

The Doppelt Effect

Far East Orientation

I experienced great disappointment and rejection when my request to accompany President Nixon to China was rebuffed by his press secretary, Ronald Ziegler.

As Grinnell correspondent to Pravda, I expected to merit prime consideration.

I can't understand the rude reply I received.

My letter was forthright but courteous. I listed my qualifications which included attending a "Symposium on

Modern China" on campus last year and a passion for Saga chop suey.

Then I mailed it to Chairman Niki-son, Great White House, Washington, D.C. I did forget the zip code.

That might have been it. They tend to "blow their coolie" over such flagrant omissions.

Such setbacks never deter a professional from covering the news. My colleagues on CBS provided me with the visuals for my subsequent un"press"ented report:

President Niki-son solemnly disembarked from his plant, the "Spirit of America." As he stepped onto the platform, his eyes focused on his welcoming committee.

However, the two Chinese were looking the opposite direction.

As the American delegation descended, a row of Chinese appeared to the far left. The Americans filed past the delegation and greeted each member individually:

First came the President, followed by his wife, her hairdresser, and Henry Kissinger. The last person who welcomed them was the Chinese Premier.

It is traditional in international circles to greet dignitaries with an embrace and kisses on both cheeks. However the Premier extended his hand. The President later commented, "a handshake instead of a kiss."

"Mr. Lai, thank you for this gracious welcome," Niki-son was overheard saying.

"Please call me Chou," the Premier extended.

"O.K., then Joe it is. I am curious as to why you didn't say prease?" asked our Chief Executioner.

"Ah, excuse me, I didn't mean to confuse you," apologized the Premier.

This was an unexpectedly hospitable welcome for a President that is

not recognized by the Chinese government. A Chinese government official explained the reason for this.

"We can not recognize your President because all Americans look alike."

The American entourage proceeded to nearby automobiles where the President was offered his choice in cars.

"I will take two from column A and four from column B," Niki-son answered looking toward Kissinger for approval.

"I don't think that was the proper way to respond, sir. Please remember not to mention a good place to clean your shirts," Kissinger advised.

"O' Henry," the President said.

The President then entered a limousine with drapes covering all the windows. That made it very tough on the chauffeur, who told the President that he had never driven before. He said that he was accustomed to pulling from the front since he spent five weeks touring with "I Spy."

The limousine proceeded down "Road to the Airport" street. The name is an accurate indication of the backwardness of the country.

The President pointed out to a Chinese official how our streets bear significant meaning and immortalize great human beings. He gave such examples as 1st Street, 2nd Street, 63rd Street, Main Street and State Street.

Mr. Niki-son commented that the streets appeared unusually deserted in the presence of a foreign dignitary.

The official gave him a long slant-eyed stare and advised that it might help if he pulled down the drapes.

The President described what it was like in the United States when an official motorcade drove by.

"The people in the streets would wave and cheer at the speeding car. They lined the streets rows deep and frequently fought just to get a glimpse of the motorcade. That's the beauty of a democracy; every person can pursue happiness in his own way."

As the entourage entered the inner portions of Peking, the official reminded the President of his anticipated meeting with Chairman Mao.

"I am most anxious to meet with Mr. Dung," the President said.

the S & B letters

To the Editors:

In the recent S&B literary supplement, a profusion of views and attitudes about poetry and writing were trumpeted forth in great seriousness, and in great seriousness they must be considered. It seems to me that these attitudes present, or represent, a grave threat to poetry as it is studied, and to poetry as I, for one, try to write it. Apparently my ideas about writing are as unfashionable as the kinds of poems that I write. Yet I must speak out and try to defend my position from the attack implicit in current popular attitudes.

From the headline of the first page of the literary supplement, "Grinnell's Literary Craftsmen," one is led to believe that the ideas expressed will in some way concern poetry as a craft. Unfortunately, that was not the case. I found two kinds of ideas expressed in both that article and the poems themselves. First, there is the attitude that poetry serves as the emotional outlet for self-contained people who have no other immediate means of making their feelings known. Then, also, there is the attitude that poetry is a physical reflection of a spontaneous creation that occurs in the mind/heart/other-vital-organs of the poet. It's a sort of birth without labor pains, and certainly without pregnancy of any duration. The author of the article says at one point that what his subjects have said about their writing "explodes the myth that poets live in a self-created but impractical dream world."

