

books as adventure stories rather than biography, as indeed they classify Parkinson's Law as humor rather than a study in administration.

Well, it's always nice to find the persnickety librarians proved wrong again. And no doubt there is an easy explanation for Burke's skipping the present viscount, probably a contemporary scandal related to his removal to South Africa. In view of the historical importance of the new biography, these points ought to be cleared up. Otherwise, too many readers, under the influence of those librarians, are likely to think Hornblower a figment of the Forester-Parkinson imagination.

Beer and Beethoven

Dig It, Man

The Language and Music of the Wolves, anonymous, Columbia; C30769.

FOR SEVERAL years now I have suffered with increasing revulsion the evolving "pop sound" as it is called. Notwithstanding the claims of Leonard Bernstein and like-minded aficionados, the Beatles' art has never impressed me as being much above that of — say — Mr. Glen Miller or Mr. Conway Twitty. It is pleasant stuff but only momentarily. After a palmy celebrity beginning in avant campus salons of the new Kultur and amongst the aging American dopes who feast off the fads of that Kultur, it reigns for a while in the mossy hearts of sorority girls, finally graduating with them and slipping ignominiously into the repertoire of the A&P Symphony Orchestra. Hence, today suitably arranged versions of the pop sounds' earliest masterpieces are performed in daily concerts for thousands of nonchalant grocery store goers in search of the perfect melon, choicest lump of beef and cheapest nylons. It is history's horselaugh on the doltish neomania who whooped it up everytime the Beatles released a foot stomper. But I do not despise all modern music. Thanks to Columbia Records, I have become a roaring enthusiast of acid rock or serious contemporary music, as it is called. This was not always the case.

At first acid rock, unlike early pop, did not even amuse me. From the claims made for it by the self-styled critics of pop music I concluded it was probably pretentious and embarrassing. I considered its sales popularity merely another monument to the gullibility of the middle-class automaton who has convinced himself that his production line scrounginess is an heroic affirmation of self. But even in the ages of darkest barbarism a modest flowering of artistic merit appears — and so I listened to a record of acid rock, and how glad I am.

The Columbia Record Company has brought forth from the welter of pop a timeless achievement, "The Language

and Music of the Wolves." It has turned my mind, impelling me to revise my earlier low estimate of serious rock. This historic performance is not the work of a mediocre college boy. Nor is it the expression of a mental defective. It is the masterful outpouring of an anonymous group of authentic geniuses, prowling about for new modes of artistic expression. The cultural nabobs were right, this is very high art. When people such as Leonard Bernstein and William Sloan Coffin began stomping and clapping, I should have realized that there was something quite extraordinary occurring. I expect "The Language and Music of the Wolves" is only part of the good news.

Robert Bartley

Robert Bartley is a journalist from Washington, D.C.

It consists of eleven bands of arias by several artists of whose sex I am unsure. All eleven performances are without instrumental accompaniment, and I take it, this is "back to the roots" — a genre recently made popular by Mr. Bob Dylan.

The opening band features a long, high-pitched kind of howl (my intent is not to cast aspersion, but as such a recent convert to pop music I do not yet know all the rich terminology). It is the finest solo I have heard in some time, bringing to mind the late Miss Janis Joplin at her best. Admittedly this is a much more advanced form than Miss Joplin's work, yet there are traces of that old inimitable primitivism. Whoever this artist is — male or female — his is a bestial magnetism.

The finest performances rendered on this disc, however, are bands two, three and nine. Band two, entitled "First Growls of Wolf Pups Inside the Den," begins with a lilting concatenation of pantings, evocative of all the youthful idealism and earnestness which have come to prefigure the young of what we call Consciousness III. Ending with an innocent sniff and tragic screech, this, I take it, is a song with a message.

Band four, cryptically entitled "Barking," combines the tempo and raucous expressiveness of the various social movements struggling for the soul of

modern America. The tempo is driving, the lyrics not readily intelligible, the violence and frustration just beneath the surface. This is a chorus for our time, and I dig.

Band nine, "Distant and Close-Up Howling Ending in Group Howl," is a melodic bridge between the existential penury of the urban soul, and the great sense of fulfillment to be found in Encounter Group Experience. It is something to think about.

The whole of side two is taken up by a piece entitled "The Wolf You Never Knew," narrated by Robert Redford. Here Mr. Redford discusses the life of an average wolf in America's vanishing wilderness. Frankly, I do not understand it.

