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laughing Ida haunts the churches:  
drunks and bastards saying prayers  
parsons and petticoats  
(for all the gossip's true);  
laughing Ida lingers by the stairs  
where drunks hide bottles  
or reveal then  
and the girls descend laughing  
(as even Ida laughs)  
glowing from their recent rendezvous.

God (if he is) watches over  
these laymen; those who haven't  
and (more often) those who have.  
some think it corrupt or pathetic  
but old ghostly Ida just laughs.

Michael Ward



Willie gets lied to a lot these days.  
People come and say, "You're not  
going to die."

then they shake their heads and  
walk away  
in tears.

(Willie forgets it's been this way  
for years.)

When he's dead they'll stand around  
and remark

how very dark and clean lies the hair  
upon his head;

they'll say how much like himself he  
looks and cry

some more

(though that clean suit and tie  
Willie never wore).

But long before he's in the ground  
their tears will end;

for when Willie died, so died his  
only friend.

MICHAEL WARD.

## IN THE DOGHOUSE

Apparently we defile lawns  
and a hundred of us  
having been bestered enough  
snap back. And these  
are the uncontrollable ones.  
Let them take what comes,  
I wouldn't give a cent  
for the lot.

However, on the subject  
of control, nuisance  
and defiling, may I bring up  
the subject of children. My estimate  
is that 80% of them  
are uncontrolled  
and there's not a parent  
in sight.

They shriek from dawn  
to dusk, desecrate fences,  
invade property, knock down  
flowers. They steal, fight  
and blaspheme. But they're forgiven  
on the grounds they're just kids.

richard snyder



## TIME FACE

Time such a big watch face  
Now I'm in second grade  
I can't wear it on my wrist  
It's too big for our apartment  
Too big for the Park  
It's moon big  
Bigger  
A face with all kinds of hands  
Made of cardboard  
Made of diamonds  
Made of chalk  
Beads  
Little green leaves

Different time for everybody  
In this big swim face  
When I play hookey

I'm on a diamond hand  
So that I'm having my evening meal  
Way before the class is out of school  
And when I'm back at my desk  
I'm on a long long chalk hand  
My wristwatch never knows what time it is  
I go by the big time face  
It has more hands

# Is This Our Dance?

by LEE BRIAN

The orchestra was playing. "That's our song," said Libby. They were sitting at a bamboo table under the marquee. The lights from the swimming pool pavilion shone upon the terrace below them and the grass looked unnaturally green in the bright artificial coloring, as if it were fresh May grass, not the summer's last stand. "Jason, that's our song."

He raised his head toward the men in the orchestra and listened.

"Do you feel like dancing?" asked Libby. "It's our song, you know."

He was a trifle weary, and drinking dry vermouth instead of gin didn't help matters but in his condition gin wasn't supposed to be good for him.

"We've already danced," he said, "and I'm pooped."

"Oh well," she said, "I wanted to talk to the chef anyway. I must find out what sauce he used on the asparagus." Belatedly Jason remembered that he had praised the asparagus.

"Don't make a production out of it," he said.

"And you ate every single one of them on your plate," said Libby.



The chef couldn't be located; he had left the club but she had his number at home, and Jason knew she'd badger him into giving up the recipe. Now the matter disposed of, she turned to the music again. "It's our song, Jason. Don't you remember at the old Columbian Club on Ervav Street? It was Freida Harriman's coming-out party. I wore a lovely tulle dress and you sent me a beautiful orchid. Don't you remember? I kept it for days. I'd never had an orchid before, And we drank champagne out of lavender glasses."

"The Old Columbian Club," he said. "You couldn't get into that place without an orchid."

"You danced five dances straight in a row with me, and then Momma--bless her heart--came up and said, Honey, this is ridiculous. What will people say?"

"Yes, your mother would worry about what people would say."

"Please don't criticize Mamma. She admired you from the first. You were so tall and you had all those interests like baseball--and you weren't everlastingly talking about cotton and bank<sup>kk</sup> stocks." She sighed. "You were so virile."

"Yes, you know where--"

"Jason!" She leaned over and slapped his wrist lightly. "Don't be so naughty."

"I'm not. I'm just reflecting on the passing of a lifestyle."

"I have no idea what you're alluding to," she



said. Well, I'll say one thing for you--you always knew how to praise Mamma's culinary skill."

He made a gesture with his hand. "You wanted to listen to the music."

Her face when she moved her head so that the light fell upon it had a soft unfamiliar look. Or maybe it was the way he remembered it from earlier times. But she had a way of spoiling his memories. "If I live to be a hundred," she said, "I'll never forget that song. 'It's Three O'Clock in the Morning.' After I heard it at the club I went right down to Whittle's and bought the music. I used to play it on the upright we had in the upstairs sitting room, and Mamma would bring in a dish of her homemade peppermint ice cream and Lady Fingers. She used to buy them at the New York Bakery. My, they were delicious."

