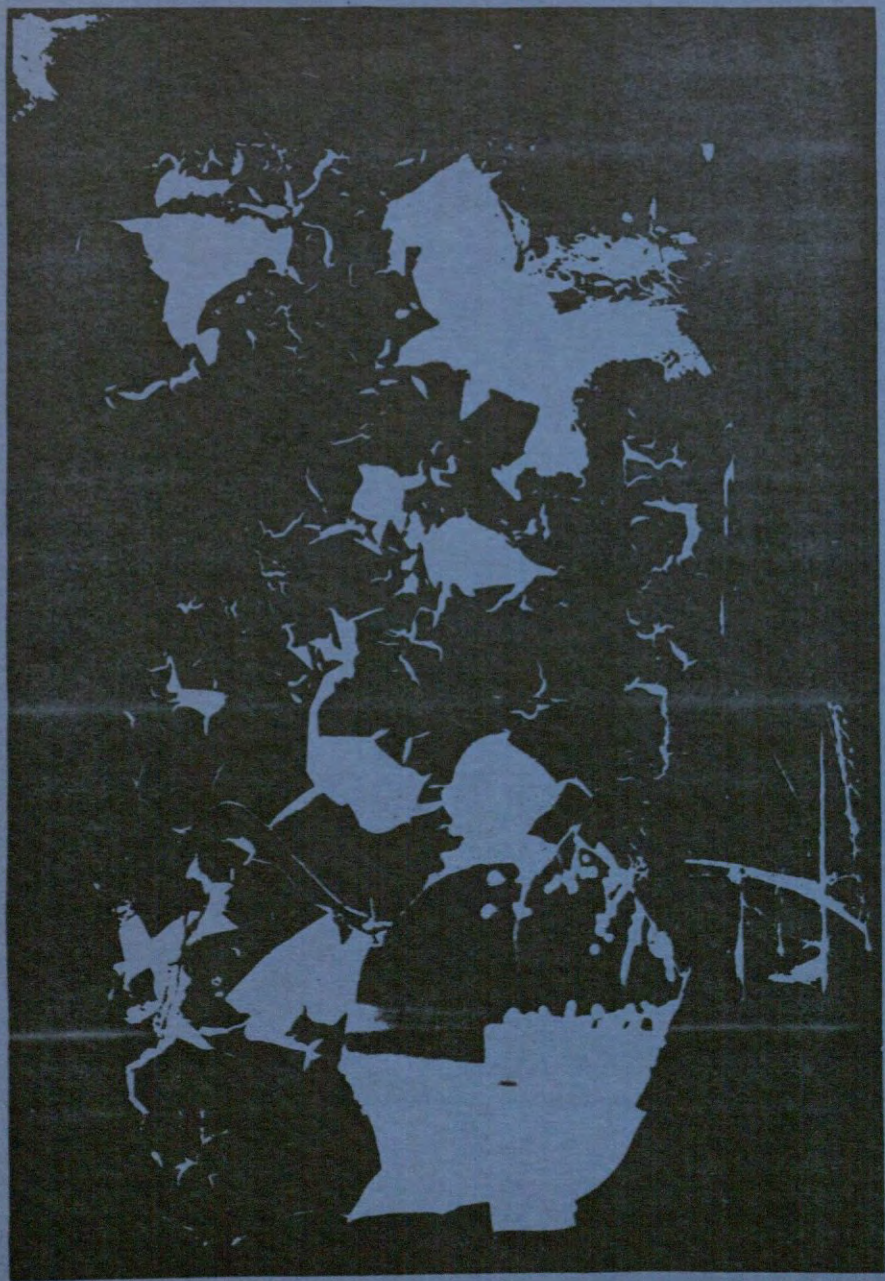


ASPECT

JUNE 1972



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another raven

mark nakell

. . . of course, that life was like a story--try as he could, he was never able to get away from the feeling that he was experiencing it and that this was what it was about.

