



Dylan takes his last drink.

Dave Cooper

Theatre Toronto performs an obituary

by Frank Liebeck

It would seem that if Churchill had been on the losing side, he would have been at Nuremberg with the rest of them. But that's an old truth. Might is right, and all that. Rolf Hochhuth's "Soldiers" is not anti-Churchill though, its publicity has been received under false pretenses, for we are presented with England's war hero intact. He merely strives to win a great war.

Clifford Williams' Theatre Toronto has finally come up to prior expectations. With critics from New York coming to see the premiere of the English version of Hochhuth's play, Toronto can be proud to be so well represented.

The play is called, "an obituary for Geneva". The entire second World War was a crime, and the blame rests on many shoulders. The incendiary and phosphorus bombs dropped on German residential areas made an oven out of an entire city. America refused to bomb these districts, but Churchill demanded that the RAF commence. Geneva was never allowed to make rulings on aerial warfare. You might say the sky was the limit.

To win a war, many prin-

ciples are put aside. This is what the Bishop of Winchester, played by Chris Wiggins, argues against. He pleads with Churchill for the lives of the "family of the enemy" who will be put to the torch. But this cannot be considered. Wiggins' portrayal is convincing as the dedicated priest, who sounds a bit like today's anti-war moralizers. If his arguments were put into effect, the war would have been prolonged. Germany had some inventions cooking that could have proved disastrous for the Allies had she had time to use them.

So Churchill had the Prime Minister of Poland killed. He was threatening the Russian-English alliance, which was of great necessity to England, so his death was well traded. This man, Sikorski, was demanding an investigation by the International Red Cross of the mass graves which Russia had dug for its victims. This would have proved critical for Britain, for Russia could not be lost, regardless of her past sins.

Through coincidence, I was speaking with James Wood yesterday, who was at Gibraltar when Sikorski

died. By mere chance he was standing by the runway and watched his plane take off and plunge into the sea. It was a four engine plane, and during its high climb, the left engine failed and it veered into the ocean. In the play we are told that it was phenomenal that the plane sank so quickly. How much Churchill had to do with this is left in doubt, through he does stand accused.

John Colicos is a complete Churchill. He looks, acts, and swears like him. The night I was there, he received a standing ovation. If it is argued that his portrayal is more like an imitation, then consider that Soldiers is a play within a play, that Colicos plays an actor playing Churchill, and any artificiality can be attributed to that.

The play has been cut to three hours, including two intermissions. Physical action is limited upon the vast Royal Alex stage, which stands high and empty to look like a stage. But if the wonder of fine acting and the significance of historical drama mean anything to you, then by all means go.

Dylan - a dialogue

by Frank Liebeck and The October Revolutionary

Dave Warga makes Guest Appearance in this article.

FRANK: YUP glistened with a polish that conquered an audience.

OCT: Yeah, I went there for the purpose of seeing a disaster, and was pleasantly disappointed.

FRANK: I think Lyba Steinberg deserves top honors for the evening.

OCT: But that's because Tom Alway was inhibited by a more difficult role and a distinctly un-Dylanesque voice, yet he gave his part equal vital-gave his part equal vitality and diversity of approach.

FRANK: Miss Steinberg's reflection of Caitlin's bitterness gave her the image of a more tragic heroine. She was helpless in her marital tie to drunken Dylan, and events were less of her doing than of her poet-husband's.

OCT: Dylan commits the sin of conscious waste. Mr. Alway was at his best when playing Dylan the clown, the drunk, the poet; but fell down, if only slightly, in playing Dylan the man. In his scenes alone with Caitlin he was self-conscious enough for us to realize that he was acting, a phenomenon not observed at other times in the play, when he WAS Dylan. But who was that tall guy who was looming all the time?

FRANK: That was John Innis portraying a striking and imposing Brinnin. His delivery was suave and articulate if only he would have cut his picturesque poses. At times he looked like he was modeling for Eaton's Summer Clearance Sale.

OCT: I've known Sue Laeoy for some time without ever having seen her act, and I must confess she has a great talent that I was unaware of. She played Meg with a control uncommon in amateur actresses.

FRANK: And Doug Lancaster provided us with a couple of enjoyable impersonations. His senile minister and pompous Jay Henry were two of the smaller roles that shone, even amongst the brilliancy elsewhere on the stage.

OCT: Well, I won't bother arguing that last point with you, but I will ask you to mention the man who made it work, the director.

FRANK: Nick Ayre set a beautifully chilling mood for the evening, by opening with a two minute silence, where a spot singles out Caitlin coldly staring at an unseen Dylan in the shadows. This starkness was felt throughout the evening, not once drifting into a warm pleasantry which would have been the downfall of the play. This was complemented by the set design, cold and harsh. one fatal mistake. He neglected to hire a lighting director. Whoever perpetrated that lighting has no concept whatsoever of theatre.

FRANK: It was Lawrence J. Siegel. Such a long name and such little talent.

OCT: Sure the stage looked pretty, but did he read the play?

FRANK: I'm positive he designed it before blocking took place, and decided nobody should tamper with his creation, and left it unchanged. There were too many shadows, and too many faces were hidden.

OCT: What a pity, because otherwise the production had the mark of excellence.

FRANK: YUP will have to reach far and wide to beat this production.

OCT: Good - night Frank.

FRANK: Good-night John Smith.

DAVE: Nick is as good a director as he is an advertiser

Machel Teitelbaum - the eclipse of abstract art

EXCALIBUR: Is it true that after your highly successful career as a painter you have decided to cease painting yourself?

TEITELBAUM: Yes, that is true. In fact, I really haven't painted in the last two years. I believe I have exhausted painting for myself and carried it to its logical conclusion.

EXCALIBUR: What do you mean by that?

TEITELBAUM: I mean the possibility of painting as a medium of artistic expression has been exhausted, not just by me, but by history. (laughter)

EXCALIBUR: Are you speaking of all painting today?

TEITELBAUM: Yes, I would say that new so-called exploratory experiments

of visual expression-pop art, op art and so on--simply indicate the death of painting.

EXCALIBUR: What are the sixteen 'works' which are exhibiting March 11th to March 22nd in the Winters College Art Gallery supposed to represent?

TEITELBAUM: They're satire-making a joke of what I feel is basically a big con game. I'm simply letting the public in on the joke with these works. I think a lot of people who saw this exhibition earlier in Toronto will agree with me.

EXCALIBUR: Are you saying that no contemporary painting is worthwhile?

TEITELBAUM: No, but, anything that is worthwhile is so because both the art and these artists are essen-

tially hold outs to nineteenth-century painting and visions. Picasso, de Koning, Wyeth-- They are very good, but they are really doing nothing new.

EXCALIBUR: Well, if contemporary abstract painting is dead where do we go from here?

TEITELBAUM: The most exciting visual art form today is the film. Most underground films are bad and pretentious, but they're a primitive expression of what this medium might produce.

EXCALIBUR: What should the Winters College Art Gallery exhibit after your work?

TEITELBAUM: There is still lots of good work around. You can look at painting now with a kind of historical hindsight. This is

the role of University-teaching.

To sum up, this stuff is part history and as such has great value. You could make a dividing line somewhere around 1960 or 1959--this was the death of abstract expressionism as a going concern.

Maud

Maud's column could not go into the paper in its usual form this week. Maud and R... and Claire Potite and Adam Apple and Bella say good-bye to the whole U. and C's sister, too.

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