

# The Sou'wester

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## Dinner in the Ruins (AD 2177, November)

Dinner in the Ruins (A.D. 2177, November) "... the connection of democratic nations with the civilization that formed them is growing loose and queer. They seem to have forgotten what they are about."—Saul Bellow, 1976.

Uncle Billy's come from Olive Branch today  
In his goat-cart. It took three days  
For him to get to Poplar Island  
Around the Wolf. He had to keep ahead  
Of people hiding in the slag who'd take  
His rank old goat if they were not so weak.  
We're all too weak to run or fight,  
Or there'd be constant war in Memphis.  
We'd make our way across these streams,  
But as it is we entertain ourselves  
With guessing what the shapes of things  
That lie deep down may once have been.

We got old Billy by a messenger  
To say we'd have the Feast a certain day.  
Anybody'd come for food, but Billy no.  
He reads old books he has and starves to tell  
About them to us. Papa says we cannot  
Live by bread alone, and laughs. We live  
On bean-paste bread and that alone,  
Except for poke-weed, lizards, bugs and such  
When we can get them. But now this year  
We call the Feast, for which my brother Tom  
And me and Shirley Ann must keep alive  
Three slickly chickens and a pink-eyed rat.  
At that, we're rich from what I hear,  
Although our neighbors in their dugouts  
Must hoard no telling what, including  
Corpses buried in the night. Only Billy  
Knows that people didn't live this way  
Forever, or we'd believe this way  
The way it necessarily must be.  
(In fact, we do believe it anyway.)

Billy came and had his hunger-sleep  
And then we got him talking from his books.  
He used a lot of words we didn't understand,  
But we dreamed along and didn't interrupt.

"My books don't tell what happened for a while  
Before the earthquake and the floods did in  
The city that was here. Some great sickness  
Came, may-be, while they had military rule.  
My father was a baby then; his folks they  
Died. But I've already told you what I can  
About what people did and how they lived

Two hundred years or so ago. If we could  
Eat enough we might get strength enough  
To dig and dive around here for the stuff  
They left, a treasure for another time  
Than this. God knows, I'd go digging for it  
Now, if I thought anything down there was food.  
The living thing they left us is their curse  
Of not knowing what to do to help themselves.  
I can't translate their how-to books. It seems  
They buried all their know-how in those books."

Billy's head sank and he slept, and everybody slept  
But me. I burned above the flood as if  
I had to be the father of the world.

Next day I laid the trestles for the meal  
On the last smooth turf of what was Century.  
I said we'd put by portions for some days  
And hear old Billy tell of seeds and fruits  
And what to do. I had him hum a tune, recite the words.  
Only some of what we do is Necessity,  
I thought. Something even in the Memphis dust  
Reaches through us to the skies . . .

They ate. I closed my eyes and found these words:

We are grateful for this Feast,  
The feeding part of it the least.  
There is something in the thought  
More than getting by has wrought.  
Old unbelieving Billy has the lore  
Which intelligence can store  
And stir to live the sterile loam  
Where some warm voice has called us home.

R. C. Wood

## Bookstore responds

Due to popular demand, the bookstore will offer clerk-service for textbooks during the first four days of Term II, beginning January 3rd. Book lists will be available soon. (Jane and Linda would like to have the "clerks" from Term I back to

help. If you would like to work, go see one of them in the bookstore.) The mail room will be closed this Thursday and Friday. It will be open to "throw" the mail on Saturday. All daily and weekly papers will be placed in boxes.

## Szczerny talks turkey on NATO and Western Europe

By Don Ramier

On November 8 1977, Professor Karl Szczerny, Chairman of the Department of Politics at Georgetown University, addressed a Southwestern audience in the East Lounge. Professor Szczerny spoke on the topic of the current conditions in the countries of Western Europe, our NATO allies.

Professor Szczerny said that these countries have certain common and unique features. Each has been hit by the economic dislocation that set in around 1973. Due to their dependence on foreign oil, a heightened rate of inflation has occurred. Also, the degree and scale of unemployment is higher now than at any point in the post-WWII days.