After his minor attack last year Libby had proved a splendid nurse and knew how to make him gain back the weight he had lost. She'd have roast beef au jus for dinner or broiled chicken or filet mignon or porterhouse steak, and at the table she'd go into endless detail about her preparations for the meal or she would recall with pleasure celebrated meals from the past. She still talked about the seven course dinner she'd eaten in San Francisco back in 1950, when potage a la julienne and saumon were on the menu, and as newly-weds they'd had bouillabaisse in New York At that French place in the village.

She was still reminiscing when Harry and Thelma walked over to the table, and Jason invited them to sit down. Ordinarily he never fussed over Harry, with whom he had gone through high school then the university (Class of '41), but now he

insisted upon ordering the drinks and signing the check, and when Thelma said, "My husband still wants to dance and I'm just not equal to it," Jason seized the opportunity. "Libby's been wanting to dance this number," he said.

"Jason!" Libby cried. "Harry doesn't want to dance with me."

But Harry did. His stomach was now tremendous and the way his suit coat clung to his rear end made him look obscene. Libby reluctantly took his arm.

Idly Jason watched her swirl among the dancers beyond the door while he listened to Thelma's chatter. "Harry's flying to Washington tomorrow," she said. "Two whole weeks he'll be gone." She too watched the dancers. "I wish he'd lose about forty pounds," she said. "You look so trim."

He sipped his vermouth. "You know why," he said.

"You always were a handsome man," she said. "The first time I saw you I thought there's a man I could go for."

As she talked he was conscious of a slight pressure against his right knee, but she continued to prattle on without reference to the contact below. "Look at him," she said. "He's positively repulsive, how he lets himself go. I can just see him making a pig of himself in Washington."



Jason's blood heated mildly and in his mind as well as down there he felt some delicious stirring and it took him back a quarter of a century. Still listening absently to Thelma, he became conscious of the face of a dancer. There was dark coloring in her eyes. Her lips were full and sensuous. Her face looked familiar, yet remote, like a painting that he might have seen as a boy and then forgotten. Why, it's Libby, he realized. His own plump wife....

And once he identified her he knew why she wanted to dance while the orchestra played 'It's Three O'clock in the Morning.'

It had been that night at the old Columbian and they had been dancing. She had told him to ask the orchestra leader, whose name was Hy Michaelson, to play the number, and he had tipped him ten dollars. He and Libby had danced close together with her moist cheek on his neck and he could still remember how heavily he had breathed, when innocently she had brushed his thigh with her hand.

After leaving the club they had driven out toward White Rock Lake, but on the way they had stopped at a place that served the most divine chocolate ice cream sodas with gobs of ice cream and two cherries on top, and he had patiently waited while she sipped her drink. Later at the Lake he had parked on a promontory next to the rim of the cliff, and with an aroma of perfume and chocolate pervading his senses his hands had explored the hard firm

body--about which he had gone mad during the past six months--and though terrified she had given herself to him.

Ten days later, following that night at the Lake, they had announced their engagement, and then came the plush wedding at the Club, which had rated a column and a half in the morning paper.

It was that damned song, he thought, and seeing again in his mind that frightened little girl in the car, he got up without excusing himself to Thelma, and walked out to the dance floor. He tapped Harry on the shoulder.

Libby once they started to dance whispered, "I'm glad you came. He was stepping all over my shoes." The heady fragrance of that perfume made him aware of her heavy breasts that pressed uncomfortably against his chest. That same overpowering perfume, he thought. She hadn't changed it in years.

"Isn't it a beautiful song, Jason? Do you recognize it now?"

He nodded. "That's all they seem to be playing tonight."

"I asked them," she confessed. "They played it on the night you proposed."

"No. I didn't propose until later. The night at the Lake. The first time--" And he buzzed in



her ear while a vision of her naked flesh under his touch filled his mind.

"Jason!" He felt her hand on his elbow.

"Good God, Libby! Who's going to hear us out here?" But a cold wind blew against his heart.

"I don't like to hear you talk that way," she said. "It's vulgar." She moved closer to him. "Besides, I remember distinctly the night you refer to. We stopped at Sammy's and had Italian spaghetti with a new kind of mushroom sauce, the recipe for which Mr. Luigi Pirano was kind enough to let me have over the phone when I called a few days later. He used to make the finest Welsh rabbit in the entire city."

He touched the hard gritty outline of her girdle; the spongy flesh seemed to melt into nothingness under his touch. For the remainder of the dance he dragged his feet. He couldn't stand the heat in the room, and at eleven they started for home. In the car she chatted about one thing and another. But he was quiet. "You heard about Harry?" she asked. "He's taken up with some little manicurist he met in Washington. What some men won't do!"

She waited until he made a signal light. "It's absolutely shameful," she said. "But he has his side too. Thelma never prepared a meal for him --- she couldn't even boil water. You know, I'm so grateful to dear Mamma for giving me all her priceless recipes."

