

# Other Scenes

John Wilcock

1969

NEW YORK—Norman Mailer kicked off his mayoralty campaign with a rally at the Village Gate attended by George Plimpton's party crowd and assorted dilettantes and sycophants. Targets of the evening were the *NY Times*, which hasn't been giving Mailer the attention he demands; *Esquire* magazine whose money he's been taking uncomplainingly for a decade; and his own audience, most of whom he correctly identified as being present "for the fun of it."

After several vehement fuck-you's to would-be supporters he thundered against people joining his campaign "on ego trips" (his own, presumably being more than enough to cope with), reminisced happily about his speech earlier in the day at the police academy (a more sympathetic audience than the current one, he indicated) and added that he was on this trip "to see where my ideas lead me."

Running mate Jimmy-the-cop Breslin: and Jack Newfield, the candidates' press attache, railed respectively against the *Daily News* and the *New York Post*—interesting choices which happen to exactly match their individual tastes and intellectual capacities.

Anita Steckel, who got a little drunk and heckled Mailer, was hauled off into a back room and worked over by two goons; a ticketless reporter on the door was pushed around by another hood. A few rightwing types, fascist-minded Orson Bean among them, were in attendance and the ugly smell of violence seemed prophetically symptomatic of what's to come.

LITERARY ALLUSIONS: Reviewing *Portnoy's Complaint* ("a case study in the pathological lifestyles of the 'mother' country") *Guardian* critic Irwin Silber credits Lenny Bruce with creating the climate that made its appearance possible. How about setting up prefab movie theatres at train stations, bus depots and airports to show underground movies to waiting passengers? asks Nick Zeoli in *Filmmakers Newsletter*.

Something Else Press is distributing a new "series of "object books" from Germany, a typical sample being a miniature arsonists kit (\$40) complete with matches, kindling wood, dynamite, gasoline, etc. A Munich publisher plans to produce a book whose pages are impregnated with jasmine perfume. The most beautiful books in America, and conceivably in the world, are those handset and printed by Jon and Louise Webb on their own press in Arizona (1009 E. Elm St., Tucson, AZ 85719). Now after incredible delays and difficulties, their latest work of art, a tribute to Kenneth Patchen, is ready. Send \$6 for a copy; an unexcelled gift for any bibliophile.

It's nice of the fuzzi / to burn / those fields of grass. god / likes to take a drag / once in a while / himself (Jim Spencer in The Amalgamated Holding Co., 50 cents from 3055 N. Downer Ave., Milwaukee 53211). Catholic women who want to silently protest the Pope's ruling on contraception should mail their empty pill containers to their bishop each month, writes Jim Collins Robson in the *Chicago Voice*.

ROCKANPOP: John Lennon & Yoko Ono, inseparable everywhere, will arrive in NYC later this month to give a concert with a "plastic band" (Plastic pillars and speakers containing tape tracks and equipment.) They'll also take a helicopter's eyevue of Manhattan and try to reach as many heads of state as possible, at the UN, to hand out their little boxes of acorns to be planted.

Yoko, who lived around Canal Street until a couple years ago organizing some memorable happenings, is a little apprehensive about coming back as a bride-of-a-Beatle but the people who dug her then will dig her now.

Should underground papers boycott Columbia recording artists? That's the question to be voted on by 80 member-papers of the Underground Press Syndicate in response to the record company's unilateral pull-out of their advertising, in many cases breaking reduced-rate contracts which still had months to go...Neil Diamond, who's made a career out of putting down pot, is at it again in the first issue of AUM, the teenybopper mag out of LA...The first issue of *Shadows*, a new NYC tabloid, appears this week...David Peel's Lower East Side group will wander through the audience playing at the Detroit Rock & Roll Revival scheduled May 30/31 at Michigan State Fairgrounds.

Man: What's he got that I haven't got?

Woman: Awareness.

Man: What's that?

—from *The Mason Williams Reading Matter* (Doubleday, \$2.95).

Milwaukee's *Kaleidoscope*, with a second edition in Chicago, plans a third soon in Madison...Reprints of old *Oracle* pieces and graphics have been reappearing in the tabloid *Oracle Anthology* (50 cents from N. Kingsley, Hollywood, Calif. 90027) and new, but similarly-oriented pieces can be enjoyed in the *Oracle*-inspired *Changes* (50 cents from P.O. Box 4219, San Rafael, Calif. 94903)...*The Great Speckled Bird* (Box 7946, Station C, Atlanta, Ga. 30309) is the best paper in the South...*The Free Venice Beachhead* (1727 W. Washington, Venice, Calif. 90291) is a weekly tabloid founded to coordinate the fight against LA's plan to kick out all the hippies, bohemians and poor people so they can fill the area with high-rent apartment buildings...EVO's Allen Katzman (47 Bond St., NYC) fell off a wall and broke both his legs.

"We shall seek to combine in our national life power with morality, technique with ethics, action with meditation."—Dr. Zakir Husain, India's first president, who died last week.

OVERSET: Three-thousand firms, the biggest being Bell Telephone Labs, will benefit from the contracts generated by the biggest business deal in history—setting up the ABM system. That's what all the fuss is about not the arguable question of American security. If the plan goes thru okay it will automatically prompt responses from the "enemy;" then if the system works there'll be no limit to future military budgets—and if it doesn't work there won't be anybody left around to complain about it.

That organization called Business Executives Move for Vietnam Peace (901 N. Howard Street, Baltimore, Md. 21201) sounds like a good group for the movement to hit on for some funds...You wanna buy some cows to keep as a tax loss? Call 799-5300...Many British pubs will be freed from their dependence on a single brewer ("a tied house" is the traditional term) under proposed new licensing regulations which still don't free British drinkers from the tyranny of 11 pm closing time...Blind newsdealer at Broadway and 46<sup>th</sup> St., accepts \$5 bills, holds them up for identification by his friend at the souvenir shop across the way...

History books will be forced to assess William Westmoreland as one of history's great losers...History: a myth commonly agreed upon (Paul Maag)...Barney Rossett's Grove Press will relocate in the booming new loft area around St. Adrian's bar (where Art D'Lugoff's new off-Broadway theatres will be)...American-born Bob Guccione, who left to paint in Paris 15 years ago, is back to launch the American edition of his London magazine, *Penthouse*, Britain's biggest...

The Lion of St. Mark's Place, an old faggot who picks up the hippy beggars on that sleazy block, takes them home and fucks them for a meal and a joint, gets recognition in Olympia's best-selling Homosexual Handbook...

Offended by Lennox Raphael's "Che!" which he describes as "hogwash" *Back-stage's* senile theatre critic Tom Dash writes about other pioneering sexual plays ("Mrs. Warren's Profession," "Damaged Goods," "Ghosts") which were "decades ahead of their time" but seems unable to recognize a landmark until ten years afterwards... Hugo Kock (321 E. 85 St.) and Fred Pholman (438 E. 98 St.) have claimed ownership of the entire universe excepting the earth and meteors.

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