

erator. Sometimes a telephone conversation is enough, but the members will come and sit with really desperate cases.

Reducing is fast becoming America's favorite pastime, and our most expensive one. A recent Gallup poll showed that one out of every three adults in the country plans to get thinner by one means or another. That's millions more people than ever see a baseball game, and more than play golf, tennis, football, or Ping-pong put together. Where are we playing the new games? We play during lunch hour at Vic Tanny's, in Slenderella salons (170 of them at last count), at Figurama, and at hundreds of similar establishments. Equipment consists of tables that vibrate, pulsate, and jostle the sportsman. There is a bicycle that cleverly simulates the agony of the Tour de France without moving forward an inch.

Synthetic exercise goes with synthetic food—a natural corollary of an unnatural state of affairs. After all, who could manage three sets of tennis on a glass of Calanil? There are quivering couches for home use that reproduce the motion of the Hudson Tubes, for those lucky enough to afford them. Best of all is an ingenious machine called the Relax-A-cizor. This works on the same principle as the electric chair. The voltage employed is less, but that's the only technically significant difference. The Relax-A-cizor is about the size of a portable radio and comes with an assortment of rubber straps, pads, and belts. The subject to be relaxed is wetted, the pads, straps them to strategic points on his body, inserts the electrodes, and flips on the switch. If he has followed the instructions to the letter, his muscles will begin to behave exactly as if he had *tic douloureux* everywhere. Sales of this machine, in four models, are in the hundreds of thousands—from \$198 to \$325.

LAST SUMMER the newspapers were briefly enlivened by the accounts of the Regimen fraud. Regimen was (and still is) one of the most popular of the proprietary reducing aids. It shares crowded drugstore counter space with reducing gums, candies, and even a cigarette called Slims. Profits mount and the manufacturers

grow fatter than their customers.

While there is no public as loyal as an overweight public, there is no public as mercurial. Intimidated by insurance statistics, threatened by cholesterol, and tantalized by fashion photography, the overweight constitute a new and glorious challenge

to the advertiser. After all, have they not their own press, a national organization, and hundreds of training grounds? The challenge has been met magnificently. A nonproduct has been created to fill the gap that might have been left by nonpurchase of existing products.

## Moscow Makes the Scene

WALTER Z. LAQUEUR

PYNATNITSKI STREET, near the Kremlin but on the south side of the Moskva River, has heretofore been known to literary historians, if at all, only because Tolstoy lived there for some time after his return from the Crimean War. A few weeks ago, however, some thirty or forty earnest young experts on western literature and specialists in international relations gathered there to ponder the social roots, ideological aspirations, literary significance, and political consequences of America's Beat Generation.

The subject of the meeting was especially surprising in view of the fact that a major campaign has been going on throughout the Soviet Union for many months against idlers, self-seekers, spongers, and parasites (the Russian language is wonderfully rich in these epithets, and many were used). The general slogan of this campaign has been "He who does not work should not eat," and most of the cases singled out for publicity concern young people who not only abstained from work but made it a matter of moral principle.

Despite these strictures, the literary experts who assembled in Pynatnitski Street did not roundly abuse America's Beatniks but even discovered a "progressive" kernel in their thoughts and actions. They might be ideologically backward, but they were at least not representatives of monopoly capitalism.

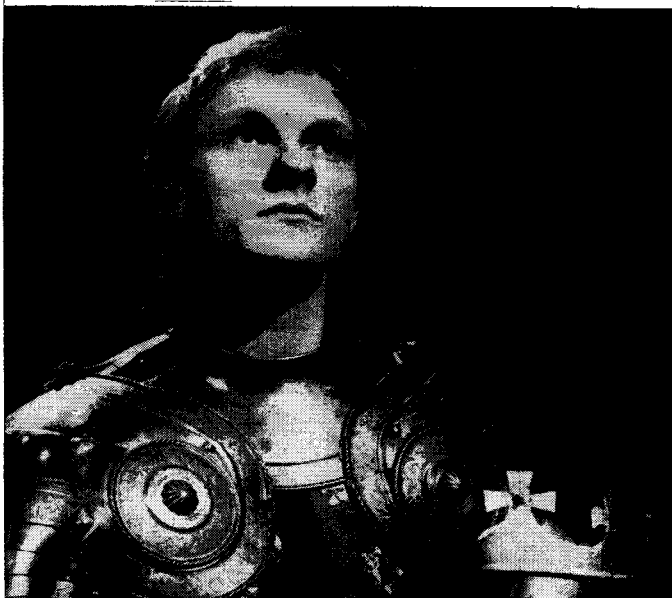
One of the experts, D. Zhukov, who seems to have made the most exhaustive study of the Beats that has ever been undertaken east of Greenwich Village, found many redeeming features in their behavior. Jack Kerouac's Dharma Bums were certainly