He was still silent, but in the moment remembering Thelma's knee pressing against his under the table he felt less tired.

"Can I fix you a snack?" Thelma asked a few afternoons later when he came out of the garage into her kitchen. "There's some cold cuts from the delicatessen."

"No thanks," he said. He noticed a section of the morning paper had been cut out. "It's just an ad," she said. "Neiman-Marcus is having a sale on those lovely cotton prints. I just hope they have my size." Right now she was wearing a sheer silk lavender housecoat with fur trim. "Would you like some sherry?" she asked.

"Sherry's not my drink," he said. "In fact, I don't want anything to drink--"

"What would you like?"

"Some air. You keep it so hot in here."

"It's Harry. He likes an over-heated house," she explained and led the way upstairs.

She had put out a pair of blue pajamas for him; they lay on the chaise lounge. The other afternoon he had grumbled at having to keep on his shorts. At his age too! These were Harry's, judging by their size. Thelma's dress and underthings were strewn



about on a chair and on the floor, but he had called her on short notice just after lunch and she hadn't had time to tidy up.

She had sprayed the room with scent. It was sweet and cloying, and why in the devil had she sprayed so much. He noticed now that the silk covers of the double bed had been drawn back. She had a taste for colored sheets, she had confessed the the other afternoon. These were pink, to match the walls.

"Are you sure I can't get you something to drink?" she asked. "Harry's got a small bar up here in his den."

"No," he said. "Nothing."

It was the heat again. It pounded in his temples. He walked to the glass porch and threw open the door. The leaves on the trees behind the garage seemed to shine silverly in the sun, reflecting, as it were, the odd effect of moonlight, and for a moment he was reminded of the Lake. He could see the trees and he could feel the faint breeze of that remote summer night and Libby's small tight breasts pressed against him and the over-sweet scent of her perfume. What a silly thing to remember--that shaky passion, and he himself weighing only one hundred and twenty-two pounds. He must have been a sight! And afterwards as if it had been the most ordinary day in the world she had eaten Italian food, and when he kissed her he could smell garlic.

He tried to lift the cretonne spread from the

bed but it was carefully bound to the sides beneath the mattress and he could not loosen it.

Thelma was behind him. "I'll do it." she said. She pulled the bedspread off easily with a vigorous sweep of her hand and as she leaned over to fluff the pillow he could see the shape of her buttocks through the housecoat. At the same time he realized that she had been nibbling on chocolates, for she had put the box on the stand and had wiped her hands on the housecoat before she touched the spread. French creams were her passion she had told him Monday.

"It's chilly out here," she said as she finally straightened up, "and we mustn't forget to draw the ee shades. I'll have to change into something else. Oh Jason, are you sure it's all right here? I don't want you catching cold."

"I'm not going to catch cold, not in this mild breeze," he said.

From the doorway she turned, "Jason, you won't mind if...afterwards..I rush off to town. I simply must go to Neiman's."

"Oh, you darling," she cried and hugged him suddenly. Her breath, he couldn't help noticing, already reeked of chocolate.





Gymnasium Rime

She was all spangled, and jeweled, and deviled,  
Frisking on the wood. Her special dark rogue moved,  
Spinned with her spin, tried glide in her glide,  
As they seemed swim through the sweating air.  
Her thighs rippled into his--and as sudden  
Were away: leaving turbid him to  
Squint through fray and long after her fair  
Form. His blood roiled for and his mind spoiled  
for a  
Tumble in the car.

(He really didn't strain;  
he was thinking, in a furrow of his brain,  
to rip her chain, snatch those swaggering  
ringlets from her ears, and pull her dress  
straight down below her knees and roger her  
until the band went home, the sheep went home; and  
they, moonlit and alone, eventually  
could tire and part. She'd even like it

Because his mind could so quick strip her of  
Appurtenance, the lady concentrated on her dance.

Bruce Robison



From Oscar Wilde, on hearing of John Betjman's appointment as poet laureate:

You aped me in the parlor; you aped me in the hall; you aped me on the rising; you aped me at my fall.

But now you will not ape me. There is no point, you see. You've risen far above me. You're Royal Chimpanzee.

KATHY

I miss her as I miss the mistletoe, the hanging branch, the dead tree burning now with fruit and flower.

Old friend, I miss her as the apostrophe of life, door to door, cigarette smoke kissed to the window of my eye. Acrid and angel, tears and boisterous laughter--"gross" was her favorite word, but delicate her soul.

I miss her because, tall as she was, they didn't come any taller--and Santa Claus, on his midnight runs, doesn't leave her chimney out.