It seems to me that the myth not only has not been exploded, but it has hardly been touched. Both of the above attitudes involve the poet at the center of personally created tensions which burst to resolution in waves of words, in descriptions of visions, in cathartic confessions, or in vocal exercises. But always, the emphasis is on the self of the writer, his consciousness, his position, to use the popular Romantic metaphor, as Aeolian lyre moved to music by

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gales of poetic inspiration. In all of this, where is there room for the concept of poetry as art?

Poems do not write themselves. If anyone had said that to Dylan Thomas, who labored whole weeks to perfect a few lines, the poet would have laughed himself sick. Poetry, if it is to be anything more than spiritual ejaculation, must be carefully crafted. A poem is, above all, a thing that is wrought. A poet should be the master of all the tools and techniques of his art, even if he only ends by discarding them all; E. E. Cummings was a thorough master of all the classical forms before he ever attempted typographical experiments. His poetry, like that of so many early twentieth-century writers, is based on extreme linguistic and rhythmic precision. Syntax is no accident.

I am not denying the importance of poetic voice and vision. Without them, a poet would have nothing to say and no way to make what he did say his own. I don't believe that there is any way for someone to write well about something he has never felt or experienced. Yet, as Wordsworth said, the feelings that produce, or result in, poetry must be written about in tranquility, from a distance of time and reflection; poetry is not merely the overflowing of an exuberant or melancholy or angry mood. Poetry is art.

I can't prescribe any formula for poetry, nor can I impose my own beliefs on anyone else who writes. However, I can try to suggest that perhaps some careful attention should be given to this question. Obviously, poetry is important, if not essential, to a whole lot of people. But the way in which it must be important to keep itself vital as a literary form is what must be determined; whether poetry is to be an individual experience, or one which can in some way synthesize that individual experience with some sort of existence outside that of the individual himself.

Sherry Mayrent

recontracting. At the time Mr. Doppelt interviewed me, I had not seen the letter for over two months.

I do not profess to know whether or not the department as a whole considers the argument (which appears above the statement in question) sound, nor do I wish anyone to think that I consider it sound.

I should also like to note that, as far as I can tell, this argument is not central to the department's reservations concerning Mr. Nasser. That is why I said elsewhere in the article that I did not believe their recommendation was based on political considerations.

Kerry Middleton

To the Editors:

In response (for lack of a better phrase) to the letter printed in last week's issue, "Seeks Concern for Homosexuals" I would like to say that I am glad someone had the courage to write such a letter. I agree with the writer of the letter on many points, especially his choice not to sign his name to the letter. Grinnellians tend to react strongly to things, ideas, and people that they find they cannot or will not understand.

I believe Homosexuality is a valid and, more important I think, viable way of life, and the sooner more people stop acting as if it is some contagious disease, the better things may become.

Loneliness is a part of life, some people may argue—but as far as the heterosexual people on this campus (or any place else, for that matter) are concerned, it doesn't have to be a major part of their lives. I mean there are plenty of girls on this campus for us to choose from. But, imagine a life where there was not the slightest chance—or maybe a very, VERY limited possibility of finding someone to comfortably relate to...Grinnell, under those circumstances, would be a rather dismal experience.

I feel that it's not only up to the Homosexuals on Grinnell Campus to organize and help alleviate some, if not all of their problems, but it is also up to the rest of us on this campus who feel that no matter what, Homosexual, Heterosexual, Bisexual or whatever, people are people and they all have the same basic rights.

Some people may argue that they feel threatened by Homosexuality, whether male or female; maybe they should sit down and give some thought as to why they feel that way.

As far as I am concerned, and I realize that I am sticking my neck out, I agree with the writer of "Concern" and I hope that this is just the start of many letters to the S&B, both Pro & Con. I also hope that some kind of organization can be achieved that will start work on some of the problems that were mentioned in "Concern", and I, for one, would like to help if I can.