Our story opens in a little square

2.

room which the Colonel had rented to be by his lady in a case of do or die. Such a case not yet having come up, the room was in the meantime subleased to one Rathhaven Kretcher, a man of hardly any accomplishments at all. But he had his plans.

3.

The foremost of these plans involved the whole world. Rath, as his many friends called him, had evolved a plan for the universal realization of ultimate bliss. Unfortunately, this plan demanded that he be in the position of having the attention of most of the world's population to activate it. It was in order to get into this position, he said, that he took on his many, varied and indeed occasionally ingenious hustles.

4.

Such as the "Lend Your Orphan To The World Tornado" crusade, a little fund gathering orifice Rath had begun in Chicago, with the aid of an English accent.

Or the "Send Me Home To Mama--I'm A Fudge Bar" cooking contest, promoted extensively on the west coast (winner to be judged by a Ph.D.).

Or the "Saskwaton Oil Mine Stock Swindle Game" for adults and children ("Many hours of relaxation and fun"), pedaled coast (South Carolina) to coast (Louisiana) by

teams of door-to-door salesmen formerly associated with religious collection agencies ("You ain't paid the five dollars you pledged to the church last May, lady").

5.

Overseeing these and vast other inconsequential enterprises did not, as can be seen, leave much occasion for Rath's central activity, starring in stag movies. It was this which originally gave him the ear and the eye of the public. He had, from his first appearance as the masked waitress (French uniform, minus pants) in "Blocked Passage", proceeded on to levels of accomplishment unimagined by his audience, in movies such as "Far Out Goes To College", where his sensitive portrayal of a young man besotted by masturbation scars working his way through Idaho selling do-it-yourself machine shops to lonely farming housewives earned him a Golden Potato award from the state office itself.

6.

Many of course became familiar with the little square room and the charming Danish provincial econo-size bed through these inspired movies. For a while, in fact, Rath had thoughts of being able to reach the whole world meaningfully through these films. But even at the height of his success (a height from which he went forward, not down), Rath felt a certain emptiness, a certain flattened toothpaste-tube feeling which led him to use his fame for a more direct assault on--everything that was good and holy?: NO!--everything bad and wrong. He even began setting aside a part of his personal income for use in the campaign.

7.

Which was why, when the Colonel came knocking at the door one day saying, "Let me in, I seen you in a film with my lady, and that's not in the lease," Rath

June 1972

)5(

felt it necessary to phone up his friend the General to call the Colonel off. "Don't tell him I sent you," he said, "bad for my image."

8.

Our story ends in a little circle.

* * *

FOR MY FATHER

his dreams were wearing out
he told me so
i was too young to listen
eyes closed from one too many years
tongue coated with defeat
leather slippers evenly frayed
bathrobe worn and shabby
the dreams wore out
all at once
there was no written guarantee
sixty-eight hard pressed years
came to a harsh end tonight

(Summer-1965)

A.D. Winans

from HEY LADY No. 7

Bill Meissner

THE MAGISTRATE. AFTER THE SALEM TRIALS

it is finally over. nineteen hung,
one pressed to death,
all of them witches

in the calm his dilated
eyes turn their faces
toward the moon

he flattens his face on the
window, looks hours into
the night. he will not sleep,

he knows. somewhere on the other
side of the glass, beyond the stone
fence, there are people dancing
strangely around the eye
of a fire,
their numbers growing
like fear.

* * * *

Desires that go to bed hungry
Wake up in the morning traveling backwards

Lon Spiegelman

MAJORITY RULES

Ebony eyes sparkling to the vibes of Eddy Harris
You sat contemplating tomorrow
 contemplating jazz
Studying thoughts of yesterdays spent
You were seen as a child of realities
 not understood
Black warriors inspired your tomorrows
and the eyes of strangers
 made deeper the blackness
 etched in your mind
Arguing we tried to understand
 our misunderstandings
determined not to build
 on foundations of falsity
Respect strove to surmount
 the anxieties of our
 "selves" under analysis
But it wasn't enough for us
to break the color barrier
 and we shriveled in the heat of societies sun.