## H A Y S T A C K S

### I

#### ( On The Porch )

She sat in the white wicker chair out front  
Shaded from the California sun

And looked out on the sparsely leaved trees  
And the rows of polished houses across the street,

Poised the clipboard on the railing and  
Supported it with the tips of her knees,

Holding her colors in her left hand,  
Brush in her right with the waterglass

On an arm of the wicker, ready to begin:  
Grover City -- The First Day of Spring; 9,

The ninth in a series she'd begun the year  
They moved here, having become so enchanté

With Southern Springs she vowed to do one every  
Year in a study sort of like Monet's

### II

But today she made no sense of the tangled leaves  
And branches all skittering around in the breeze,

Not sure whether to put in this branch or that,  
Whether it was too small to worry about

Or would it be an accurate portrayal  
Otherwise, and whether to include



The huge limb they had cut from the magnolia  
Last Saturday because it had died during

The winter or to put it in as she had  
In all the others or just what, and it

Was so mercilessly hot besides she had  
To keep fanning herself with the scrap paper

Even though when she started painting again  
And stopped fanning she was hotter -- and when

The glass fell over god knows how and the dirty  
Water spilled all over her new smock

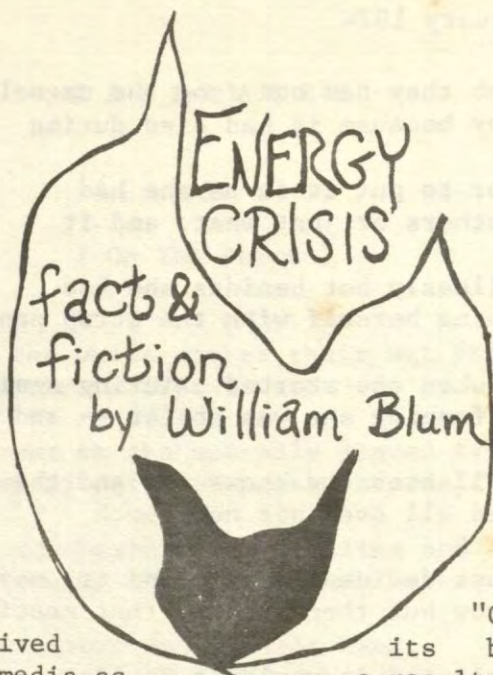
Well, she just decided to quit and try maybe  
Again tomorrow but then she had that meeting

With the girls and it wouldn't really  
Be the first day anymore...

Whereas her husband was pleased to lie in the  
hammock  
Out back and watch the leaves fluctuating  
With the sky, green blue, green blue, all day long.

Patrick McGrath





THE TERM "CREDIBILITY GAP" received its baptism in the news media as a result of America's military engagement in Southeast Asia. During the war years, the term was employed to describe the disparity between the official U.S. version of the war and the American public's perception of the conflict.

MUCH TO the Nixon Administration's dismay, the "credibility gap", along with its attendant erosion of public confidence in government, has persisted in both the media and the national consciousness despite the peace with honor realized on January 28, 1973. No sooner was the Vietnam cease-fire operational than rampant inflation and the Watergate Affair became the symbols of continuing popular antipathy for constitutional authority.

RECENTLY, however, Watergate and inflation have been giving way as indices of social skepticism to a development which promises to widen the credibility gap still further. The development, of course, is the Energy Crisis, the enigmatic depletion of the world's oil and gas supplies which



took America by storm last spring and summer.

BECAUSE the economic measures taken by the Nixon team to deal with the crisis (permission to the oil industry to raise gasoline prices, ban on Sunday gasoline sales, reduction of heating fuel for homes, stores and industry, and so forth) adversely affect the daily lives of most Americans, a clear understanding of the energy dilemma is vital. The task, however, is extremely difficult, even for a public which has grown sour on big business, politicians and the federal government. To distill a workable analysis of the Energy Crisis from the unwieldy mass of data which has circulated through the major media during the past few months, an intensive ongoing investigation is needed. The following is a contribution to that ongoing process.

## THE OIL MONOPOLIES

A MERE SEVEN OIL COMPANIES, the fabled "Seven Sisters", own roughly 70% of oil production machinery and 50% of refining capacity in the non-Communist world. Of these, five are American owned: Exxon, the largest U.S. corporation in terms of total assets; Texaco, the third largest; Gulf, ranked sixth; Mobil, number seven; and Standard Oil of California (SoCal), the ninth largest. Together, these companies control assets in excess of \$60 billion.

CONTROLLING INTEREST in four of the five American oil giants is enjoyed by two families: the Rockefellers, whose empire includes Exxon, Mobil and SoCal; and the Mellons, who hold Gulf Oil.

THE ANNUAL SALES and profits reaped by the oil majors staggers the imagination. The table below lists the 1972 sales of the five American majors in terms of billions of dollars:

Exxon.....	\$20.3
Mobil Oil.....	9.2
Texaco.....	8.7
Gulf.....	6.2
SoCal.....	5.8

THE OIL TRUSTS are able to realize their super profits because they completely dominate the processes of oil production and distribution. In the jargon of economics, Big Oil constitutes a "vertical" monopoly. From the point of extraction from the ground to the refining stage and the point of purchase at the filling station, the same corporations and their subsidiaries set the prices. At each step along the way, lucrative earnings are recorded.

