

event and also involves a means or income test whereby the aged have to prove they are in dire straits before they can get care. This particular discussion went to the very heart of the conference for it brought out the great fundamental fact behind this meeting and all the others that have been occurring: medical care is now to be regarded in this country as a basic social right and people are going to act on that assumption, not just mouth it as General Eisenhower himself did nine years ago. This means income, the ability to pay, will no longer have a bearing on one's ability to get essential medical care and get it in a dignified, self-respecting way.

IT WAS THIS principle that was endorsed in the most important of the episodes reviewed in this report, the White House Conference on the Aging. This conference, President Eisenhower's last, occurring a few weeks before the C.B.S. show and the Boston meeting, was over two years in preparation. It involved hundreds of meetings back in the various states. The A.M.A. tried to use it as an excuse for inaction ("wait till the White House Conference before you act") on the matter of financing health care for the aged throughout 1960. The medical and insurance and labor lobbyists all pointed for the conference as an important battleground. Most reporters, on the other hand, thought it would be a bust, like Mr. Eisenhower's fifteen other conferences.

But it was important, and it was not rigged after all. And the essential rightness of the argument for medical care as a social right—and thus not a "charity" public assistance benefit, but as a part of Social Security funded on a contributory payroll tax on employee and employer during the working years—prevailed and dominated the conference. The official re-

sult of the conference was an affirmative vote for the financing of medical care for the aged via Social Security. This vote will have no little influence upon the members of the all-important House Ways and Means Committee when it takes up the Kennedy Administration's new bill. The bill proposes coverage of inpatient hospital services, outpatient hospital diagnostic services, skilled nursing home services and home health services such as part-time nursing care. It does not cover physicians' services or surgery. It is to be financed by an increase of one-fourth of one per cent on employers, the same increase on employees, and three-eighths of one per cent on the self-employed, on taxable earnings up to \$5,000. The cost will run about one billion fifty million dollars (\$1,050,000,000) once underway.

The sad thing is that the two main institutions fighting this development, organized medicine and sectors of the insurance business, fail to welcome it on their own terms. The doctors should rejoice that government funding of medical care for the dependent population will mean the chance to bring care more easily to millions who need it the most. And for government to take care of the indigent and semi-indigent (the medically indigent) will open up a much bigger market for the health insurers because, with the basic coverage met by government, the aged will then have some money left to buy desirable supplemental coverage from private insurance; and also the insurance companies, freed of the indigent, will be able to offer more attractive rates to the rest of the population.

Just as Social Security helped the private pension business, so will it help the private health insurance business. The prediction here is that all this will become quite clear within the next few years to all the parties concerned, even the A.M.A.

THE MODERN JAZZMAN

Jazz and Jim Crow

by NAT HENTOFF

ALTHOUGH Jazz began to be taken "seriously" by some European intellectuals in the 1920's—and even before—it wasn't until the next decade that a prickly nucleus of jazz partisans emerged among those who ordinarily tried to avoid being contaminated by the "popular" arts, however lively. Nearly

all the early American enthusiasts were white. Most Negro intellectuals still regarded jazz as product and symbol of the ghetto and mistook it for a minstrel show without make-up.

A majority of the young white proselytizers for such creators of native art music as Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith and Duke Ellington were also involved—emotionally if seldom organizationally—with various cadres

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of the political left. To them one of the basic attractions of jazz was its thrust as a vigorous, spontaneous self-expression of the American Negro; and accordingly, several of those early buffs searched with particular zest for evidences of "protest" in the music. A corollary credo was that jazz was a microcosm of democracy in an otherwise grotesquely imperfect society. In jazz, its lay brothers proclaimed, a man was judged on his musicianship, not his color, in contrast to nearly all other areas of the damaged melting pot at the time, except perhaps for professional boxing.

To most Negro jazzmen of the 1930's, the evidence for jazz as a night school in equality was not convincing. There were, to be sure, more casual interracial working and personal relationships in jazz than nearly anywhere else, but the white bands were still booked into the most desirable locations, had the best air time, and made the most money. Furthermore, there were exceedingly few integrated bands, large or small, and such fraternization between the races as existed usually took place at after-hours sessions or occasionally in recording studios. As for jazz as "protest," it is true that a few Negro players consciously regarded at least some of their music as having been conceived in the daily rage of being a Negro anywhere in America. Most, however, considered themselves just professional entertainers—even if entertainers of a higher and more challenging order than the average run of players in the all-white "sweet" or society dance bands, or in the theater pits (also almost entirely closed to Negroes). Richard Wrights they were not. I doubt if one in five hundred even belonged to the N.A.A.C.P.