--Emma L. Womac

POLITICS

by Harry Greenwald

WHY THE SYSTEM STILL DOESN'T WORK IN MASSACHUSETTS

The only prize was a senatorial nomination to run against Edward Brooke, the U.S. Senate's only black man, and political caliphers of all dimensions have given the same reading on Brooke's re-election chances - slightly better than Stalin's in 1939.

The foregone conclusion was that the prize was meaningless, so the big names in politics kept their names out of the ring at the Massachusetts State Democratic Convention on June 10.

And that's what most of the conventional political columns cited as the big news. But far more important a story is that even with a meaningless prize at stake the Democrats still couldn't run a democratic convention.

It took six ballots, beginning in mid afternoon and ending about 2 a.m. to determine a nominee to run against Brooke, and then the count was anything but accurate.

It took less than an hour and a half to adopt a platform that is generally conceded to be the most liberal ever adopted in the state, even though it was never debated by the delegates.

To go with the platform is the winner of the six ballot marathon for the senatorial nomination, John Droney, the Middlesex County District Attorney whose politics are somewhat to the right of Ghengis Khan. Aside from calling the platform adopted by his party sick, Droney's political beliefs are characterized by support of the recent bombings of North Vietnam and Nixon's Supreme Court choices.

How did all that happen? Let's start with the selection of delegates. The leadership in the Massachusetts legislature, where the Democrats have less opposition than John Connally at a barbecue for Texas oil millionaires, passed a law in 1969 governing the selection of delegates. Little noted then was a provision that left the selection of delegates to the 1972 state convention to local town committees elected in 1968, even though new local committees would be elected in 1972 more than ten weeks before the convention.

This piece of legislation would never have been forced to

crawl out from under its rock and into the light of day if McGovern hadn't swept the state's primary on April 25. When he did, McGovern swept many new local committees into power with him. These new local committees were less than pleased to learn they wouldn't be selecting delegates to the upcoming state convention, and they let the press and the legislature know about it.

The Democratic heavyweights in the legislature who had hitched their wagons to Muskie's burned out star were still smarting from the defeat at the hands of McGovern's "unknown" national convention delegate slates when the state delegate selection story promised them another inglorious moment in the sun. They quickly moved to get a new law through the legislature.

But even in the Massachusetts legislature it takes time to pull the strings and by the time the law was changed and new delegates were chosen by the new local committees, less than three weeks to convention time remained.

The process used in selecting the delegates to serve on the convention's platform committee was something like a professional sports winter draft without scouting reports. The candidates and party officials called up state party chairman Charles Flaherty of Cambridge and told him who they wanted on the platform committee. He had to balance his selections according to ideology, sex, age, minority group interests, etc. without benefit of a scorecard.

The press made a big deal about how the liberal activists took over the platform committee. The members of the platform committee I talked with said there were 45 members; Flaherty later said he appointed 57 people, and the wire services said 60. Speculations about the ideological drift of the membership are no sounder than guesses about how many members it actually had.

Whoever they were, the members of the platform committee received, on the average, less than 24 hours notice as to when their hearings to work out a platform were. A final draft of the platform was completed about 36 hours before the opening of the convention. And then the party almost didn't have enough money to print a copy of it for each delegate. (There weren't enough funds to print a copy of the rules for each delegate.)

Before most of us who were delegates on June 10 had settled into our seats, co-chairman of the convention and speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, David Bartley, pushed through a motion, on a voice vote in a hockey rink not designed to be an accoustical wonder, to prevent debate on the platform.

Even Flaherty couldn't swallow that, but his attempt to get the matter reconsidered failed.