THE OIL MAJORS are not monopolies in the sense that a single holding company directs the activity of the various majors from above, but rather because the oil trusts have effectively eliminated any serious price competition among themselves. It is no accident that gasoline prices at Gulf stations closely approximate those at Exxon and Texaco.

ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL, the monopolist tendencies among the oil majors are even more pronounced. Here the oil trusts all but abandon their individual identities to form a world-wide cartel for the purposes of inflating international oil prices by manipulating the market relations of supply and demand and presenting a common front in negotiations with third-world governments. A trenchant example of such cartelization is the little-known Arabian American Oil Company, owned 25% by the Saudi Arabian government and 75% by the American giants: 22.5% by Exxon, Texaco and SoCal and 7.5% by Mobil.

## THE POLITICS OF BIG OIL

RICHARD BARBER has written in his book THE AMERI-



CAN CORPORATION (1970) that Exxon employs three times as many people overseas as the U.S. State Department and operates a tanker fleet twice the size of the Russian government's. The size and stature of the oil majors has prompted both friends and foes of the industry to characterize Big Oil as a veritable world government.

THE POWERFUL INFLUENCE the oil giants wield over international events is reinforced by the intimate ties existing between Big Oil and the U.S. government. In a nation in which economic wealth is concentrated in a tiny percentage of the population (it is estimated that no more than 200 industrial corporations control 60% of manufacturing assets in the U.S.) the virtual identity of big business and the federal government is nearly taken for granted.

IN THE HEGEMONY exercised by big business (and thus, the oil trusts) in American political life, three factors predominate.

BY FAR the most significant and direct factor in the corporate community's domination of the American state is the fact that the members of Congress, the Cabinet and the governmental and semi-governmental agencies either come directly from the ranks of big business, aspire to someday enter those ranks, hold stocks in large corporations or at the very least are sympathetic to the ideals of corporate capitalism. The Nader Congress Project's study, WHO RULES CONGRESS? (1972), reports that more than two-thirds of the 435 House members have significant outside investments in American companies. Of these, the Nader Project asserts, 54 had investments in the oil industry as of 1969. In the Senate, the investment picture is even more pronounced.

AS FOR THE GOVERNMENTAL and semi-governmental agencies, one example will suffice. The present

chairman of the prestigious Committee on Economic Development, a semi-governmental "think tank" for business planning, is Emilio G. Collado, who doubles as executive vice-president for Exxon Corporation. Other vice chairmen of C.E.D. include the head of General Electric and the chairman of Alcoa Aluminum. In like fashion, emissaries from Corporate America staff other vital agencies, such as the National Security Council and the Council on Foreign Relations.

THE BRIDGE LINKING big business and Big Oil to the government by no means ends at the executive branch. John Mitchell, the Nixon Administration's first Attorney General, rose to prominence as chief counsel to the Rockefeller family. The President himself grew wealthy as a member of the Mitchell firm from 1962-1968. In addition, Henry Kissinger received his political schooling as a personal aide to Nelson Rockefeller in New York.

THE SECOND MAJOR METHOD by which big business and Big Oil dominate the U.S. government is Congressional lobbying. Acting under cover of the First Amendment right to "petition the government for a redress of grievances", the nation's large banks and industries maintain legions of lawyers, public relations experts, ex-government officials, corporate executives and trade association representatives in Washington to put ready cash and pertinent information at the disposal of compliant legislators.

THE OIL LOBBY is generally recognized as the daddy of them all. Although of a nebulous and secretive character its chief concrete manifestation is in the form of the American Petroleum Institute.

THE THIRD ASPECT of corporate control over the American state involves election financing. To run for office or even seek nomination the modern candidate needs money. To run for federal office, he



