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James Meredith: protest at the heart

By Martin Segger

One thousand, five hundred students and adults packed the university gymnasium Wednesday to see and hear the U.S. civil rights champion, James Meredith. Another 400 were turned away.

A man of "will, tenacity, and courage," as Dr. Malcolm Taylor introduced him, hardly begins to describe the character of the man who walked calmly through rows of angry jeering crowds to be the first Negro to desegregate the University of Mississippi; the man who was shot in an attempt to demonstrate the Negro's will for freedom and equality in Mississippi.

This was his first lecture to a Canadian audience. Many were impressed.

Some were disappointed.

It was obvious that the content of James Meredith's lecture only suggested the hints and shadows of the embroglio of interacting forces, sociological, political, and economic, which surge beneath the current civil rights problem in the U.S.

DIRECT REFERENCE

Although Mr. Meredith generalized the situation at the beginning, by pointing out the the whole of western civilization is to blame, as it is based on the postulate of white supremacy, we can be assured by the obvious scope of his knowledge and experience that everything he said was directly in reference to the problem as it stands in the United States today.

The shooting of Mr. Meredith, as he himself pointed out, was not a gain or a step forward in the integration struggle. This at first seems odd, that this act of violence, directed against such a prominent figure, should not trigger a response, which would rival if not surpass the 1965 pilgrimage from Selma to Montgomery, Ala. It is obvious then, that the tides of change have ebbed since the Spring of 1965.

The fact is that all the civil rights legislation, including the Voting Bill of 1965, has been directed at the blatant, legally sanctioned discrimination against Negroes in the South. Sections of the new legislation introduced this session by President Johnson: elimination of the exclusion of Negroes from juries, and extension of federal jurisdiction under the law to provide Negroes and their white supporters further protection against discrimination and violence, appear as a direct thrust at the North. One of its main aims being to eliminate the de facto segregation

of housing and schools above the Mason-Dixon line. It is therefore quite obvious that it is not a coincidence that the storm centre has shifted to the huge northern cities, where every ghetto is a seething cauldron of potential violence. Up to now the self righteous northern congressmen, viewing a situation of the non-violent agitation of Negroes in the South counter-acted by the violent reaction of Southern whites, pushed through numerous civil rights measures over past years.

Michael, chairman of the Student Non-violent Co-ordinating Committee, and pamphleteers like Leroi Jones and James Baldwin, proclaiming a philosophy of "blacks for the blacks, the devil take the whites, and integration is irrelevant."

With all this in the offing, and the fact that desegregation is now a little closer to home, the Northern moderates are now having second thoughts. A new-found feeling of fear is rampant among the Northern whites and

said we can hardly censure him for his opposition to non-violence. In fact we can only admire his honesty.

DECADES OF DREAD

After asserting that Negroes are human and feel as we do mental and physical pain, he went on to explain the dilemma of the negro male. After generations of servitude, and further generations of being a second class citizen, the Negro male finds it almost totally impossible to be assertive, to be dominant, in fact, "to be a man," either in his own society or that of the nation. It is quite easy to see then, why the Negress must run his family, and why the white is so easily able to assert supremacy. As Meredith pointed out, the Negro male must be brought to realize that he is an equal of the white man and that he can give orders as well as receive them, before he can in fact fulfill the responsibilities of his new status. For decades the Negro has lived in dread and fear of the white. He has been too scared to raise even a finger to his own, or his brother's defense. The present bouts of violence, by the Negro against whites, can only be viewed in this light as a small but significant victory against this ingrained fear. It might be immoral, and distasteful to us, but often the mean is found only after the two extremes.

In an attempt to gauge the progress of the civil rights movement, Meredith pointed out that the United States, ten years ago, was a segregated nation. Now it is officially a desegregated country of equal rights and opportunity for all. The problem now, as he saw it, was to make this a reality. He cited the instance of the American Armed Forces as being the ultimate example of this. Ironic however, was his example of the Negro previously regarded as unworthy of participating in the noble art of war, and who now makes up 75 percent of some of the units in Viet Nam. In an era when war is no longer viewed as noble, and soldiery is in fact disdained, perhaps the Negro is still doing the dirty work.