Almost from the beginning, however, there *was* a marked race pride among Negro jazzmen. Nearly all were convinced that Negroes were invariably more creative improvisers and had a more authoritatively swinging beat than their paler colleagues. A few exceptions among the whites were allowed by some—Bix Beiderbecke, Eddie Lang, Frankie Trumbauer, Jack Teagarden—but by and large, white jazzmen were considered to be insufficiently endowed. While Negroes were excluded from white bands so that those bands would have no booking problems anywhere, whites were not hired for Negro bands largely because they simply seemed to be chronic minor leaguers to the Negro musicians. (Certainly, there was also a pleasurable measure of retaliation involved in this all-Negro hiring policy.)

This conviction of superiority was rarely stated aggressively. It was simply taken for granted. Similarly, although the Negro players were relentlessly angered at eating from paper bags at a sanitary distance from hamburger stands on one-nighter routes outside as well as in the South, and were bitter at the constricting knowledge of which part of each town they could sleep in, the anger also was part of the implacable climate

they shared with all other Negroes. It too was taken for granted by most. The sun might shine in their backyards some day, but they had no idea when.

BY THE mid-1940's, however, the *music* of jazz had changed organically, as Negro innovators such as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie and Thelonious Monk introduced considerably more complex rhythms and harmonies. To more and more of the younger players, jazz was now no longer for dancing or general night club entertainment. It was becoming a music to be listened to with complete attention—and respect. A generation of jazzmen had finally arrived who agreed with the white collectors of the 1930's that jazz was "serious" music.

This generation bristlingly disagreed, however, that the jazz life was a model room of the "house we live in." Like a rapidly growing number of the young throughout the Negro community, the "modern" Negro jazzman was beginning to express himself explosively off the stand about all aspects of life. A few became converts to Mohammedanism as a gesture of contempt for all the white man's boons, including Christianity. They adopted Muslim names, and some still retain them. (For the most part, it should be noted, these were conversions to relatively orthodox Mohammedanism, not to the guarded temples and war-lords of Mr. Muhammad's black Muslim movement and its fiercely anti-white testament.)

Those who retained their names and nominal church affiliations no longer, however, took any obeisance to the "greys" for granted. In their work particularly, there were to be no more funny hats, no smiling masks. In fact, legends even began that modern jazz had begun as a conspiracy of Gillespie, Monk and others to concoct so complex a music that for once the white musicians couldn't steal and exploit it. In less romantic fact, there were white musicians among the first "bop" bands, and I expect that these tales of the birth of modern jazz as a secret society are almost entirely apocryphal.

The change of jazz into a "serious" music for listening did, however, contribute to the aforementioned new independence of the players, particularly the Negroes. Feeling freed in spirit—if not always in actual working conditions—from their previous roles as entertainers, they were also freer to release more of their belligerency in their music. Much of early modern jazz was harsh, raw in tone and searing in emotions. Why should our playing be carefree or softly lyrical, the implicit message of the music snapped, when our lives aren't?

A "cool" reaction to the clawing urgency of much modern jazz began in the late 1940's. The music now became introverted; the emotions were distilled; a greater distance was established between the jazzman and his audience. To the chagrin of those "cool" play-

ers who were Negro, a white adaptation of their style began to gain popularity in the comparatively anemic "West Coast" school of the first half of the 1950's. Dave Brubeck, Shelly Manne, Shorty Rogers and others began to dominate record sales, and these white modernists based in Los Angeles increasingly tried to fuse classical techniques with their material.