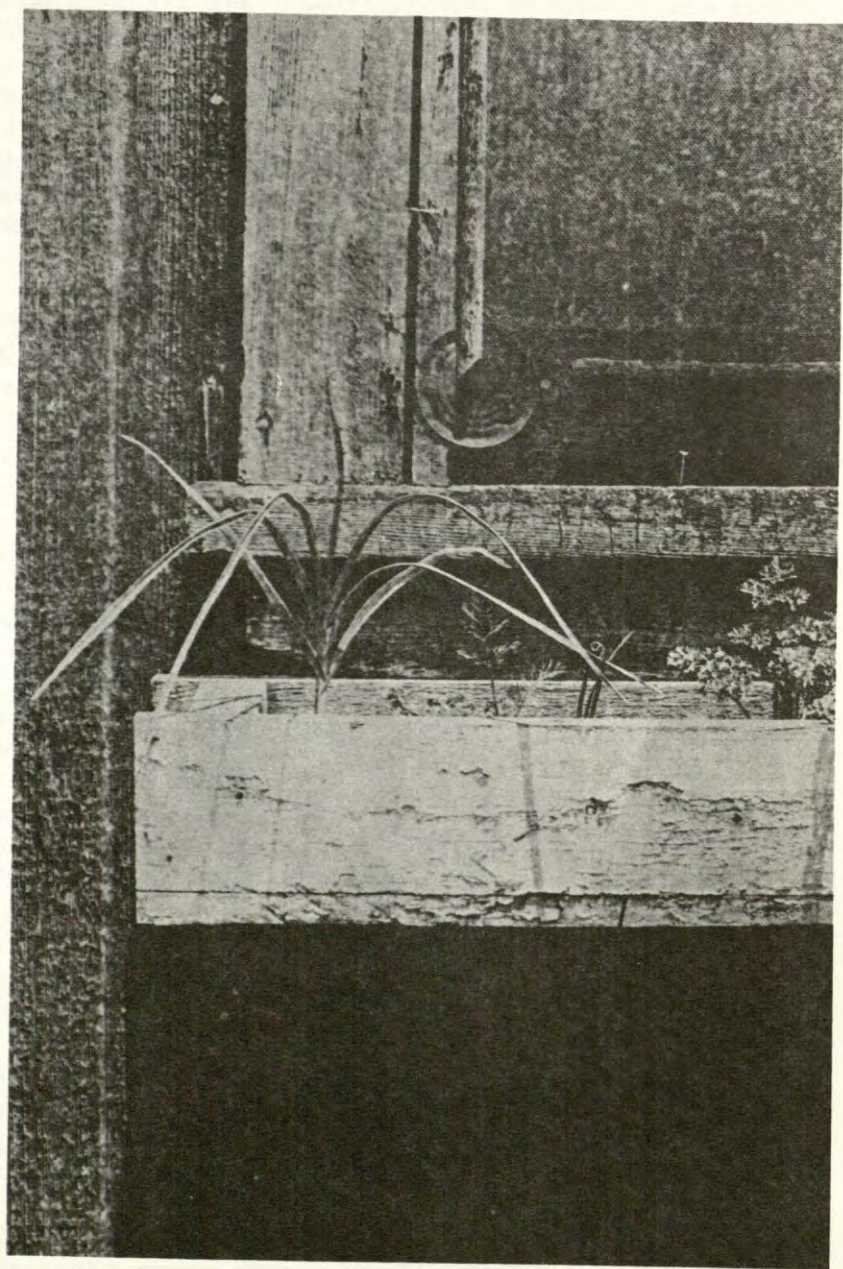
needs great sums of money, which only big business has to spend.

BY NOW it is widely known that Richard Nixon amassed more than \$52 million in campaign contributions for the 1972 presidential race. Of this sum, an appreciable portion was donated by oil magnates from the Rockefeller and Mellon clans, not to mention contributions from lesser oil barons.

AMONG THE MANY direct economic benefits received by the oil industry as a result of the political influence it commands are the following:

- \* The Oil Depletion Allowance, the gigantic tax credit granted to the oil industry on the assumption that oil reserves are finite and that someday the oil trusts will be out of business.
- \* Numerous tax loopholes, e.g. Gulf Oil paid only 1.2% in taxes on its \$990 million U.S. earnings in 1971.
- \* Direct subsidization of foreign operations: the royalties paid by Big Oil to Third World governments come primarily from American taxpayers.
- \* Weak anti-trust legislation and lax enforcement of the same.
- \* An imperialist foreign policy, e.g., 50% of the oil reserves in the coastal waters of South Vietnam have been purchased by Exxon.

NEXT ISSUE: Mr. Blum's conclusions on why there is an oil shortage; and why energy alternatives based on other than fossil fuels are not being investigated more thoroughly.





## MIDNIGHT

One small dog barks  
three barks at a time  
every three seconds  
but the moon gets no smaller

the night has become  
something we must feel & see  
My eyes are constant as stars  
the same raccoon has tipped  
the same garbage can again

Only the bat catches his prey  
and the wind its sleep

ROBERT WRIGLEY

LOOK IN THE FILES

Each day I rise and peel the layers of my sleep with the bed-sheet  
Until the wrinkled nightmare is as taut as a sail  
Against the morning's weather,  
Ready to be folded; a ritual  
Fit for the last left-over of an idea,  
A flag to tuck under a widow's arm,

I wash off the part of my face that died during the night.  
The leftovers of yesterday's work I pry out of my fingernails.  
Uncovering the unity of large surfaces,  
I return your things to the space they have molded;  
I mate the pieces of the time-puzzle,  
Picking myself out of the distant past.  
New patterns are born at the expense of old ones;  
Stains vanish, and with them the memory of contacts.  
Surfaces retrieve a virgin's beckon.  
In the depth of my chaldrons  
Untouched and over-scrubbed metals  
Melt into a common sheen.  
Alchemy is my truest call;