WHITE POWER

The campaign against the white power structure of Mississippi is another example of progress. The Civil Rights movement is now re-orientating itself to direct efforts, not as previously in protest toward Washington for more legislation, but now at the heart of the matter — towards those institutions which make our civilization survive on the premise of white supremacy. Thus Meredith marched on Jackson with the expressed purpose of changing the white power structure of Mississippi, the poorest, most backward, and heaviest Negro populated state in the South.

This is a logical target. An advance gained here, where soon after the voting rights legislation was passed immediate work was begun on gerrymandering the electoral districts so the Negroes would nowhere have a majority, would be a significant victory for all Negroes in the South.

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... the whites need the blacks.

RACE WAR

But now the situation has altered. The North has become the target, and violence has increased there as more militant Negroes continue to feed the fires of discontent, already hot within the large city ghettos. The effect has been to turn former racial strife into a race war.

The battle for reform in the South has until now been used by the Negro leadership to gain the support of the liberal and northern moderate whites. Today such men as New York Democratic Representative Adam Clayton Powell, who called on the blacks to abandon conference table and instead seek "audacious power" to further their aims. The result has been an advent of something called "Black Nationalism" with leaders such as Stokely Car-

their representatives in Congress, and this will not help produce the kind of support Mr. Johnson requires to gain approval for new measures.

And so the response to the shooting of Meredith has become typical of recent developments. At the time of the shooting, President Johnson spoke up — and refrained from intervening — but the civil rights invasion of the South, envisioned by so many idealists, did not take place. The national churches made no clear response. The N.A.A.C.P., aware of these pressures, stood aside. Rev. Martin Luther King stated that such publicity methods did more harm than good.

Mr. Meredith, in his lecture, dwelt for a long time on the psyche of the negro male. In the light of what he

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Naked Politician: A Fantasy of Grey

By Richard I. Gravil

This is a gripping study of raw politics. The hero of this story, which concerns the domination of a province and the emasculation of its politics, is presented admiringly by the author as a complex of ruthless ambition, self-adulation and mass-manipulative power. The biggest question-mark remains. What mission has been served by his zeal? What ideals by his charisma? To what purpose has the hero employed every device in the political armoury? There are two answers: one is "power," the other, simply a "genuine emotional delight in seeing monuments grow and people prosper."

One should say at once that Bennett emerges as personally untainted by any of the more spectacular vices. He is not a crook. Indeed his ruthless self-divesting of any pecuniary interest in the political game is sufficiently thorough as to be ob-
-essional. Every move has been prepared in advance. Every alibi established. He is not 'a man of lust.'

"Bennett rules his motley group with ruthless style . . . His natural response is personal vituperation."

Who else could sit surrounded by the pick of Tokyo's geishas and every delicacy of oriental cuisine and show interest only in a televised ballgame and a glass of ginger ale? He is not a drunkard: indeed, given a chance he will refuse alcohol on behalf of everyone with him. His only weakness of the flesh is an appetite for strawberry shortcake — for which he will pass up a federal-provincial conference.

FORTUNE FROM WINERY

Nevertheless, he did make a fortune out of a winery. And his government makes a bigger one each year out of the provincial monopoly on liquor. The teetotaler making a fortune out of wine: is this paradoxical? It depends who you are. The impassioned free-enterpriser taxing and expropriating big business; the man of God making a game of character assassination; the lover of debate making two attempts to dispose of his opposition leader; the 'non-partisan' leader desiring a one-party province: all these might seem paradoxical if you attempted to relate them to principle. But Bennett

"But Bennett is not a slave to any man's principles. He has created for himself and his electors a world of fantasy in which black and white merge into the half-tones of prestidigitation . . ."

is not a slave to any man's principles. He has created for himself and his electors a world of fantasy in which black and white merge into the half-tones of prestidigitation, in which the normal processes of legislation are seen as a dull irrelevance barely noticed on the periphery of the eternal game of catch-as-catch-

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can played by a juggling premier and his troupe of tumblers on their long-suffering trampoline.