Several amendments to the platform were considered, again without debate, and then as I was returning from fetching a hot dog for my growling stomach, the convention was adopting the platform on a voice vote.

However much I might be in sympathy with a platform that calls for an immediate withdrawal of all military forces from Indochina and the elimination of criminal penalties for possession of marijuana, I can't say it was adopted in a very democratic fashion. When the vote for adoption was taken, perhaps half of the fifty people in the delegation I sat with knew what was happening.

The platform dispensed with, the convention launched into nominating speeches for the candidates. They uniformly told the delegates the candidates were honest, loyal, courageous--in short, all the qualities of an ideal dog. The one exception among eight candidates was George Sommaripa. He outlined what he would do about taxes, welfare, the war, and the Pentagon budget--which he would reduce even more stringently than McGovern.

Regrettably Sommaripa was eliminated after the first ballot when he failed to get the 100 votes needed to stay in. It is worth wondering why the first vote totals for Sommaripa were 103 and then revised downward on the final tally to 98, or just enough slippage to get the dangerous radical out of the running.

After the first ballot there was Droney, who was obviously unacceptable to anyone but a Neanderthal; Boston City Councilor Gerald O'Leary; Hampden County Register of Deeds John Lynch; and Norfolk County District Attorney George Burke. The major known element about each was as follows: O'Leary let his hair grow and suddenly had become a supporter of McGovern; Burke kept dropping in and out of the race; and Lynch told me I should vote for him since we both come from west of Worcester, the more sparsely populated section of the state.

That left me as well informed about the candidates as about the contestants in the last mayoralty race in Sioux City, Iowa.

When the nominating speeches were over balloting began immediately, with no opportunity for caucuses, so our knowledge of the candidates remained at the primitive level.

It really didn't matter, since the state committeemen and committeewomen who were acting as tellers in the different delegations had, for the most part, taken upon themselves the responsibility for determining how their delegations should vote.

Some examples: my own Hampshire-Franklin delegation was challenged on the fourth ballot and revealed Lynch had received 13 more votes than were present and O'Leary had been deprived of 3; on the fifth ballot the Hampden County delegation was challenged and half of Lynch's 46 votes there disappeared; on the fifth ballot the First Bristol delegation was challenged and O'Leary's 42 votes sank to 12. The litany of fraudulent counts could go on for pages.

The message, however, had long since been made clear--those in control of the mechanics of democracy, the vote counters, were less than enthusiastic about letting it work.

For those not so alienated by the convention as to jump ship and let the Massachusetts Democratic Party die of blood poisoning, there was another message: the mechanics of democracy need to be as guarded at the convention as at the polling place back home.

For those going to Miami important questions were raised: how much time will there be for consideration of a platform? If there is a deadlock, how much time will there be for considering dark horse candidates? And can any candidate or stance on the issues generate support if it comes from a convention that the public has written off as crooked?

The answer to the last question is obvious in the recent action of the Massachusetts Legislature. Both houses voted overwhelmingly to abolish party conventions in Massachusetts. In the view of the legislature, and many other people, the image of the convention as an instrument of democracy is beyond resurrection.

Edward J. Hogan

THE PRIMARY SYSTEM IS SOUND

Early last April, Senators Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) and George Aiken (R-Vt.) proposed a bill for a constitutional amendment that would establish a national presidential primary. It is not difficult to find fault with the present primary system, but the alternatives seem so poor by comparison that I find it hard to grasp why the Senators made their proposal in the first place.

Perhaps the neat, one-shot decisiveness of a single primary is appealing to a national politician, but I can scarcely see how it would serve the people better.

The primary election was one of a wide range of reforms advocated by the Populist movement in the 1880s and 90s as a means of giving voters something more than the privilege of choosing between the 2 candidates that the leading politicians of the major parties had selected for them. The first statewide primary was held in Georgia in 1898, and by 1916, 24 states had enacted them. After that year, many states dropped their primaries as it became clear that the politicians were still dominating the selection of presidential candidates.