Again, my congratulations to the writer of the letter - a person with the courage to know how to search for a solution to a problem and the sense to realize and avoid unnecessary consequences.

duane taylor

Screen Gems

'Shaft' Is Worth A Dollar

For those still interested in Alfred Hitchcock despite Topaz, one of his greats is on the educational channel tonight at 7:30. Made in England in 1935, *The Thirty-Nine Steps* concerns a man who is mysteriously linked with a murder and must flee both the police and the murderers while trying to unravel the threads of an espionage plot. Robert Donat plays one of Hitchcock's most successful heroes in a finely polished production. The humor and excitement are genuine and the film is quite enjoyable to watch. The interview following the film should also be worthwhile.

Anyone approaching *The Gene Krupa Story* with more than a jag in mind had better reconsider. The high point of this film occurs when Krupa's career is ruined because he is busted for the possession of a few "reefers" (which he of course claims were planted by Federal agents). Sal Mineo's performance rivals Howdy-Doody at his best. *The Little Kidnappers* is new to me so I cannot comment.

As for the Strand Special, *Shaft* is definitely worth a dollar. It is by no means a good movie, but it is more entertaining than most of the films released these days. The production technique can best be described as "showy-functional", the type of direction television series employ when they want a "new" look. Still, there is enough action to hold the audience.

Shaft is an example of Hollywood thinking at its best. It is aimed at cashing in on the large potential black audience, but it is not "black" enough to drive off the even larger mass of whites. It has just enough sex, just enough violence, and just enough profanity to be on top of the latest trends, yet it never goes so far with any of these things as to endanger an "X" rating. John Shaft is a detective in the Sam Space (no pun) tradition; he ignores bullet wounds, cracked ribs, and the New York Police to crash through windows and shoot large holes in the enemy. Yet the problems of reconciling his super blackman character with the demands of the "system" (in the form of his private detective's license and gun permit) are resolved ambiguously.

The cast is disappointing. Richard Roundtree's acting is based solely on changes of facial expression and costume. Moses Gunn, an actor of considerable skill, grumbles a lot. Charles Cioffe (you may remember him as the murderer in *Klute*) plays the Lt. Jacobi role from Peter Gunn with little new inspiration. The film does not show the understanding of the detective genre that is displayed in *Dirty Harry* or *The French Connection*, but in its own way it succeeds as what Pauline Kael would call "good trash". This is a movie that should be seen and enjoyed for its entertainment value without regard for the art of the film.

Editor Chosen

Don Dagenais has been selected as editor of the 1972-73 *Scarlet and Black*, the Committee on Student Publications and Radio announced Wednesday.

Dagenais, a junior, is presently copy editor of the S&B and has served as the Student Government Association reporter in previous years. His major is economics.

"Concentration on a more journalistic style of writing" is Dagenais' major plan for next year's paper. He hopes to institute a policy of educating S&B reporters in the nature of journalistic writing and to expand coverage of campus news events in the hopes of making stories "more than just the minutes of committee meetings."

Stories will be oriented more toward student activities than towards faculty or administration activities. During the first semester, Dagenais plans to research graduate schools, particularly those in medicine and law, by writing recent Grinnell graduates now attending those schools who should have current perspectives on the quality of graduate education. The small format magazine supplements begun this semester will be continued next year, he said, with a concentration on magazine layout such as that used by Sunday magazines in commercial papers.

To the Editors:

In Jack Doppelt's article of last week on the subject of the non-renewal of my contract, I was correctly quoted as saying that the Philosophy Department "is worried about post-5th century views on philosophy." I must apologize for this uncharitable remark. It was made in haste and does not reflect my estimation of the competence and personal qualities of colleagues.

Alan G. Nasser,
Instructor of Philosophy

To the Editors:

I wish to correct a statement which was attributed to me in the last issue. On page seven, I was quoted as saying that "the Philosophy department believes that 'you can't be a good teacher and a good Marxist at the same time.'" That is not what I said. All that I did say was that, as well as I could remember, an argument of that sort was utilized in the department's first recommendation on the subject of Mr. Nasser's

The Grinnell Scarlet and Black

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