From stale thoughts I fabricate the virginity  
With which resourceless sorcerers must start;  
I furnish them their tools, free.  
I force the structure of my day-dreams on the spices;  
In the ancient vulgarity of the stewpot, I absorb the intimacy of matter.  
Chemistry dances for my mood, a temple whore dangling



His brewing glands,  
My recipe box is open to all comers.  
Simple, abstract associations are broken  
The Rosemary leaves its place by the Basil  
Called by an obscurer affinity with flesh.  
I ransack God's simple pharmacy shelves,  
Spurning the structural names;  
My hermitism must be more subtle,  
My meaning too remote for complicated words.  
The deepest magic lies in the food  
Which speaks to the palate of each mouth on its own level,  
The child's, the snob's, the bum's, the connoisseur's,  
The young woman's with her sewing,  
The graduate student's on the couch.  
I follow life's example, transmuting  
Into myself what I am not;  
The incense stick becomes a smell,  
The animal flesh a taste, and thence a dream.  
The scientist-philosophers, the ones without the stone,  
Finger like in the digestion, not the belly  
- the process rather than the form.  
And so my magic might be dreaming, and not dream,  
Your reading, not the poem.  
The end is alien to the Alchemist;  
Her nature  
Is in the passage; her work  
Not order, but ordering; the brewing,  
And not the linden tea.  
She is not time; she is  
The link which chains time to itself.

approaching a mastership

another month for donald  
his uneven head has learned the difference  
between money & promises between  
owl & ursa his hard old nose  
has educated itself to discern brass  
deom marble by scent he has taught  
his tongue to manipulate words & soft foods  
he understands many languages doves & squirrels  
wait for him at his window he can tell  
fish eyes from the sun by touch

donald

has learned to cope with the habits  
& unependabilities of demons he has managed  
painting without paints he has mastered  
writing poems with his finger in the air  
he remembers all of them without error  
he has learned to hum to himself to answer  
& address voices he has mastered  
the textures of carpets a woodwork  
pipe fittings & glass he can put  
his pants on correctly he does not mix  
colors or styles of shoes he begins  
another month he can count  
his change & changes he is a kind  
of master in his way

r d swets



The Dry Side

I crossed the bridge,  
I looked down and the wind passed through  
my reflection, easily as a lie through  
history. and I no longer knew myself,  
here on the dry side of the mirror.

I looked for myself on the other side  
and was not there.

I had not crossed, I wanted to be  
on the wet side, where I did not belong.  
Now, I am a part of neither.

Shari Gant

Can you  
Above your being  
Jump, high up to  
Bring the sky down  
To not touch one flower  
You've grown but others  
Blossom; there a field,  
Grasp it, feel it laughing in the sun,  
There a cloud white pure,  
Surrender, surrender  
You who aren't as tall  
To know you can reach  
For stars and here you  
Dream of metals and paper.

Richard Latta



## FIRE DESTROYS 3 MOTEL ROOMS: GIRL

A blaze which firemen said  
was started by a cigarette  
destroyed 3 rooms  
of the Roadside Rest Motel  
and Debbie Vandenbos.

Quivering she lay  
beneath the drifting sheets.  
Her clothes upholstered  
a mahogany chair.  
She held a cigarette  
the soft creamy ash  
balanced.  
As he clicked off the light  
her hand fluttered  
the ash sifted as it fell  
onto the matted shag.  
The mattress sagged  
where he touched.  
Silently she opened  
as they groped  
the carpet turned red.  
It spread to their rhythm.  
Suddenly he saw and ran  
leaving her to gather her clothes  
in the brightening room.  
When she saw there was no way  
she burrowed in the sheets  
still cool  
and closed her eyes.

Damage was estimated at \$35,000.

Elliot Fried

## DISCOVERY

undisturbed

the man with the hatchet

in his back

bullet holes in his chest

picked up the phone

dialed

WE-6-1212

and found the weather to be fine

for the funeral

Guy R. Beining



At the bar

At the bar, after the touchdown,  
during the commercials,  
the stranger next to me  
poked his face in front of mine  
asking,

"How dya make a polack cry?"

"What was that?"

"How dya make a polack cry?"

"I dunno?"

"Take away his garbage!"

Kinda chuckling, he shook my hand,  
brought me a beer and asked,

"Ya know any good ones?"

"Naw not really."

Then the roar of the stadium crowd  
stole our conversation.

Our eyes swung towards  
the color TV and  
the stranger rooted for  
his all time  
favorite  
nigger.

M. C. Case

## SKIING AT STERLING MOUNTAIN, VERMONT

I have fallen again.

The ski patrolman stops,  
picks up my skis, suggests I go back  
the way I came.

My skis fit his shoulders like wings.

With my poles alone

I start back up the chairlift.

I remember how a fly

raped of its wings once staggered  
up my bedroom wall.

Each footprint I leave reminds me of my feet.