Having established two thriving enterprises during the depression, Bennett was elected in 1941 as a Conservative on the slogan "A man of action who gets things done." Mr. Sherman reviews the years of Patullo and Maitland and tells of Bennett's career in the legislature, his attempts to enter federal politics, his establishment of a Coalition party in south Okanagan during the coalition years, and his attempts to become leader of the provincial Conservative Party. In his second attempt to gain this position Bennett's supporters circulated an attack on the ethics of the incumbent leader, Anscumb, who resigned as a result. Bennett fulminated on the rostrum—but failed to hold even his friends' support.

AIMING AT POWER

Soon after this he left the Coalition to sit as an independent and denigrate his former colleagues. He was aiming at power, and a new fringe group called Social Credit

Bennett

By Paddy Sherman

McClelland and Stewart

Available at Ivy's

would soon become his vehicle. A by-election in Esquimalt in October, 1951, gave Bennett his chance to test the voters' will. He performed here one of the most ruthless acts of political cynicism in his career. Through pressure and trickery he got a retired naval officer to run as an independent. Bennett spent \$10,000 on the campaign and made the speeches. The C.C.F. won the seat, with the Coalition candidate trailing badly. Bennett's candidate came a good second. Bennett was jubilant: his guinea-pig had shown the Coalition to be dead. Better still, he had not embarrassed Bennett by being elected.

With Bennett running as a Social Credit candidate, the 1952 campaign began. Leaderless, the new party ran a candidate in every riding and fought an old style evangelistic campaign. Came election night and the new vote system — the single transferable vote, introduced to keep the C.C.F. out — produced total chaos. The election was held on June 12th. At the end of the first count the C.C.F. had a lead. Then the second choices were added. By the 12th of July the count was over, and Social Credit, everybody's flippant second choice, had emerged as a minority government. The traditional voting system would have produced a clear



"... the net will break under Bennett and his troupe."

C.C.F. majority. But the new system kept the C.C.F. in opposition. It also smashed both of the coalition parties which had introduced it.

The following session of the legislature is as confusing in Sherman's narrative as it must have been to the participants. Bennett allowed none of his party — who had just elected him leader — to speak. He rarely spoke himself. No legislation was passed in seven weeks, no budgets approved. The whole purpose appeared to be to entice the opposition to bring down the government. On March 24th they did.

Naturally, Winch, with the support of the two conservatives told the L-G that he was ready to form a government. But as Bennett knew, Ottawa had already told Government House that this must not be allowed. Which was driven to collapse and resignation.

FORMIDABLE OPPONENT

Bennett had already tried, according to Winch, to get rid of his formidable opponent by offering him a well-paid government job. Winch had refused and says that Bennett threatened to call him a liar if he ever reported the offer.

The following election, still on the complicated voting system produced a majority government and all but eliminated the rumps of the Coalition parties. Through succeeding elections the gradual accretion of charges of corruption against the government is well explored in Sherman's book. The party has been accused by its own defectors of 'deceit, trickery and sacrilege,' of 'corruption, scandal and prevarication.'

Bennett rules his motley group with ruthless style. When Mel Bryan crossed the floor of the house, as Bennett had done before, Bennett attacked him in white fury, accusing him of packing his nominating convention two years before. Bryan suggested opening an enquiry: it was not taken up. Rarely does Bennett answer charges made against himself, his policies or his ministers. His natural response is personal vituperation. On the other hand, if any of his ministers is charged with unprincipled conduct, as Bonner and Gagliardi often have been, his response is equally unbridled adulation.