This, then, is a very advanced stage of musical expression. And anyone who, like me, doubted the important things taking place on the pop scene should listen to it very carefully. Let us remember how the critics sneered at Mozart, and how they drove poor Schumann mad. The young people who put together this triumphant recording have had access to the finest education ever available. Their work is bound to be superior and defiant of facile comprehension. But these people are aware of what is going on in this sorely afflicted nation of ours. Though I doubted for years that the Beatles and the virtuosos of acid rock would ever chisel out any achievement whatsoever, I am now man enough to confess how wrong I was. Their heritage is this towering work, "The Language and Music of the Wolves," and its performers deserve everything they get.

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

-CORRESPONDENCE-

To the editor:

I could not agree more with Mr. Tyrrell's January editorial. However I wish to remind him that there have been "educated men of intellect" in politics before. The case of Edmund Burke comes to mind, especially when I compare his thoughts with some of the idiotic legislation of today which deranges our heritage of freedom and entralls future generations. Burke appreciated the enduring damage of politicians when he wrote:

"Each generation is but one link in a lengthening chain. It is not for us, the creatures of a day, to decide what part of the heritage of the ages we will preserve, what part we will remodel or destroy. We are not the owners, but only the custodians, of humanity's baggage. It would be presumption on our part to discard old customs and institutions because their purpose is not clear to us; no one generation should set itself up as a judge of society's future needs; the ties which knit together a state or a people have a mystical sanctity, and the rationalist who strikes right and left in a fanatical desire for progress may end by destroying the vital but intangible forces which preserve a civilization."

Stan Delacey
Oxford, Mississippi

EDITORIAL I

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poverty as experienced in America merely means bringing every family to an income of half the mean. I cannot believe that this would eliminate one's sense of being poor, for the inflation would be considerable and social planners just have not been very good in predicting men's feelings. If we are going to attempt to eliminate the feeling of being poor it seems more realistic to go full boat and raise incomes to the erstwhile median income. But now the futility of our undertaking becomes obvious, for there simply are not enough funds available in America the Bountiful to raise all incomes to the national median, or even to Fuchs' figure (consider that corporate profits in 1970 amounted to only fifty billion dollars). The cost of bureaucracy would not allow it. Inflation would not allow it. The nature of American society would not allow it. The people would not allow it. And finally, I suspect the nature of the problem is just not amenable to such a solution. For when we discuss relative deprivation — which is what American poverty amounts to — we are not only talking about income levels. We are talking about aspiration levels, and men's aspirations for the good things of this world forever transcend resources.

In America, when a politician proclaims his intention to eliminate poverty, he inflates the expectations of the citizens, he intensifies the poor's feeling

of poverty and, as fate would have it, he actually creates American poverty. Considering the kind of poverty legislation urged by such groups as the National Welfare Rights Organization, and by politicians such as Senator Edward (Teddy) Kennedy, it becomes obvious that the superstitions surrounding poverty are more dangerous than superstitions about swollen tongues or dirty socks. Their influence on the citizenry is unfortunate. Their influence on polity could be catastrophic.

III

Probably the most creative activity going on in America today involves political and academic pronouncements on national defense and foreign relations. So abundant and varied are the superstitions regarding these subjects that it is only a matter of time before they are incorporated into a nationally recognized religion replete with rituals, scriptures, mullahs and horse hairs.

In domestic matters Americans turn out only a few new superstitions a year, but in foreign affairs their prolificacy has been truly monumental. Every few weeks a new bugaboo is revealed, a new savant steps forward and an old superstition expires from overexposure, while a dozen replacements elbow their way to center stage. This process has been going on since the rise of Kennedy. How long it can continue I do not know; it is all too tremendous to contemplate.

Remember the hopeful early days of

Mr. Nixon's Administration when there raised in the land a children's chorus promising that if the Vietnam War would end, some twenty billion dollars would be available to care for more pressing domestic problems — namely, them? Then Mr. Daniel Moynihan explained that this twenty billion dollar windfall would be utterly dissipated by things such as a) military and civilian pay increases, b) cost escalation, c) cost overruns on weapons systems already under development but not yet deployed, d) future expenditure consequences of already approved weapons systems and e) wider research and development.

The children moved on. Another superstition ascended in popularity. Supposedly vast fortunes were accruing for American tycoons as they carried off the fabled treasures of Vietnam. Or, according to a more recent variation, Vietnam abounds in limitless oil deposits.

The *New Republic* and the *Nation* are convinced that Mr. Nixon is actually expanding hostilities in Vietnam. And the way the *New York Review of Books* sees it, Washington is up to no good in Latin America, Africa, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Western Europe, South Asia, Amchitka and Berkeley, California, to name only a few. One senator, a son of the famous Hoosier State, seriously suggests establishing a Department of Peace. Other statesmen believe that the most persuasive tactic for encouraging the inscrutable

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