

guest feature: Mike Horsey, the Ubysey MISSISSIPPI;: A Grim Story

Snap one, two, three pictures of the little girl and her mother entering the school.

A meaty hand slashes the camera away from you, breaking the strap. "Don't go doin' that sort of thing, son," says a gruff voice as you watch a fat sweaty man open your camera and unroll the film. Both are handed back and nothing more is said as the sheriff's deputy disappears into the milling crowd.

Your mistake was to photograph a Negro girl. The place: Mississippi. The time: 1964.

A few days later in Jackson, capital of Mississippi, another problem. You look at a blue Chev police wagon driving by; it comes the other way and you look again and begin to worry.

Turn up a street and get away as it comes toward you. Panic. Run into an alley and stand beside a tumble-down shed for 15 long, hot minutes; then forget your destination and get back to the motel.

Your second mistake was walking alone in a Negro section. In Hattiesburg, south Mississippi, ask a white lunch attendant: "Which way to Mobile Street?"

"Jus' waht part o' Mobile street you want, mistuh?"

The wrong part, in the middle of the Negro section. "You one o' them nigger lovin' commies?" No directions, fumble along and find it yourself. Mistake number three: don't ask the white citizenry where the civil rights workers are.

I spent ten days in Mississippi this September, and found it both a beautiful and deadly place. You learn fast.

Beautiful because it is a green, rolling country with a great river winding through it; deadly because it is hostile to northern newspapermen and student civil rights workers.

This southern state is the last stronghold of massive racial intolerance. The white Mississippian has had more than a century to convince himself he is superior to the Negro, while the Negro Mississippian has spent the same time learning the same lesson.

The civil rights workers and northerners who flooded into Mississippi this summer upset things. The white Mississippian reacted violently to these intruders. Five civil rights workers were murdered; hundreds of workers and ministers were beaten and harassed.

Even the efforts of recent sabotage undertaken by such persons as Nelson Mandela have been aimed at disrupting the country's economy and were not envisaged as acts of terrorism. Mandela explained at his trial that sabotage was intended to scare away overseas capital and to force the white voters of the country to reconsider their position.

The leaders of the country's imprisoned majority have made repeated calls for a world-wide boycott of South Africa. The United Nations has passed a resolution calling for economic sanctions. The International Student Conference and the World Assembly of Youth, (CUS is represented in both bodies) have each called for a boycott.

Efforts to apply economic sanctions have met with some success during the last few years. Denied landing and over-flight rights in Africa, South African Airways has been forced to fly a 900 mile detour on its route to Europe — at a cost of \$3,000 extra per trip.

In 1960, when several European trade union centers launched a boycott campaign, the Johannesburg stock exchange suffered a fall of 600 million pounds. Added to a simultaneous drop in foreign exchange, reverses of twenty per cent, a serious crisis faced the

South African economy. Mr. Ben Schoemann, the South African minister for transport, declared on June 7, 1960, that the country's economy would be jeopardized if the international boycott were extended. The lesson was plain: South Africa was susceptible to economic pressure.

So far, the only major student response in the west to the plea for a boycott has come from Scandinavia. On March 1, 1963, the National Youth Councils of Sweden, Denmark and Norway began an all-out campaign that has significantly slashed trade between their countries and South Africa.

In Scandinavia, the boycott was only one part of a three-pronged

attack on apartheid. Another took the form of a fund-raising drive for material and legal aid to the victims of the South Africa government's racist policy. Third was the educational program undertaken to publicize the apartheid ideology and to make known its consequences.

In spite of such efforts, however, massive British and American investment in South Africa has, until now, offset the effects of the boycott campaigns. In August, Scandinavian delegates to the 5th general assembly of the World Assembly of Youth urged young people all over the world to join the campaign as a last chance for a just and nonviolent

solution. They pointed to their own increasing difficulty in holding the line at home in the face of South Africa's ease in finding new markets.

CUS has responded with a plea to the entire Canadian student community, 150,000 strong, to organize and to act on a scale unprecedented in Canadian student history.

Across the country committees are being set up on every campus. Community education, fund-raising, the implementation of a boycott — the blueprint is bold, requiring thousands of participants — the call to action is out to every student in Canada.

films: David Giffin

Two Early French Films

Jean Vigo's ZERO DE CONDUITE is an interesting survival of that borderline period when producers could not decide whether "talkies" were simply a passing fad.