BENNETT'S STOCK

Ludicrously exaggerated claims, vituperative charges, extravagant gestures, contempt for normal pro-

cesses, gambling instincts: these are the stock in trade of Bennett's government. And the people take it all. A 'bonfire' of cancelled bonds, with Bennett shooting a flaming arrow into the pile (and missing), to celebrate B.C.'s debt-free status is one example. B.C. is not debt free, despite the symbol. Its growing per capita indirect debt is Canada's highest. Chant irresponsibly talked about Hoffa-type gangsterism in Labour when the government passed the free-world's most restrictive labour legislation — Bill 43. Another blow at labour was the introduction of Bill 42 to starve the N.D.P. of funds from the unions. This was presented as a safeguard for individual liberty. Its purpose was to deny a political voice to the unions and guarantee that Social Credit could swamp all future campaigns by infinite superiority of funds. The incredible, and expensive, fiscal fantasy by which the province pretends to be debt-free by offloading its debts onto Public Authorities and Municipalities is one of the larger and more grandiose hoaxes perpetrated on the electorate. Bennett's shocking decision to sell downstream benefits for one glamorous cheque — instead of perpetual income at current rates — is another of the childish flamboyances which delight the premier and which the province will pay for, evermore.

"Ludicrously exaggerated claims, vituperative charges, extravagant gestures, contempt for normal processes, gambling instincts: these are the stock in trade of Bennett's government."

In 14 years of power, Bennett has presided over an immense development of B.C. communications and resources. He has partly aided, mostly benefitted from an immense growth in revenues and general prosperity. In education, vocational training, mental health, social welfare, agricultural policy, development of industry, protection of parks, control of pollution, price control, urban planning, long-term economic planning — in all these areas of human concern and of concern to those who believe that political leaders have a responsibility to the future — B.C. government has been sadly remiss.

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Meredith

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PATHETIC END

It is regrettable that Mr. Meredith was forced to end on the pathetic note which seemed to label him as only another racist. It did however bring out the flaw in his philosophy that the whites and blacks should

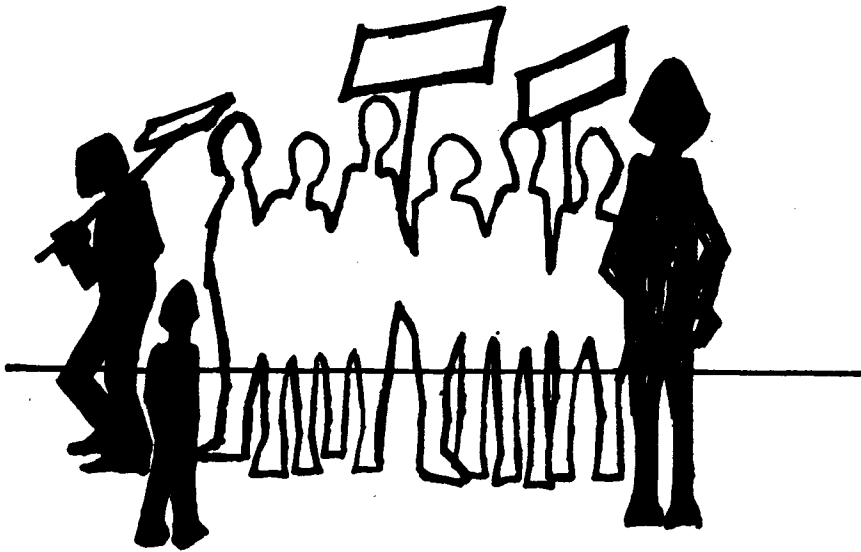
Throughout his lecture, Mr. Meredith re-iterated the fact that "we have not made an effort to understand the situation or seek a permanent solution." He seemed to insinuate that the average American refuses to focus his mind on the problem. But his appeal that perhaps the answer lay with some outside observer, with an objective view, who could analyze their problem and present the solution, seems idealistic . . . many times removed from reality.

SKIRTING THE OBVIOUS

The answer can hardly be expected to come from any great or sudden discovery resulting from further sociological or ethnological studies, though these may help. Meredith seemed to skirt the obvious, that what is now required is patience — the passage of the all-healer, time. An attitude, a culture, a way of life, perpetuated through generations, cannot be radically changed in the course of a few years.