Up to and including 1968, both the Democratic and Republican conventions have more often than not gone against the most consistent primary winner. In 1912, Theodore Roosevelt attracted more popular support than William Howard Taft, but the nomination was Taft's. In 1952 and 1968, the Democratic nomination went to men who had contested no primaries.

After the stormy '68 Democratic Convention, when candidates representing the strong public dissatisfaction with the country's continuing Vietnam involvement were unceremoniously pushed aside by a phalanx of party "pros" with their eyes fixed on Hubert Humphrey, even Richard Daley realized that it was time for a change. The Mayor of Chicago was the first witness to testify before the McGovern Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection--the Democratic reform committee.

The McGovern-Fraser Commission (Sen. McGovern left the chairmanship when he declared his candidacy, and Rep. Donald Fraser took it over) fundamentally altered the way the Democratic Party chooses its convention delegates. Perhaps the most important reforms were those that required that at least 75% of delegates

(in the non-primary states) and delegate candidates (in primary states) be chosen by caucus open to all rank-and-file Democrats, and that this process take place within the calendar year of the election. These reforms were basic in giving all Democrats the ability to get involved at the beginning of the nominating process for the first time. (In 1968, by the time McCarthy announced his candidacy, many delegates to the convention had already been chosen by party leaders.)

The 24 primaries held this year, controlling 67% of Democratic delegates, made it essential that a candidate earn concrete voter support previous to the convention. This year, unlike 1968, the primary season served as a meaningful barometer of what issues the Democratic voter was concerned about.

Without the primaries, the depth of public dissatisfaction with the way the federal government functions--for example, from the way it collects taxes to the way it spends them--may have remained submerged and largely unrecognized and unheeded by the Democratic Party as it chose a candidate to seek out the weaknesses of his opponent.

By the end of the 1972 primary campaign, Sen. McGovern emerged from obscurity as the strongest candidate for the nomination because he most accurately reflected the desire for change among those who voted in the Democratic primaries.

The stage has now been set for an election one of the most important functions of which will be to test how widespread the desire for change is in the country as a whole.

The proposal for a national primary would be, from the Democratic point of view, a repudiation of meaningful rank-and-file participation because it would re-institute a situation in which only the candidates with the most previous exposure--not necessarily the ones with the greatest potential voter appeal--would have a chance of being nominated. It has been said that politics is too important to be left to the politicians. A national primary would put the politicians, the pollsters, and the media firmly back in control.

It is true that primaries have a number of glaring flaws, not the least of which are their myriad variations from state to state.

But the present primary system is fundamentally sound, for it

tests the views and abilities of candidates challenging the incumbent, and requires them to personally seek out the views and needs of voters in many parts of the country. The candidate who successfully passes the primary hurdle, and the endurance it demands, is likely to be more qualified to seek the presidency than he was when he first announced himself.

- - - - -

Source note: Some of the information on the history of primary elections came from U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT'S GUIDE TO THE '72 ELECTIONS, pp. 91-98.

Richard Latta

feet in my head,
dreams walking all
night long,
lifting, trying to
move my heavy body into
the next hour.

at night when i almost
lean in sleep, my
heart talks so loud and
fast like the feet of a
charging dinosaur trapped
in my chest so very long
ago.

THE AGONIES OF CHRIST

I. Temptations

Christ in the early hours of the evening
Watched two young lovers kissing
In an orchard of olive trees.
He saw the young man's hand
Massage the girl's nipples anxiously.

Christ saw an old man uncage a sparrow,
Cut off its head, and set the trap again.
Yet Christ did not give in to his envy
To trap and fell the birds of sorrow.