Professor Szczerny noted that there is a polarization of politics and that ideological considerations have come to the fore again. The political

parties in Western Europe are divided internally and the party systems are under fire. Coalition governments are not as dependable as they once were. Each country is at a turning point; each has to meet challenges when stability itself is threatened.

Some of the individual aspects or features of some of the NATO countries were presented. In the United Kingdom there are references to England as the "sick man" of Europe. Her economic position has deteriorated, due in part to her "stop and go" economic policies. She has had serious inflation, unemployment, and an adverse trade balance.

Politically, the Labour Party has moved to the left while the Conservative party has moved to the right. England has a weak, unstable government since no one party has a

majority in Parliament. Some implications for the NATO alliance should include a reduced commitment from the United Kingdom. Britain will continue in the direction of a protectionist economy.

Professor Szczerny stated that in France they had experienced fantastic economic growth until May, 1968. However, after 1968 economic development became uneven. The people of France have become acutely aware of the inequality in terms of wages, income, and socio-economic benefits existant in their society. The stable political pattern of the Fifth Republic has crumbled, and the Socialists and the Communists have become increasingly vigorous.

Since Pompedeau's death in 1974, the Gaullist party stability has

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## Holiday Musings. . . Thanksgiving

By Bernice White

Thanksgiving is a funny holiday in some ways. It has to be proclaimed every year, and it wasn't until 1941 that it was finally set for the fourth Thursday in November—and then Congress had to do it because some of the states declared different days from the one proclaimed by President Roosevelt (I looked it up in the second edition of the *Columbia Encyclopedia*). It began, of course, with the Pilgrims at Plymouth in 1621, and the first "national" Turkey Day was declared by President Washington in 1789; the custom was re-established by President Lincoln in 1863. So much for facts.

Halloween is a peculiar holiday, too, stemming as it does from a blend of ancient Celtic rites and Roman Catholic observance of All Saints' Day. One of the oddities of the fall holidays during my childhood in New York was the custom of going begging for goodies not only on Halloween (and, boy, did we ever trick 'em—Dr. Vogel's wrought-iron gate on Mrs. Thomas' hand-tended lawn) but on Thanksgiving Day, a practice my brother and I were not allowed to pursue: "You should be thankful on this day, not asking for more!" My mother was a hard woman then.

All through my school years, Thanksgiving was the favored holiday because we had to go so long without a break. Christmas was great, and sufficed, but after almost ten weeks of school (who cared about Columbus or some old armistice—they only lasted one day) we were more than ready for four whole days off—not to mention turkey and stuffing and candied sweet potatoes and gravy and red cabbage.

Not even during World War II did Thanksgiving fail us. Rationing, to the best of my recollection, had no effect on the mounds of goodies my mother and aunts prepared. When my grandmother came here from Germany as a refugee in 1947, she was overwhelmed by the yearly food orgy.

Kinfolk, of course, are a crucial part of the holiday. We either had my aunts and uncles and cousins at our house or we went to one of their

houses. Now and then newly-arrived German acquaintances helped to fill up the table and were treated at bewildering length to the stories we children had learned about Pilgrims and Indians and John Alden and Priscilla Mullen and Captain Miles Standish.

Sometimes Mother would grumble about the necessity of serving turkey: "Wouldn't it be nice to have a gib ham instead? Or maybe a piece of roast beef? Or how about a goose?" Heaven forbid! My brother and I looked forward all year to turkey—especially to the skin and stuffing—which we experienced only at Thanksgiving. At Christmas we had roast beef (or, after the Grinch stole Christmas when my son was small, "roast beast").

Great debates were held on the dessert: Mother and Pop favored apple pie, which Teddy and I tolerated; I adored mince pie; only my brother wanted pumpkin. Apple won most of the time until Mother found a recipe for an ambrosial coconut custard pie (it's 50% whipped cream). At that point, we created a tradition of our own.