(The date of the film was 1930, not '33 as the program notes indicated). ZERO DE CONDUITE is to all intents and purposes a sound film; the survival of sub-title cards is vestigial and they are used mainly to indicate shifts in place or time, the idea of making this apparent from the plot itself not having developed. Even today this practice is occasionally resorted to.

The story concerns the experiences of a group of boys in a private school in France, their boredom and loneliness under a mindless system of regimentation, and their eventual revolt against the petty bourgeois tradition aptly symbolized by a school inspector whose tiny stature matches his lack of wit. To prove that conditions in French schools during the period between

the wars are little exaggerated, one need only turn to the autobiographical account of Henry Miller's experiences at Dijon in TROPIC OF CANCER.

The film makes use of several camera tricks, including animation and camera speed both accelerated and slowed down. The best sequence in the film is a slow-motion mock-religious procession of the boys, who, after a tremendous pillow fight in the dormitory, float off-screen in a shower of feathers. A naturalness marks the production which is rare today. Vigo apparently bothered little with re-takes, and if some minor accident occurred during the filming of a sequence, he allowed it to stand in the final print. This naive approach makes the film seem much more real than many of the polished productions being made today. When the passion for correctness sometimes necessitates a dozen takes of a given scene, BLOOD OF A POET

Jean Cocteau's BLOOD OF A POET (1933) is an attempt at surrealist cinema — there is no plot or developing theme of action. Presumably those who admire surrealist painting would be better able to appreciate it than those who don't. But in the cinema, which is quite a different art-form from painting, what is recorded is even more important than how it is recorded. Technique is the handmaiden of inspiration and not its mistress.

IN BLOOD OF A POET, Cocteau does not recognize this, and some of the "blood images" he records are merely repulsive. About 75 per cent of the film's content can be explained on the basis of Cocteau's homo-sexuality; the other 25 per cent doesn't seem to matter much. Viewers interested in exploring Cocteau's use of the Krishna-symbol, however, will find a translation of his long poem, LEONE (written during the Second War), for Dec.-Jan. 1960-61.

poetry: Michael Lushington The plight of Modern Poetry

Poetry finds itself today in the unenviable position of being more honored than read. There are several reasons. In the main, poetry is very much the product of its time. Even the greatest poetry ever written is, to some extent, confined by this elementary fact. At the very least, the terminology with which the poetry is constructed has to be contemporary and this is sufficient to date it as belonging to this or that era. As long as there is a living, continuing tradition of poetry writing, this fact becomes relegated to the relatively unimportant position it really deserves.

This is precisely, or so it seems, what has indeed happened to poetry. It is a fact, and an indisputable one, that people in general no longer read poetry, unless they have to.

There are many factors which have to be taken into consideration when one is making a judgment as to what constitutes good poetry, but first, one has to understand what is being said. It is only after a person has read and understood a poem that he is in the position to make a critical evaluation. If he cannot understand it, he can go no further, even, which is rather unlikely, should he so desire.

If poetry were vitally active, and people were in the habit of reading it, they would appreciate the good poets of the past. It may be advanced that the poetry being written at such and such a present time, be that time Elizabethan, Romantic nineteenth century, or what you will, is the most important to the people of that particular time. It is, as has been stated before, the contemporary with which people associate themselves; it is only when they are able to make this association that they are willing to reach back and learn to appreciate what has come before.

Such a thesis as has been expressed here leads to only one



But once the poetic tradition is interrupted, and people get out of the habit of expecting and enjoying good poetry from contemporary writers, this and similar factors become blown out of all proportion. Poetry becomes relegated to the position more and more, of being nothing other than an academic exercise and less and less an essential factor in the development of a society's culture. And this is the state into which all poetry is rapidly submerging today.