" . . . after generations of servitude, the negro male finds it totally impossible to be assertive, to be dominant; in fact, "to be a man."

unite in the western hemisphere because of a question of need. "The whites need the blacks," he stated, to counter the other forces threatening our civilization." (The forces



. . . a way of life cannot be changed in a few years.

being presumably the Communists). This attitude conjures up the idea of a concordat between two conflicting forces only so that they can survive in conflict with a third.

Surely if this is the basis for racial equality it can neither be genuine or permanent. There is only one way equality can be attained, and that is to convince both sides that they are equal. This truth can be the only solution.

That we unite against a third racial force is only one way of viewing the present Chinese-American conflict, and is in fact the wrong way. It is a war between two conflicting world philosophies of government and organization. The racial issue is accidental.

A re-education of American society, in fact western civilization, is needed — and this takes time. Rioting, violence, and crime while inflat-

" . . . the Civil Rights movement is now re-orienting itself to direct efforts, not as previously in protest toward Washington for more legislation, but towards those institutions which make our civilization survive on the premise of white supremacy."

ing the ego of today's Negro making him more activist, do nothing for the movement toward equal justice and equal rights as a progressive force.

ART: A SPRINGETT SALUTE TO THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS



DEAR MAN,
HERE IS A PICTURE OF ME AND SOME OF THE GUYS AT HASTINGS IN '66. I SUPPOSE YOU'VE HEARD BY NOW WHAT HAPPENED HERE BY NOWHERE: WELL IT WAS A BIT OF A BINGE. THESE BRITISH WENCHES ARE FULL OFF IT! WELL, HAROLD, THE LAD IN CHARGE HERE, HAS EYE TROUBLE SO I HERE, ANYWAY THIS WENCH, I WENT TO HER — ER — HONS' GELDAG.

Cerberus



Diplomatic Window Dressing

The news of North Viet Nam's rejection of the latest U.S. peace offer was to be expected. It seems fairly certain that the offer was designed to be rejected in the first place. President Johnson and his advisers know very well that the 'ballyhoo' approach is not the kind that gets results — every responsible journal told them so at the time of the "Peace Offensive."

On this occasion there are at least four reasons why the offer would be rejected. First, Ambassador Goldberg made the offer in the U.N. He did so partly to answer the strictures of U Thant against the U.S.A.'s crusade in Asia, and partly to buy back a little esteem among critical allies and neutrals. The choice of time and place for the speech indicates that it was intended as window-dressing, not as a genuine approach. North Viet Nam, after all, is not even seated in the U.N.

Secondly, Secretary Rusk chose the same day to assert that U.S. policy in Viet Nam is unchanged. Whether he meant that the war was to continue or that the U.S. had always been in the position outlined by Goldberg is unclear and immaterial. To the Vietnamese it is only too clear that if the American position has changed it is in the direction of increased military commitment.

The third reason is the evident military build up in South East Asia. The U.S. is bolstering its strength in Viet Nam, and establishing a daunting presence in Thailand and throughout S.E. Asia. The evidence does not suggest a phased withdrawal—rather a threatening encirclement.

CAUSE DOUBTS

Beyond these reasons — sufficient in themselves to cause doubts in Hanoi about the sincerity of the offers — was the text of the speech itself. Had there been any evidence of sincere motives, and had North Viet Nam been in an extremely forgiving mood, the offer to reach an agreement about a mutual phased withdrawal of troops might have been well received. To Western eyes, far from the Asian scene, Mr. Goldberg's words seemed to say 'let us both withdraw in the interests of peace.' To Hanoi the same words said: "Now that we've bombed the hell out of you we'll go home if you will too."

The first offer was even less palatable. Mr. Goldberg said: "Would North Viet Nam, in the interest of peace, and in re-

sponse to a prior cessation by the U.S. of the bombing of North Viet Nam, take corresponding and timely steps to reduce or bring to an end its own military activities against South Viet Nam?"