I remember distinctly that in 1941 Thanksgiving fell on MY BIRTHDAY! It was better than a Christmas birthday because no one else got presents—I had the whole stage to myself, and a special dessert into the bargain: Aunt Martha baked me a superb and suitably inscribed chocolate cake.

Very often, the debates over dessert were matched in extent and decibels by consideration of what Pop calls "liquid bread" to go with the noble bird: Liebfraumilch? Rhein? Krover Nachktarsch? And there had to be an after-dinner libation, too—Asbach Uralt (Grandma's favorite) Drambuie? Courvoisier? We were not a sober bunch.

I like Thanksgiving—it's warm and friendly and good for us.

Now that I've grown older and maybe a little mellow, I like it even better: there are memories to cherish and be grateful for as well as the good things in my life today.

Give thanks, friends!

P.S.: There is a word hidden in the essay. I will buy a beer or a coke for the first TEN people who find it. BW.

## Thanksgiving

By Buck Thompson

I was just sitting there—reading, watching the leaves fall 'round the memorial, drifting so lightly, tumbling and swirling from the pregnant oaks, encrusting the soft earth. Fall leaves, crackling sounds that rustle and blow, caught up in a wind that scatters life's seeds like so many moments upon eternity. I sat and perused this page, trepanning sensibility between the lines.

Fall indeed, the sky breath lingering to chill me—and the swaying oaks. It would seem nature might find some warmer moment to bare her progeny than this chirring noon. All around was encroaching, something damp and melancholy, boney stark fingers of winter and dormance and death. The wind dried and moaned; my furtive eye searched for some instance of renewal, some insight with which I might focus the paragraph before me. I resolved to look hard and grasp what I could. I sighed and stood, splashing in the blue fountain sky—I danced with the leaves in the wind.

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# THE SOU'WESTER

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## Oxford Tea to be held December 1

Dr. Yerger Clifton and Professor Mary Burkhart will hold the annual Oxford Tea in the East Lounge Thursday December 1, during Break; later the same afternoon at 4:00 they will present a slide and lecture show in FJ-B on the Oxford Program. All students, whether actually considering enrolling in the program or not, are urged to attend this unique presentation.

In 1972, British Studies at Oxford was placed under the auspices of the Southern College University Union, an education consortium of which Southwestern is member. Students from other colleges and universities outside this region are also invited to participate in the coeducational program.

While at the University, students live, dine, and study in the College's seventeenth-century buildings. They attend lectures in the mornings by eminent British authorities and seminars in their tutor's rooms in the afternoon, followed by tea in the Junior Commons, which were once Shelley's rooms. The tutors are professors from colleges represented in the SCUU.

Since the group has weekends off and every other weekend with Fridays off, they have free time to travel. Excursions are frequently made to London, Paris, Stratford, Wales, Scotland, Stonehenge, Bath, Canterbury, the Lake District, and to some of the seaside villages and historic towns.

Response from the Oxford Alumni seems to indicate that the programs best features are the learning environment and the experience of living in England.

Professor Clifton is Dean of the program, assisted by Mary Burkhart. At the December 1st tea and Illustrated Lecture they will discuss the period of study and any other questions you might have.

## Saturday Night

Drunken stumbling, the drunk boy falls;  
 So she picks him up, the dirty fool, to take him home  
 She whispers,  
 He is too drunk to listen.  
 Let's not get too close.  
 All he hears is buzzing, feels dizzy,  
 Wants to fall back down.  
 He can't hear, but he is drunk and knows,  
 Wants to tell her,  
 Stop.  
 Don't say what doesn't need to be said.  
 She whispers, he leans on her to help him walk, She whispers  
 I was flattered by you, I'm gracious but we're different--Let's let it be.  
 She says talk, talk to me,  
 What do you think?  
 He trembles, it's cold, the leaves crackle. Something has snapped,  
 been let go, swept into the chill. She looks at him. He looks at the ground.Talk.  
 He wants to say stop but it's already been said.She sighs,  
 Tomorrow, I'll talk to you tomorrow, You're too drunk tonight.She says  
 goodnight. He says goodnight.He wonders if being too drunk has  
 anything to do with a good night,  
 Stumbles to home, knows his bed is unmade,  
 On the way wonders why the passing car  
 Almost hits him on this good night  
 Wonders if he'll remember to wake up in the morning.

