

DHARMA -- APPENDIX-B -- POEMS

A Selection From Overby's "Poetry As Therapy"

UNFETTEREDNESS

Eagles soaring on winds/ swept up treeless hills/ of brown summer grass/ Or, climbing in thermal drafts/ over broiling prairies --/ To be one with the wind,/ freed from tugs of earth/ to wheel and swing/ In wild abandon/ and with spontaneity/ through mansions of air --/ Eyes of a ten year old see/ childhood dreams of/ eagles views of earth.

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Commentary on this poem – This is a reflection on some of my childhood love affair with “flight” as I was growing up in northeastern Montana in the 1930’s.

NIGHT VISIONS

Penetrating black voids/ in night ahead/ brightened with/ july fourth-like/ works of fire --/ Steady on course/ into colored holocausts/ become hard metal/ with rockets red glare --/ While below/ bombs burst everywhere --/ our gifts to “gooks”/ and our flag was still there.

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Korean War B-29 pilot

Commentary on this poem – I satirically refer here to our B-29 night bombing and killing in Korea as the transferring of technology to serve the needs of humans everywhere. Anti-aircraft fire at night looks like 4th of July celebration fireworks in America. The United States national anthem, The Star Spangled Banner, glorifies war as experienced in America’s War of 1812 with England -- and it contains many words of violence. These lines from my poem come from our national anthem – “with rockets red glare,” “bombs burst everywhere,” and, “and our flag was still there.” Again, satirically, the term “gooks” was a common “term of US military endearment” used in the Korean War for North Korean and Chinese people who happened to be the “enemy” of the day.

I would like to see the present U.S. National Anthem replaced with something less militaristic and violent such as that so beautiful set of words set to Sibelius’ Finlandia music.

Finlandia (Words by Lloyd Stone 1933 ?) (Music by Jean Sibelius 1899)

This is my song, O God of all the nations/ A song of peace, for lands afar and mine./ This is my home, the country where my heart is,/ Here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy

shrine;/ But other hearts in other lands are beating/ With hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.
My country's skies are bluer than the ocean,/ And sunlight beams on cloverleaf and pine,/ But other lands have sunlight too, and clover,/ And skies are everywhere as blue as mine./ O hear my song, thou God of all the nations,/ A song of peace for their land and mine./

A UTOPIAN REYARP*

Our father which art in things,/ Hallowed be thy lucre./ Thy products come/ As it is in thy consumptiondum./ Gorge us this day with our daily bread,/ big mac's,/ and artichoke delicacies --/ while other bellies bloat/ as starvation raves./ Dry our tears --/ rivers of pollution./ Forgive us our lagging g n p./ As we forgive those who would / change its distribution./ Advertise us into temptation/ so that our bellies swell/ armpits smell sweet, while/ Humvees and SUVs deliver us to glory,/ on other people's oil --/ as valium and prozac nightly give us,/ peace./ Deliver us from heresy/ which strangely gnaws at our bones --/ Could thou be a false god?/ But no --/ For thine is the kingdom of consumption,/ The power and glory in things,/ For ever and ever/ ah-man and wo-man --/ Have we arrived lost?

* prayer spelled backwards

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This poem, also a satire is based on the Christian "Lord's Prayer." It was written in the late 1970s when I worked in Washington DC on sabbatical leave in the United States Congress, Office of Technology Assessment [OTA]. This poem's words are modified periodically as technologies change. My professional engineering task at OTA was to examine some of the enormity of United States resource consumption, our wastefulness as a nation – and to make some recommendations for improvement. This poem is one of my ecological engineering -- "Green-Technology-By-Design" pieces. From this fulfilling Washington experience I learned much about America's real god.