugs.

The text requires ratification by forty governments before it is legal, though I. W. Roper's conclusion that the problem concerns mostly the highly industrialized nations such as Sweden, Japan, England, France, and the United States. The Nixon administration was the first to sign two weeks ago. John E. Ingersoll, head of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs in Washington, represented the U.S. at this "Convention on Psychotropic Sub stances" signing in Vienna. John was most delighted by a clause allowing new drugs to be added with ease. "We do not know when or where such drugs may be developed in the future and become serious problems."

The current thirty-two substances are grouped under four schedules, with the strictest controls applied to the first, which includes LSD and mescaline. The treaty was agreed to except for scientifi c and very limited medical purposes and requires that such use be restricted to government-run or government-approved facilities.

ABORTION INFO

The State Attorney General is investigating abortion agencies because some are huge rip-offs. Here are a few agencies that sent notices to the Observer, and the information they sent. If you find out more about them, let us know and we’ll pass the information along.

Abortions are legal in New York State. The present law makes no residency requirement. A patient from any state or country, therefore, may come to New York to have one. An woman, regardless of marital status, may request abortion.

The present law allows abortions up to the twenty-fourth week of pregnancy, although it’s better to have an abortion earlier in pregnancy, preferably under 12 weeks.

Ruth Martin is one abortion and Family Planning Consultant who will advise you on how to have an abortion under safe conditions. She refers patients only to skilled doctors in government clinics or private practices who operate in hospitals and clinics run by patients receive good, safe medical care. The total cost is reasonable.

For details, call Miss Martin person-to-person between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. E.S.T. Monday through Friday or 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, (224 E. 38th St. N.Y., N.Y. 10016).
This play is very simple and short (fifteen minutes). It serves as an Entr’acte between the others. The acting is not overplayed and doesn’t get bogged down.

EVIL EVIL is an extremely bitter satire. Most of the dialogue is between Rosie (Sandra Briga) and Lita (Lynn Collins), two Black students in an eastern college, “workbench alley cum laude.” They discuss a paper Lita’s writing whileaves dropping on Joy (Beth Shaw) a White student in the next room, who has stolen one of their customers.

Reacting to a letter from her father, Rosie comments, “Well, maybe daddy’s wrong, maybe I don’t get me a brain but I gets me a body, and I done used it. Cause them what gits in them what gits out without and comes back with. Po Daddy.”

Rosie and Lita show their obvious bitterness toward Joy when she finally enters the room, after a quickie. As Rosie puts it, “Wham-bam, thank you ma’am.”

Joy is nervous for the whole scene. She tries to talk of Appalachia, which fills her background, trying to fit in with Rosie and Lita. They ignore her.

They move into a dream sequence—a ritual of revenge. As they intone a chant to Allah, they prepare their knives to thin the help of the brothers and sisters (Henry Jones and Clementine Anthony).

This is an exceptionally effective play, and as of now, the most complete.

CRITIC

from page 4

Theatrical reviews have collectively misapplied all of these basics of theater, and have committed the nearly fascist narrow-mindedness which I described. And until a person accepts theater as freed expression instead of chocolate-iced convention he is a fascist and he has no business writing a review. I have never accepted the idea of theater as a “willing suspension of disbelief” — that is only one condition by which an audience can talk itself into seeing what it is seeing. Theater is human events intended to be felt by a human audience. The reviewer must first describe the event without bias. He needn’t do a lot of reading, though that might help; he needn’t rehash the plot (which is only one occasion for the play). He must consider the events until they tell him what the production is finally about. He may then evaluate the performances of the director, actor and designer in light of the central fact or statement.

For years theater has not believed it is an illusion, nor has it behaved like one. It lives in reality and reality’s expression. It does so in the full knowledge that an actor acts wants and intentions, a director stages motifs and a designer molds space. The theater has more to do with honesty than it does with illusion, poverty or cruelty. Perhaps people have called it the latter three because that’s what they think of honesty. The point is that a reviewer must deal with the fact of theatrical events; he is a journalist, not a romantic idler and he must accept theater as a fact d’accomplir, not as an ugly noise which has interrupted his dreams of the musical.

Rather than admit they are not talking about plays, Observer reviewers have hidden behind their heavy-handed jabs at well-intentioned people. They are arche-types of intellectuals in a self-made void, trite cynics who refuse to discuss the reality of events because it is easier to puncture the dream which does not exist. I think reviews would serve the community if they came to grips with what is happening; now they are divorcing the theater from the community.

Bruce Chilton
Shostakovich

from page 5
actually a sounding board for the need to depict simple and strong emotions in music. By the time the meeting ended, Shostakovich had been effectively cut off from Soviet artistic community.