The press has generally treated this as a very reasonable offer. The U.S. has made the offer before, and it is Canadian policy to represent it as part of a genuine search for peace. When Canada recently protested infringements of the demilitarized zone in Viet Nam it suggested a similar bargain. For a considerable time troops have been moving south, and bombs going north, over the zone. When the troops and the bombs met within the zone, Canada decided to protest. One can only assume that the U.S. had put pressure on Ottawa to bring about a pact similar to last week's offer because the bombing was bad for public relations and was having no military effect except to stiffen Vietnamese resistance. So in August Canada (having failed to notice the infringements of the past year), raised a proposal on the lines of Mr. Goldberg's U.N. offer.

IMPLICATE

A moment's thought exposes the cynical hypocrisy of both governments. What does the offer amount to? Stripped of its diplomatic sophistry it means simply this: that the illegal bombing of North Viet Nam will cease if North Viet Nam withdraws support from the National Liberation Front. The effect would be to isolate the Viet Cong from its ally — while leaving the combined forces of the U.S., South Viet Nam and their allies to obliterate the guerrilla army of the Viet Cong. Let there be no doubt that Canada is as fully implicated as the U.S.A. in this cruel piece of sophistry. The terms of the proposal are as much Mr. Martin's as Mr. Goldberg's.

It seems totally unlikely that any motive underlay the U.N. speech beyond an attempt to whitewash America's position and to discredit domestic dissent. Cessation of bombing is not a bargaining point in Hanoi's view. It is a necessary prelude, without conditions, to any hope of peace in Viet Nam.

One-Upmanship to the Death

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

By Frederick Edell

The American theatre during the past several years has had a curious resemblance to the old Fitzgerald travelogues. Despite a few abortive sidetrips, it has largely roamed the familiar faded landscape of the American psyche with platitudes and forced sentiment. We have witnessed the older serious playwrights progress no further than their early triumphs. Arthur Miller has intensified his romance with pseudo-profundities about Contemporary Everyman in the land of Universal Guilt, and Tennessee Williams is apparently being fatigued to death by his lengthy travels with Poetic Emotionalism and Lyrical atmosphere. Given the existence of this desert of dramatic art, it is not difficult to understand how Edward Albee has become Chief Guide. Without negating his positive talents for language and emotional confrontation, Albee's hold on his proeminent position seems to be chiefly due to the not very difficult feat of existing in a theatrical vacuum.

His gifts for acidulous language and emotional conflict are considerable. Albee has a beautiful instinct for the theatrical — when it works. Presenting a small number of characters in passion-to-passion combat, he can write dialogue for them that in its aggressive rhythms and poisonous lyricism can lift the skin off illusory self-respect. With the exception of some of the better works of O'Neil (and there's lamentably little of that), I know of no other American playwright with the ability to write scenes of such cynical power as are found between George and Martha in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* (currently at the Odeon), or the Cardinal and the lawyer in the opening moments of *Tiny Alice*. . . . Perverse, perhaps. But an extremely valid theatrical experience. Albee has a grand intuition for the corruscations of psychodrama, and a large part of his audience seems to greedily identify with the emotional exposure of his characters. At times it's a little like hearing the Christians cheer while the lions eat them.

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Naked Politician

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RUNNING TO SEED

Outside the glittering marquee, away from the spotlights and sequins of Bennett's political circus the broader acres are running to seed. One day the luck will run out: the trapeze won't be there, and the net will break under Bennett and his troupe. Then perhaps the electoral audience will break out of the spell and find they are numb and weary. Until then we will get what we deserve.

The dominant impression given by this book is that British Columbians like authoritarian government, approve of corruption and arrogance, and applaud dictatorship. It is a fascinating character portrait of an electorate, and it lays bare the

NO THINKER

I begin to question the validity of Albee's high reputation as a serious playwright when he wades into the high tide of ideas. Invariably he goes in over his head; he doesn't seem to be much of a thinker. When he attempts to provide an intellectual sub-structure for his emotional confrontations, the ideas are cribbed, vague or clumsily superimposed. His skill for the violently appropriate seems to boggle when faced

fashion or other. The problem is that Albee never establishes what his game really means to George and Martha. Are we to assume that they have been playing it for so long that Martha really conceives of it as being more real than reality? I suspect this is what Albee would have us believe. But we have to take George and Martha at their own estimate of themselves, since their creator never implies that there is anything deeper in their re-



"virtuoso combatants locked in ingenious battle, . . ."

with his propensity for the intellectually obvious. This annoying trait was barely noticeable in his early one-act finger exercises, but it blitzed *Tiny Alice* and almost does irreparable damage to *Virginia Woolf*.