I crawl up to wait for a chair

to come gather me into its cold metaled arms  
to begin the slow stagger down.

I have disappointed my friends again.

MARILYN GRAVETT



## BOOK REVIEW:

### **underhanded history of the USA**

by Nick Thorkelson (visuals) and Jim O'Brien (verbals). Radical America, 5 Upland Rd., Cambridge, MA 02140. 68 pages. 75¢.

Supporting Western Civilization on your back for several centuries at a stretch gives you an interesting perspective on things.

One thing you notice is how some creatures do all the work while some other creatures take all the goods & all the credit.

Taking credit for somebody else's work is usually called "history".

So says the narrator who introduces this innovative essay. The authors retell U.S. history from a radical viewpoint, and the results are both entertaining and substantive. This Underhanded History is completely free of dreary radical sectarianism--it is the broad radical perspective presented with clarity and humor.

The contents are presented in comic book style. A high school history teacher is stationed at the top of the page every once in a while to open the discussion of a period or topic with a few familiar-sounding words, such as:

The 17th century colonization of the Atlantic coast by England was conceived in liberty--above all religious freedom for Europeans persecuted by the intolerance of the Old World.

Then comes a quick rejoinder:

The North American colonies were conceived in white supremacy: theft of land from native North Americans and--almost from the start--slavery.



O'Brien develops the discussion from here in additional (but not oppressive) detail, and he is paced all along the way by the enjoyable drawings of Thorkelson, which never fail to spice the narrative with humor. And so it goes throughout.

Contained here are the essentials of any radical critique of the goals, methods, and nature of expanding European capitalism, as embodied in the discovery, settlement, and subjugation of America. Here's another sample:

Columbus' voyage was part of stage one of European domination over the rest of the world. In this stage, the European kings and merchants wanted gold and silver either by finding it, as they did in South America, or by forcing the merchants of India and the Far East to hand over part of their profits. Because Europe had better guns and ships, it was able to get its way.

Nothing here can be disputed. At minimum, it



provides an important perspective that all of us should be aware of. Although we all rail at such things as political corruption, unfair tax laws and, nowadays, the windfall profits of the big oil companies, most of us still aren't fully cognizant of the degree to which so much that we all see as wrong with the world today is the result of the unvarnished pursuit of gain.

There's no doubt where the authors stand. They think there's a better way for people to order their lives. But the radical analysis of what's wrong, as stated so well here, makes important reading for people of differing attitudes as well, however much the difference.



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THE PASTORALS by Robert Kelley. SPARROW I, Black Sparrow, P.O. Box 25603, Los Angeles 90025. 13 pages. 50¢.

Here is an ambitious long poem. One of the dominant themes is a contrast between simple, pastoral and economic, ideological life. The poem has many facets, but one of the more arresting statements is:

...Do not plan,  
do not agitate, all curses are worse  
than the ills they aim at--we have been  
stricken  
ten thousand years through feckless  
ingenuity.

ONE SHOT DEAL, collected by L. Zirlin, P. Oppedisano, and B. Pelosi. Release No. 4 from Release Press, 478 Seventh St., Brooklyn, NY 11215. About 10 pieces.

For reasons of bureaucratic order, and none other, let's call this a "book". A "one-shot deal" can't be a magazine...or can it? At any rate, this work was "printed in a limited edition of 400, on varying grades & brands of paper."

O.K. 400 of what? Well, they say "no two are exactly the same, and I'm not sure whether that refers to just the paper types or also to what's printed thereon. The deal I got included a proclamation for "Animal Liberation Day", that looks like an official pronouncement of the governors of Arkansas and New Jersey, but looking at the way it's done up I'm not sure....an envelope containing a form letter from Hank Aaron dated July 30, 1973. ...a fortune reading from a card combination, and other equally endearing ephemera.

Be the first on your block to corner a copy of this formidable undertaking. You can get your hot little hands on a copy for four bits, I'm sure. And don't forget, the cover features the well-known Larry Zirlin posing as Mr. Human Cannonball.



## THANKS

What can a little extra money do for a small magazine? It can finance the printing plates required for the reproduction of photographs and non-line drawing art work; more varied cover colors and textures; more promotional letters to libraries (libraries being a great way to boost readership); and just cut down our general operating deficit by helping meet the printer's bill.

Those are some of the things we've begun to do recently thanks to a \$400 grant from the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines (CCLM), a private agency funded by the National Endowment for the Arts.

We want to thank CCLM for their support, and also Richard Nixon. One of the few places the President recommended an increase in last year's budget was in funding for the National Endowment.

ADDENDUM: We forgot to print the title of Harland Ristau's drawing on p. 26 of the November/December '73 issue: it is "Study In Line #1".

We try to publish work by beginning writers as well as those more experienced. ASPECT does NOT have an editorial viewpoint for content: all ideas and styles welcome. An exchange of views is encouraged. First issue: March 1969.

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& CCLM (Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines)

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