II. The Flagellation

The whips of soldiers cut his back
The Whip's steel-ball tongue licked
His white, emaciated skin.
Caressing shivers induced
His tense nerves to deep pain;
Soon his skin blushed vivid red
At having been kissed by the whip
So many times with such passion.
The warm blood pulsed faster
Finally spurting free
From its hot cover of skin.
The body fell sprawling and spent
Sanctified and prepared,
Eager for its crucifixion.

--R. Daniel Evans

arise and going now

I will tie up my wanton laugh
and go now into the midnight...
my mother my sister,
she rides alone past the hysterics
of the moon
a sheltering madness and a
feel for my inner empty rooms.

I did not ask her here
she does not acknowledge my breathing
beating up against the walls
of her womb.
she does not seek to own me
her caress is free and does not barter,
she asks nothing of me
only takes up the confusions
planted in my eyes by cruel human hands
casts them into singing...
and when she goes
it is greyly
and she only speaks to say
that she will
come to me
again.

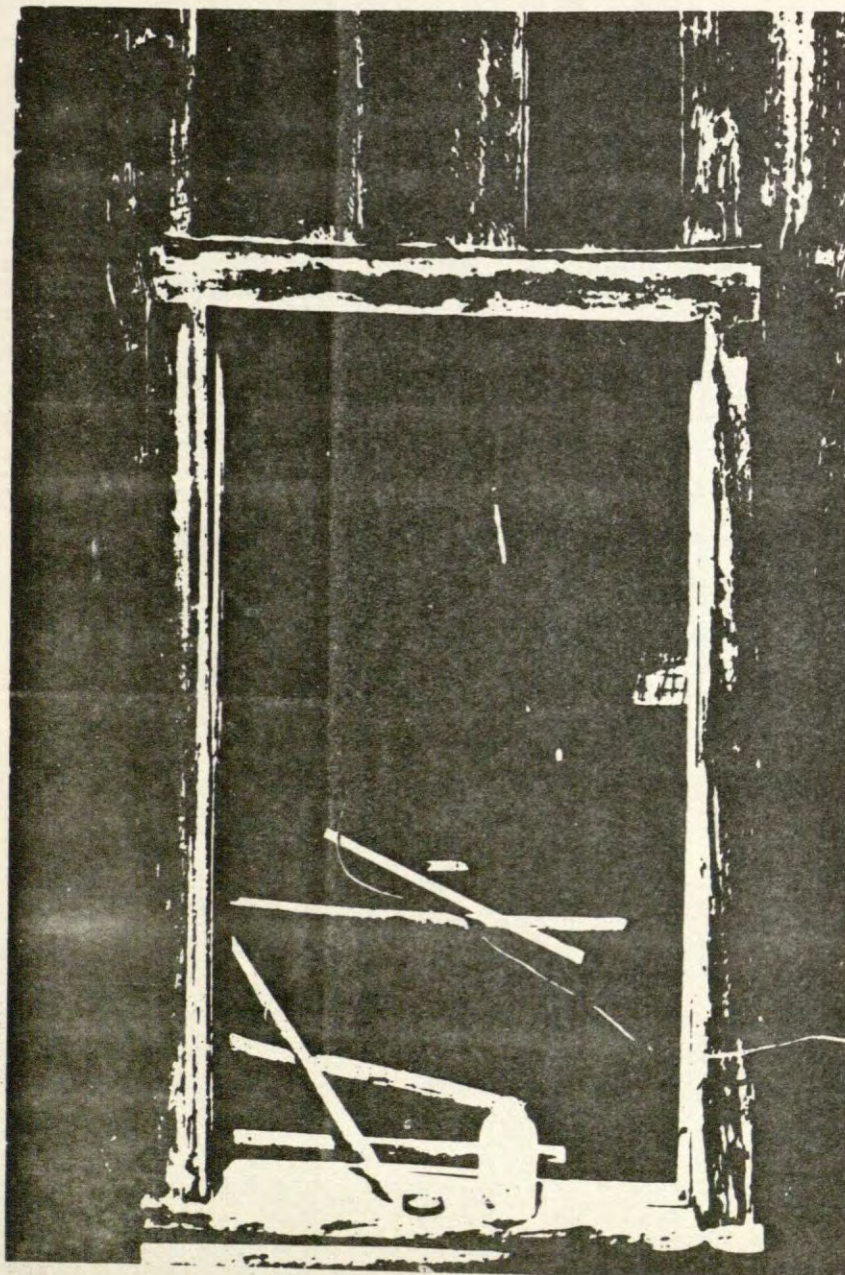
Angela Bristow

TOY FOR A GROWN-UP

My time-portal, my stiff, medicinal flesh
My doll-heroïn
Enrobed in corseted semi-enormity
Strapped to transistors and ideas
Wired with customs and ritual visits:
Precious and rare gossamers of hard-crack sugar
Which no strain of dormant imagination could or should break!
Bloated tower of strength
Which can be lifted and cuddled weightless
As a huge teddy-bear!
Lightened of its last shit
 Shell of motherhood, drained of poison
 My poor, sweet little fanthom doll;
Your arms hang loose under your gestures.

Paulette Carroll

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Roger Camp

SWEDE HOMESTEAD

I watched the ant dart
and swerve such
rapidity its precision
like electric charges
feeling forth over foreign surface
regarding the perimeter crest
seeking familiarity
of deer droppings and pine
makes a quick exit
at the first chipped porcelain edge, the dish
somewhat imperfect
victim of man, its creator
and time.

Not altogether unlovely it lies
the handpainted morning glory
and what was once
the ecstasy of a butterfly
faded and filmed
with one licked finger