" . . . he can write dialogue for them that in its aggressive rhythms and poisonous lyricism can lift the skin off illusory self-respect . . . "

The Grand Idea in *Virginia Woolf* is both vague and superimposed. At the core of the script is the game of the non-existent child. It's a questionable gimmick to begin with, sort of a contemporary version of the mysterious letter that neatly ties everything together, but upon it Albee has construed a complex and obscure ritual of illusion. When the game is shattered by George's betrayal, Martha collapses and the structure of their aggressive love-hate relationship comes crashing down. Their life together lies in ruins, waiting to be rebuilt in some

political reflexes of William Andrew Cecil Bennett. Sherman has a special virtue. He is not partisan in his approach. He rarely permits himself a subjective judgement, though he sometimes romanticises. There is a lot of journalese and some illogicality, but there is no attempt to rationalise, to fit Bennett into any set of ideals or principles which the author might fancy. Bennett is not conspicuous for principle. Mr. Sherman is to be commended for not pretending otherwise.

relationship. Both indulge in easy self-analysis and Albee leaves it at that, never implying that there is anything subterranean beneath their behavior that they don't understand. One can read all sorts of hang-ups into their relationship, but ultimately they must be judged by the information that the playwright supplies us. Their behavior may be somewhat irrational, but as they seemingly understand why they behave as they do, they are established as extremely rational people. However, the effect on Martha of the ending of the game is irrational. Her married life has apparently been constructed around a banal game and she is shattered. The effect is maddeningly disproportionate to its cause. George and Martha are virtuoso combatants locked in ingenious battle, but when Albee tries to deepen their actions by dredging up a confused fantasy ritual, he almost loses the fight.

SOME CHANGES

Hollywood has remained surprisingly faithful to Albee's original Broadway text. The major changes have been visual ones dictated by the graphic necessity of using location shots rather than a single, static

living room setting. The reverent approach recreates both the virtues and defects of Albee's work. Mike Nichols, making his bow as a director with this film, is often self-conscious, but he is also a very clever man and he has tried to cover the confusions in Albee's thoughts by sentimentalizing a good part of the movie. This is particularly true of the long, slow ending. Nichols gives this scene a languorous pacing and his restive camera comes to a dead stand-still. The effect is to throw focus to the emotional responses of the characters and take it away from the gratuitous idea that supposedly motivates their behavior. Elizabeth Taylor, looking appropriately like an academic Tugboat Annie, gives an effective if limited performance as Martha. George Segal is a slight Nick, but after a slow start, Sandy

"At times it's a little like hearing the Christians cheer while the lions eat them."

Dennis becomes a fittingly shallow and shaken Honey. But it is the immaculate work of Richard Burton, as George, that in large measure carries the film. Despite his years of Hollywood hack work, he still has the commanding repose and the quality of "a still, brimming pool, running disturbingly deep," that Kenneth Tynan mentioned fifteen years ago. His brooding, vengeful George manages to be both a harried weakling and a man of unplumbed strengths and acute self-understanding. Burton's vital Celtic stolidity offers up a lovely piece of work and one that provides a necessary depth to this exciting, if badly flawed, game of one-upmanship to the death.

Poetry :

jon york's crowd

smoke drifting aimlessly,
searching for
a place to prove
its existence;
faint talking,
touching rafters that loom
overhead, like giant
repulsive gods of corruption.
the blues of black girl
relentlessly travellin'
to starvin' ears;
john booker singing,
great artist;
chimes of freedom ringing,
echoing on and on.
girls of perfection
walking on through;
dylan, peter, paul, mary,
donovan, leadbelly,
and woodie guthrie . . .

—Rocky Craig

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