

So bitterness churns out

PETER DAVIS

This will be hard to read.
I don't care.
Why should you read?
There is so much wrong,
All around,
That unless you're blind, you see it.
So why read a load of junk
That'll make you unhappier still?
Masochist.
If you've read so far,
You like the pain.
And should you feel the pain
From my side.
Pain of love, fear and selfishness.

I saw a man in a motor accident once;
He died.
Life frothed from his mouth in one convulsion
And his smashed body was left.
Too bad.
Had a friend who's a vegetable now.
There was a sliver of glass in his brain.
He's dead too,
But his body lives on.

A man lifted a wooden club,
And smashed it on a woman's head.
"Don't stop," cried my passenger:
"Don't interfere. It doesn't concern you."
I didn't stop — coward.

It is easier to be uncommitted.

All around us there are people who starve
And their roof, if they have one, leaks.
"But what can I do?"
"I give my girl food and old clothes.
"She's my only contact
And I do well for her.
"I can't concern myself with the starving
millions."
And you can't concern yourself with love,
Or hate and fear and other people
Or life.
People make life and love and politics;
But you can't concern yourself.
Who cares.

And another time,
A man's wife was there vital and happy.
The next moment she was dead.
The man wailed for what he'd lost.
He lost a robot that talked,
Was warm and comforting.
But the man did not lose love.
He hadn't any.
He felt pain for no one but himself
And the few sacrifices he'd made
Were for peace and harmony
That's all.

Then there were strikes
And the Black people said: "Pay us more."
The employers said: "We can't
"Give you the amount you want.
"We have our obligations to our shareholders.
"We must produce a good return on the
"Money they've invested."
And the strikers said:
"See we have many mouths to feed.
"That money you gave us can no longer
"Buy what it used to buy.
"And, besides, we want to buy more.
"Why can't we ever have the chance of buying
"A motor car?
"Without us, your factory cannot run,
"Yet we can live off little
"As we've done throughout our history."
And the employers said:
"We understand all that
"We need you, come to work and we will help
"Where we can."
And they came to work.
They were helped, a little here and a little
there.
But their dreams were as far from reality
As dreams always are.
And they came to dirty boring work and grind.
The investors got their return.
Were they happy?

And so the bitterness churns out.
Is there no answer?