Poetry has existed, and has flourished, for thousands of years. No great civilization has ever been without its poets, and these poets have always occupied a pre-eminent position in that society. They acted as prophet, sage, councillor, mystic and philosopher. They explained and justified the ways of gods to men; they paid tribute to ancient and modern heroes; they glorified the nation; and they criticized when they thought that it was necessary for them to do so. In short, they were the spokesmen of the life of the nation. Through it all, they never lost sight of the axiom that Wordsworth was later to express in one terse statement: "Poets do not write for Poets, but for men." Poetry flourished; everyone who could read was able to understand the poetry being written, and to enjoy it because it meant something personally to them. Those who couldn't read had it read or recited to them, or, in the case of dramatic poetry, were usually able to see it produced so that they too might draw benefit from the words and the thoughts of the poet.

Suddenly all this has changed. People no longer read poetry. After thousands of years, humanity, in general has suddenly turned away from it and towards other means of intellectual enjoyment. People do not suddenly become tired of something they have had for thousands of years; something, which in all that time, was an essential part of their cultural heritage. This is not human nature. The answer to the problem lies elsewhere.

Because most modern poets have lost contact with their audience, they, at least in an indirect manner, are responsible for the overall demise of poetry. Continuity is essential to any artistic tradition, for it is only when an art form is alive that appreciation of it flourishes. People are always on the alert for something new and different, yet something with which they are personally able to associate. Thus, they tend to reject the handed down poetry of previous ages, for the simple fact that it is handed down. Something old is interesting and important only when people can turn to something new, something that is an essential part of the world they live in. When they have the new, and the old takes on a significance, and then it is accepted. Shakespeare would not enjoy the prominence that he in fact does today, were he the sole source of drama. But because there are contemporary plays, plays which have an immediacy about them because they are contemporary, people become interested in them and in drama. And then they discover Shakespeare, and realize that he is not, after all merely an other ordeal designed to plague high school students.

Such would be the case, were there an active tradition in

conclusion, and that is that modern poetry is failing the tradition of poetry. Modern poets insist upon using the medium as a vehicle for self-expression, and they justify their work by claiming that it means something to them personally. Poetry for the sake of poetry, or for that of the poet, is an unacceptable justification. It defeats the basic, essential purpose of poetry, which is the communication of the ideas conceived, or inspired, in the mind of the poet and passed by him down to the people in such a way that they share in the thought he has had. In the final analysis, good poetry is the voice of life, and it is the people who sit in final judgment. It appears that they have done just that, and that they have, by their rejection of it, expressed their dissatisfaction with it. There can be no argument against this position because it is based upon this lack of acceptance.