tramps, but so were the heroes of Jack London and O. Henry; this has been a recurrent theme in all progressive American literature. They were rebels without a cause, but it was still a revolt against conformism, against the American way of life. Commenting on Allen Ginsberg's "Howl" ("a talented poem"), D. Urnov said that it "went off like a bomb and was heard all over America." As a matter of fact, some of the excerpts heard on Pynatnitski Street were somewhat bowdlerized. "Moloch whose mind is pure machinery" becomes "Moloch whose mind is a dead scheme." Ginsberg's anti-industrialism would not have gone down well in Moscow. Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Zhukov reported, has written a number of poems directed against the nightmare of an atomic war; Gregory Corso devotes his poetry to unmasking the hypocrisy of bourgeois morals.

THERE WERE some differences of opinion as to the number of Beatniks in America. According to G. Zlobin there are only about 100,000, but Zhukov, calling on Norman Mailer as a witness for the defense, announced that millions of Americans shared the mood of the Beatniks without even knowing it. But then, G. Zlobin was apparently not so much interested in the literary aspects of the crisis of Young America as in the political aspects, particularly as set forth in the resolutions of the Seventeenth Congress of the American Communist Party. Most of the literary critics, less down to earth, were more interested in Jack Kerouac and his friends, despite the fact that he has now become (as a Miss Levidova put it) the emis-

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## WNEW-TV

January 10 and 15

RICHARD II, ACTS 1, 2 & 3

January 17 and 22

RICHARD II, ACTS 3, 4 & 5

January 24 and 29

HENRY IV, PART I, ACTS 1 & 2

January 31 and February 5

HENRY IV, PART I, ACTS 3, 4 & 5

February 7 and 12

HENRY IV, PART II, ACTS 1 & 2

February 14 and 19

HENRY IV, PART II, ACTS 3, 4 & 5

February 21 and 26

HENRY V, ACTS 1, 2 & 3

February 28 and March 5

HENRY V, ACTS 4 & 5

March 7 and 12

HENRY VI, PART I

March 14 and 19

HENRY VI, PART II, ACTS 1, 2 & 3

March 21 and 26

HENRY VI, PART II, ACTS 3, 4 & 5

March 28 and April 2

HENRY VI, PART III, ACTS 1, 2 & 3

April 4 and 9

HENRY VI, PART III, ACTS 4 & 5

April 11 and 16

RICHARD III, ACTS 1, 2 & 3

April 18 and 23

RICHARD III, ACTS 3, 4 & 5

*Washington D.C.*

## WTTG-TV

January 13 and 15

RICHARD II, ACTS 1, 2 & 3

January 20 and 22

RICHARD II, ACTS 3, 4 & 5

January 27 and 29

HENRY IV, PART I, ACTS 1 & 2

February 3 and 5

HENRY IV, PART I, ACTS 3, 4 & 5

February 10 and 12

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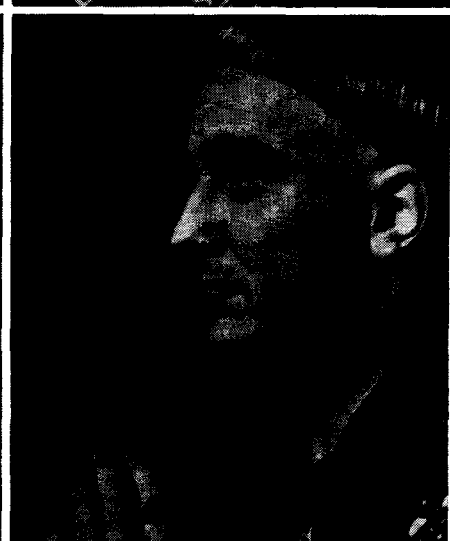
April 14 and 16

RICHARD III, ACTS 1, 2 & 3

April 21 and 23

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*Metropolitan Broadcast*



sary of the Californian Beatniks in the New York literary salons.

Miss Levidova is the author of a long comparative study of Truman Capote, Jack Kerouac, and J. D. Salinger, whom for some reason or other she prefers to call "James." Salinger, she thinks, is nearest to the canons of "critical realism"—the highest praise that can be bestowed on a non-Soviet writer; Capote is farthest away, Kerouac somewhere in between. Since an analysis of their social origin and class character is obligatory in Soviet literary criticism, these writers' heroes are identified as Bohemians—with roots both in the intelligentsia and the *Lumpenproletariat*. The reader, however, is warned not to jump to wrong conclusions: the heroes do not suffer the torments of hunger, cold, or unemployment—only frustration and spiritual emptiness.