## Sczerny speaks on NATO

Continued from Page 1  
 deteriorated.

Professor Sczerny's alternatives were a success of the left in the French elections in the spring. He sees France continuing to play its autonomous role. D'estang once said that France may increase its collaboration with NATO.

In Italy, 1969 was a very bad year. Massive strikes triggered high scale inflation while Italy's currency value plummeted. Sporadic violence has occurred in the country. Italy has had thirty-five cabinet crises since the end of World War II.

Professor Sczerny recommended political solutions for the economy. He said that this poses a problem for NATO because Euro-Communism although a different type of Communism is no less a threat to the NATO alliance.

Germany has been in a minor recession since 1973 with over one million young people now unemployed. The German government is most concerned with terrorism and law and order. The major German

parties are divided within themselves. Germany is in an unusually paradoxical situation at the present. They are worried about political and economic stability, yet they are doing very well.

Professor Sczerny believes that Germany will become much more assertive and not as willing to always follow the US's lead both economically and militarily. The Germans are concerned about isolation in Europe. The German Mark has become the currency in Western Europe. The German Army is the largest conventional army in Western Europe due to the partition of Germany. They hope for a stronger Great Britain, France and Italy.

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## A few short notes and announcements

This is a short paper for a short week. The next issue, and the last of Term I, will be on December 6. The New England course for Term III has been approved.

A reminder for Work-Study and Campus Employment students: to be paid before Christmas vacation, you need to turn in your time sheets 24 hours before you want to get paid. Your time sheet must be filled out accurately and signed at the bottom by you and your supervisor.

The basketball season starts December 1st with a home game against Millsaps. If you cannot make the game, it will be broadcast over FM-89, as will all the home games.

The deadline for the winter edition of *Ginger* is Tuesday, December 6th. Please turn in any material to Box 727 or to Cathy Roan. Poetry, short stories, creative essays, and any other sort of original work will be graciously accepted.

Kinney needs old scout uniforms for the Kinney-sponsored troupe 411. When you go home this weekend, look around and see if you can help Brian Burkhardt and Al Early get uniforms for the troop. The scouts are 11 and 12 years old, but just about any size will be needed. Please leave any that you bring at the Kinney Office.

And finally, tickets go on sale November 25th for *Equus*, which will be playing December 2-10 at Theatre Memphis, 8:00 p.m. except Monday, December 5. All seats are \$6.00. *Equus* is one of the heralded of recently produced plays. (It ran for three years in New York.) Wherever it has played throughout the world, *Equus* has been hailed as a provocative and stunningly effective piece of theatre.

Have a good Thanksgiving.

**SUPER JUSTICE**  
 GOLIATH GOES ON A RAMPAGE!  
 THAT'S RIGHT, PUNY GNATS—RUN!  
 HA HA HA HA HA!  
 LEMME OUT OF HERE!  
 IT'S A GIANT!  
 HELP!  
 CLUSTER BANG!

HA HA HA! ALL THIS MONEY IS MINE FOR THE TAKING!  
 SSSHRK!  
 BUT WHAT NEED HAVE I FOR MONEY? WITH MY POWER, I CAN RULE THE WORLD! AH HA HA HA HA!

SOON, AT SAM JONES' APARTMENT...  
 FLASH! A GIANT, CALLING HIMSELF GOLIATH, IS RUNNING RAMPAGE IN THE CITY OF CLOISTER!  
 MERCY DAY! THIS LOOKS LIKE A JOB FOR...

**SUPER-JUSTICE!**  
 WHOOSH!  
 NEXT: BATTLE ROYAL!

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