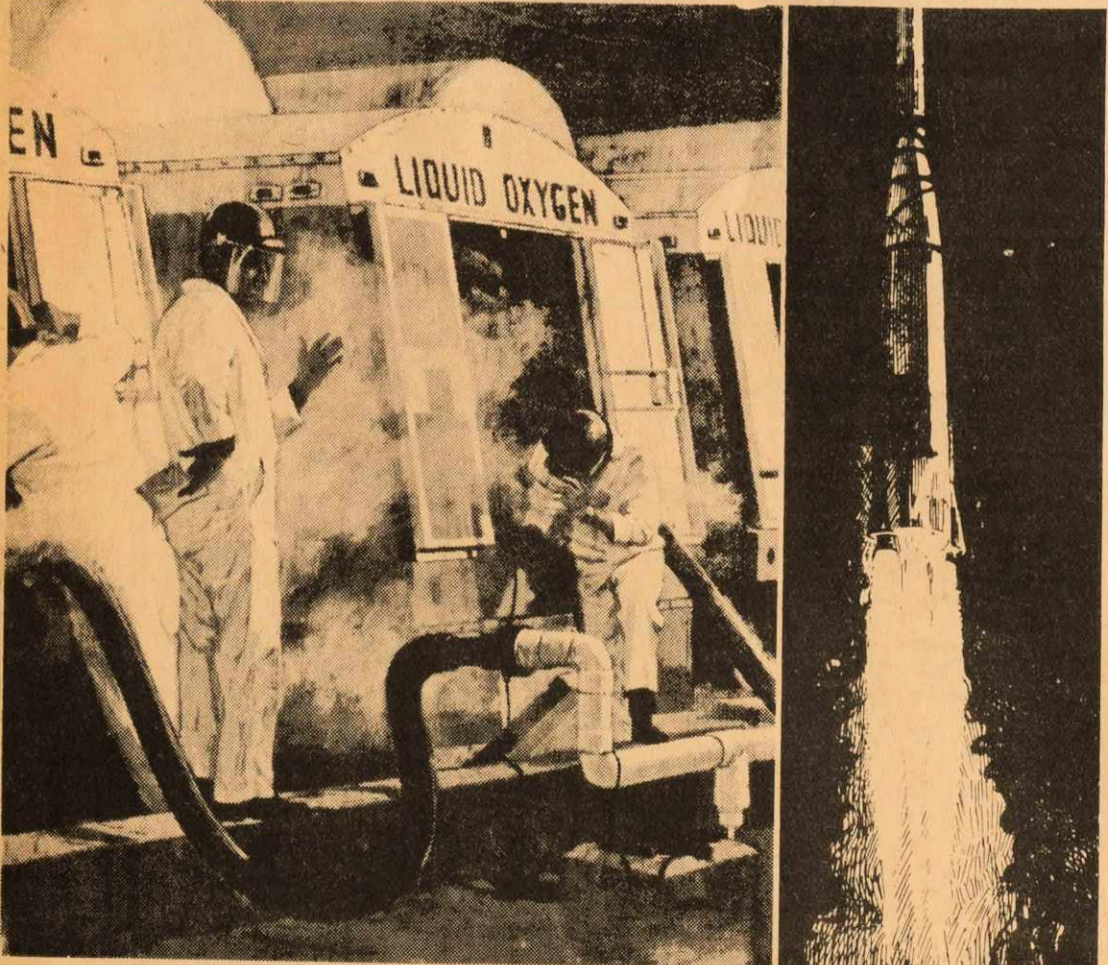
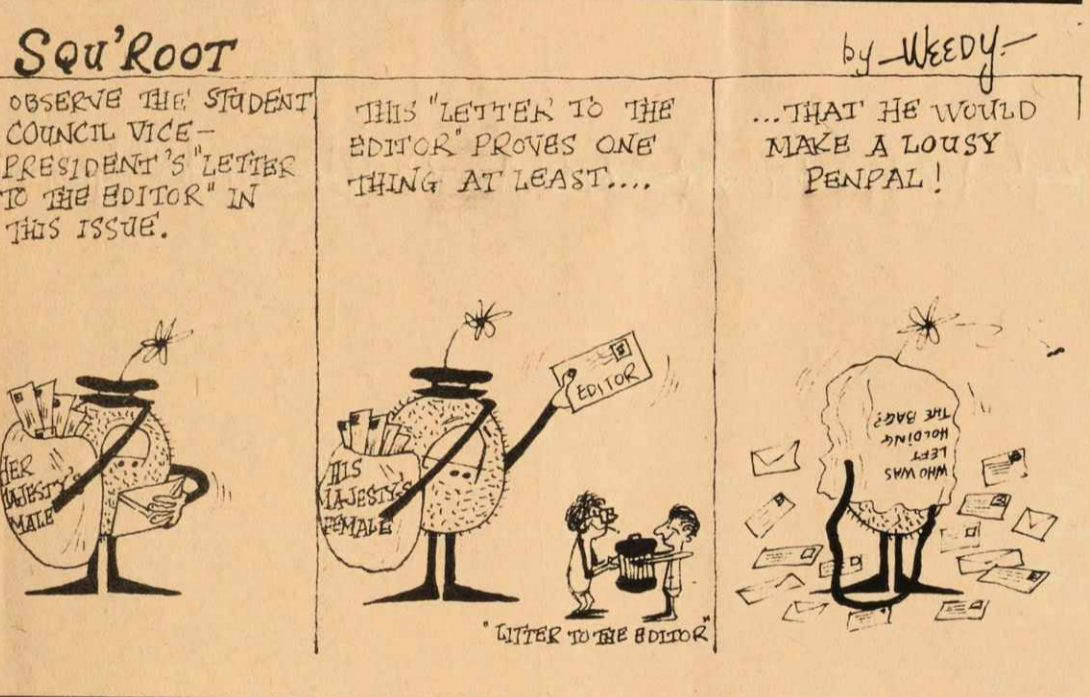
If poetry is to regain the eminence it has held for thousands of years, it must regain its popular appeal. People will again read poetry if it meets up with their standards, but only if this is done. Communication is only the beginning; good poetry must do far more than merely pass on thoughts; but it is a beginning, and it is an essential factor.



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