Despite all her reservations, Miss Levidova obviously liked the Beatniks very much. She defended them against an American Communist critic who had compared them to the samurai, likening their form of protest with performing hara-kiri on their enemy's doorstep. No, the Beatniks do not end up by committing suicide; they very loudly demand their place in the world. Kerouac, at any rate, is a "great artist, endowed with great temperament, a fine gift of observation and a profound lyrical sense. How beneficial it would be for him, and for American literature in general, if he would grow up and forget about his childhood memories."

SOME PEOPLE in Moscow clearly expect a great deal from the Beat Generation and its revolutionary élan. Its nonconformism and its unrelenting opposition to everything official America stands for clearly outweigh, in Russian eyes, its less attractive features. The Beats may be unwashed and unshaven—which, of course, is *nyekulturni*—but are they not reminiscent of the young Gorky or the pre-revolutionary Russian students? They may be nihilists, but there is a strong nihilist tradition in Russian literature; it could well be that this makes them all the more fascinating to Russian observers, who firmly believe that the souls of most Beatniks can still be saved.

## RECORD NOTES

JOHANN STRAUSS; *DIE FLEDERMAUS*. Hilde Gueden, Regina Resnik, et al.; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and State Opera Chorus, Herbert von Karajan, cond. (London, 3 records; stereo.)

The most ballyhooed aspect of this recording is the tangential participation of several high-priced singers not customarily associated with the music of Johann Strauss. Midway in Act II the festivities at Prince Orlovsky's palace are interrupted by a telephone call from Emperor Franz Josef. We learn that he cannot, alas, come to the party himself; but to keep Orlovsky's guests well amused, he has taken the liberty of sending over a bevy of singers from the Court Opera.

A succession of celebrated artists then appears on stage to do what does not come naturally. Renata Te-



baldi is heard in Lehár's "Vilia," Birgit Nilsson in "I Could Have Danced All Night," Jussi Bjoerling in "Dein ist mein ganzes Herz," and Giulietta Simionato and Ettore Bastianini in "Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better." There is a precedent for this kind of spoofery (the Metropolitan does it regularly on New Year's Eve), and it is great fun to enjoy once—or perhaps twice. I first heard it in the company of an Austrian countess, who was not amused; but those of us who hold Johann Strauss to be something less than sacred can find in this "gala entertainment" a source of innocent merriment. Once the novelty wears off, the interpolated section is easily bypassed.

The real merit of the new *Fledermaus*, however, is not its zany diversions but its bright re-creation of Strauss's sparkling score. Much of the credit goes to von Karajan, who maintains just the right balance between high polish and relaxed Ge-

*mütlichkeit* (and who has the advantage of conducting an orchestra that plays Johann Strauss to perfection anyway). Moreover, his cast—with one exception—could not have been bettered. Hilde Gueden is a stylish, appealing Rosalinde, neither too arch nor too mannered; Waldemar Kmentt has the dash and charm requisite for Eisenstein; Giuseppe Zampieri is a genuinely Italian-sounding Alfred; and the American mezzo Regina Resnik contributes a delightfully world-weary characterization of the oh-so-bored Russian Prince Orlovsky. The one weak member is Erika Köth as Adele.

Garnishing this concentration of talent is the all-stops-out stereo production techniques for which London Records is now famous. There is abundant movement, though not to the point of distraction, and a full quota of stage effects—creaking locks, sputtering coffee machines, and the chattering hubbub of a tipsy party. The cumulative effect of the "effects" is one of dazzling animation. Perhaps most magical of all is the faint sound of an orchestra performing a waltz offstage in the garden of Orlovsky's palace while Eisenstein and Rosalinde play their scene together in the onstage ballroom.

Once again London Records has demonstrated—as previously with its much-acclaimed recording of *Das Rheingold*—that the stereo medium can unlock a new world of enchantment. The key is taste, imagination, and unremitting attention to detail.

CHOPIN: SONATA IN B FLAT MINOR, OP. 35. Michel Block, piano. (*Deutsche Grammophon*; mono or stereo.)

The world is full of well-known prize-winning pianists. Michel Block is a well-known prize-losing pianist. At the Sixth International Chopin Competition, held in Warsaw early this year, he placed tenth; yet Artur Schnabel, one of the judges, was sufficiently impressed with Block's uncommon musicianship to award him a personal prize of a thousand dollars. This fall, at the annual Leventritt Competition finals, Block again failed to win, though he was the obvious favorite of the invited audience in Carnegie Hall.

Now we have the twenty-three-year-old pianist's first recording, made in Warsaw just after the Cho-