I pull a fleck across
another and
another
restoring shafts
of past elegance then leave,
the gleaming disk
still burning through my mind
dust of ages
settling on my tongue.

Molly Beck

SMALL PRESSES/Received * * * * *

NEW COLLAGE, edited by A. McA. Miller, P.O. Box 1898, Sarasota, FL 33578. ca. 35pp. \$1.00/copy 3.00/year

Primarily a poetry quarterly. Poets include John Holbrook, Chris Armen, David Haken, and John Horn. Also: several pages of much varied drawings and photos; and reviews. A very well-produced mag. From a poem by Howard Norman, "'I'm Bored,' he said":

No birds? Nowhere do you hear
air, leaves, rustle with crows
amplifying their march
into the cornfield? No woodpecker
who wants the back of your head?

What is it you want, anyway?
to do the dead man's float
in your own blood?

Look there. It's night. The
quarter moon hangs its dim hammock
Dream yourself up there and sleep on it.

RESPONSE: A CONTEMPORARY JEWISH REVIEW, edited by Bill Novak, P.O. Box 1496, 415 South St., Waltham, MA 02154. 120pp. \$1.50/copy 7.00/year 5.00/students.

Most of the content of the Winter 1971-72 issue appeared to be of interest primarily to Jews, but many of the offerings were of general appeal. Some of the contents, which I sampled: "Panthers And Jews" by Albert Axelrad ("My position is that we Jews should strive to become the allies of ... militant groups in their domestic struggles for liberation."); "A Conversation With Palestinian Students"; "The Left In Israel"--interview with Amos Kenan. Also: "Two Views of Zionism". RESPONSE is a very literate publication, very easy to read, and it has a good format.

CAMELS COMING, edited by Richard Morris, P.O. Box 703, San Francisco, CA 94101. 6pp. \$7.00/12 issues. Irregular. No. 1 is out. Morris edited the poetry mag CAMELS COMING from Reno, Nevada, 1965-1968. The revived publication will be primarily comment on small press subjects and people, including poets, etc. The editor says the price is negotiable: if you haven't got \$7, send a dollar for postage--you'll get issues on an irregular irregular basis. O.K.?

THE LAST WORD: You may take it as an article of faith as I write on this 22nd day of July, that there WILL be a July issue. Believe me!