In growling protest, a counter-school of Eastern jazzmen, mostly Negroes, began to concentrate on producing "funky" jazz—modern jazz pridefully and aggressively rooted in the basic, earthy Negro blues language. Emphasis was on "soul," passionate spontaneity, and not on fugues or polytonality. The attack of the hornmen was "hard" and slashing. Straight romantic ballads were generally avoided except when they were suddenly double-timed into ferociously swinging stompers. Among many of these players, anti-white attitudes became explicit. The "impostors" on the West Coast were scorned by name and race. White apprentices in the East were made to understand—except for a very few who were "accepted"—that they were unqualified by birth for the inner temple. It was during those years in the late 1950's that I heard several white jazzmen in New York wish dolefully that they had been born Negro. In part of jazz at least, Crow Jim reigned.

IN THE PAST two or three years, however, yet another change—or rather, series of changes—has blurred the racial divisions and diluted the anti-white self-righteousness of the large majority of Negro jazzmen. For one thing, "West Coast jazz" has ignominiously slipped into limbo, and the most popular current style is an extension of the race-proud "funky," "hard" jazz. It's now called "soul music" because its practitioners have incorporated some of the backbeat, rhythms, and exclamatory melodic lines of Negro gospel music. Young Negroes who haven't been to church in years, and in some cases, have been faintly ashamed of their memories of the abandoned "sanctified" shouters of their childhood Sundays, now glow with the satisfaction of being authentic prophets of "soul" music. And for once, moreover, whatever money is being made during the "soul" vogue is being made by Negro musicians, since this is one genre that whites can hardly emulate.

The most popular of the "soul" groups is led by Julian "Cannonball" Adderly, a sophisticated college graduate who is trapped in his musical—and racial—success. He is capable of much more subtle and challenging jazz than the rather simplistic and repetitious "soul" music, but his audience, white and Negro, wants only that Negro church feeling, however synthetic it has become. "Cannonball," in fact, has become so integrated into the society at large that his unit was recently selected to record the commercials for Prell Shampoo, an honor that followed a featured

spot on a Debbie Reynolds' T.V. spectacular. Clearly, "hard" jazz is losing its sting.

A further factor in the gradual disarmament of the "funky" legions has been the aesthetic as well as commercial success of such thoroughly "authentic" if non-conformist Negro jazzmen as Miles Davis and John Lewis. Neither has been tempted to limit his music to a primarily racial posture. Both are proud and confident enough of themselves as Negroes not to have to continue to gild their birth certificates. Davis has become the most lyrical and intensely personal trumpet soloist in jazz, and explores material as contrasting as flamenco music and "Bye Bye Blackbird." Lewis, through his Modern Jazz Quartet, has successfully transmuted such classical forms as the fugue into jazz terms while retaining a subtle but pervasive blues foundation for his work. Other Negro player-composers—George Russell, Charlie Mingus, Cecil Taylor, Benny Golson, the vehemently individualistic Ornette Coleman—have also indicated how extensive the possibilities are for further expanding the scope of jazz expression by utilizing whatever musical materials will work.

The Negro jazzman, in short, whether exploiting the "soul" anthems for whatever they'll yield or regarding all music as his to use in his own stubbornly personal way is increasingly less on the defensive. No jazz trumpet player makes as much money as Miles Davis nor is so respected by jazz musicians of all colors. The Modern Jazz Quartet, all Negroes, have played in more major music festivals in Europe than any other jazz unit.

Today the "serious" (which does not necessarily mean solemn or pretentious) Negro jazz musician is more and more being accepted on his own terms—if he has the stamina and self-confidence to scuffle for several years rather than change those terms. Simultaneously, through the courts, the sit-ins, and the irreversible pressures of practical economics and politics, the Negro non-jazzman is also closer to the point of not having to make—and hence to waste—his long-smoldering point in Crow Jim. As governmental and judicial forces further accelerate non-token integration throughout the country, the strength of the racist "Muslim" followers of Mr. Muhammad will inevitably fade, as will the force and frequency of jazz-as-retribution.

In fact, some—not all—of jazz is already much too skittish about protest in any form. As the music, "soul" and otherwise, becomes a bigger business, its softer warriors want most to "make it," and safety comes first. A few weeks ago, Ella Fitzgerald turned to her recording director at a session and said worriedly, "There's a mention of Cuba in the verse to this. Should we leave it in?"

Or, as Lorraine Hanesberry, James Baldwin, Julian Mayfield and others have been putting it, "We ought to examine just *what* we're being integrated into."