Why did this happen? That the powerful personalities of Moscow did not understand Shostakovich’s often radical music of this period is a nice generalization, and at least partially true, but it is not the whole answer. Far more important is the fact that the Soviet government has always believed that music should be prepared for the listeners’ ears and not the other way around. Soviet music, after all, is supposed to be a music for the masses, and if the masses can’t understand it, at least at first hearing, then it can’t be Soviet music or, so thinks the Kremlin.

Politics also played a part in the 1936 attack. Stalin probably guessed that he would somehow have to defend himself against Hitler, and he wanted Russia to be ready for war (the 1939 Russo-German pact was a delaying tactic for both sides). Thus, a sense of Russian unity would be necessary, and this would have to be emphasized in all the media, including art. "Lady Macbeth of the Mzensk District," a bleakly pessimistic work, did not meet Stalin’s requirements, and Shostakovich had to be told who was boss.

The door was left open, however, for Shostakovich, to return to Moscow’s good graces. He was, after all, the most talented of young Soviet composers, and his talent, channeled into what Moscow considered the right paths, could be a great asset. All Shostakovich had to do was make his music conform. Somehow, he succeeded without compromising himself. His Fifth Symphony, subtitled "A Soviet Artist’s Reply to Just Criticism," was an immediate sensation and is still his most popular work thirty-three years after its first performance. His Piano Quintet of 1940 won him a Stalin Prize of 100,000 rubles.

At about this time, the Germans attacked Russia. Leningrad came under Nazi siege, and Shostakovich served as an air raid warden. He also began working on a new symphony, to be dedicated to the people of Leningrad. Here is where the strategy of 1936 paid its highest rewards, for the "Leningrad Symphony." Shostakovich’s Seventh, ranks among the greatest pieces of war propaganda ever created. Obviously descriptive of war, tragedy, and final victory over Fascism, the work is often banal and trite, but people hearing it at the time didn’t care. It made Shostakovich a hero in America, whose people had seen the photos of him during air raids and had heard the stories of the symphony’s composition and of the flight of a microfilm copy of the manuscript from Russia to New York, via Tehran, Cairo, and South America, so that Arturo Toscanini could give the American premiere on the NBC network. When the war ended, the music went into limbo, but it had served its purpose.

After the war, life returned to normal - for a while. In 1948, the condemnations started again, the same old charges from 1936, this time leveled at practically every Soviet composer who could read music. The doctrine of "Socialist Realism" was espoused, and this time Shostakovich responded by releasing virtually nothing until after Stalin’s death in 1953, when he finally got his tenth Symphony and Violin Concerto, two of his masterworks, published.

Under Khruchev, Shostakovich had greater artistic freedom, yet he produced little of real importance. Years of Stalinist repression had taken their toll, and the unusual tendency for Soviet criticism to either glorify or damn a musician had injured his sense of self-criticism. His next really major project was his "Babi Yar" symphony, on poems by Yevgeny Yevtushenko, written in 1962, and this uneven but often beautiful music has been kept under wraps for most of the years by the Soviet government because there are lines in it that suggest that the Soviets have been guilty of anti-Semitism at some time or another.

Since then, the creative spark seems to have been rekindled in Shostakovich, who has written a new violin concerto, string quartet, cello concerto, violin sonata, and a 14th Symphony in the last five years. Now 84, he lives in a Moscow hospital (he had heart trouble for years), currently working on a new opera. The subject for the libretto is Sholokhov’s "And Quiet Flows the Don" whose plot by Ozer- jmuky was so heavily praised by the Krem- lin in 1936.

Recent recordings of the music of Shostakovich:

- A Melodria / Angel disc conducted by Rudolf Barshai features the 14th Sym- phonies real cycle of songs with or- chestra dealing with the various aspects of death. This music is dark, often terri- fying, but often very beautiful as well. I consider it Shostakovich’s masterpiece.

Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra are featured in the best record- ing yet of the Tenth Symphony, also dark but with a “happy ending.” Orman- dy is just a bit fast and loud, but his inter- pretation is well thought out and beauti- fully played, and his full-speed-ahead and damn-the-torpedoes finale is worth the price of the record by itself.

Finally, Shostakovich himself plays his two Piano Concertos on a Seraphim rec- ord made in the late ‘50s, but issued in America for the first time. One would expect that the performance is superb, especially since Shostakovich wrote the

First Concerto for himself.

Other recordings of interest (with the performer’s name, or performers’ names, in parentheses):

- Symphonies Nos. 1 and 9 (Hovhan) Symphony No. 5 (Frisken) Symphony No. 7 (Barenboim) Symphony No. 13 (Kondrashin)

Plano Quartet (Borodin Quartet) Complete String Quartets, Nos. 1-11 (Borodin Quartet)

Katerina Isakova (formerly “Lady Macbeth of the Mzensk District”) is also available, on a three-record Melodria / Angel album.

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