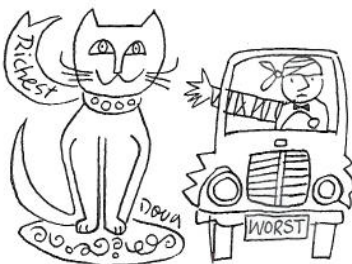


Marvin Kalb:

What is Power Doing to the Pentagon? on couples
ght's board
for a week.

Their brochure stipulates: "Your marriage should be within twelve months of your booking."

► The new edition of the *Guinness Book of World Records* is out, with fresh items such as the identity of the richest cat and the most prolific dog. The worst driver is said to be a man from McKinney, Texas, who on October 15, 1966, received ten traffic tickets within twenty minutes.



► You're over forty if you know what a cowcatcher is.

► On this week's TV show, *The Actor*, Peter Bull, the English thespian, unburdens himself regarding superstitions: "I'm as superstitious as the rest of them, mind you. Most of the superstitions take place backstage. There are certain things you must not do in the dressing room. You must not whistle. If you ever whistle, you have to go outside, knock three times on the door, turn around three times, and say, 'Can I come in?' and if they say 'Yes' then you're forgiven. And now a new thing has come into the theater where you mustn't say 'Good luck' to anyone. I find this deeply disturbing. I was in America recently and they said to me 'Break a leg' and they said 'Drop dead,' but you mustn't say 'Good luck.' Extraordinary!"

► A little girl from Lexington, North Carolina, was visiting her grandmother in Frostproof, Florida, and said to her, "If your skin fit you better, you wouldn't look so old."

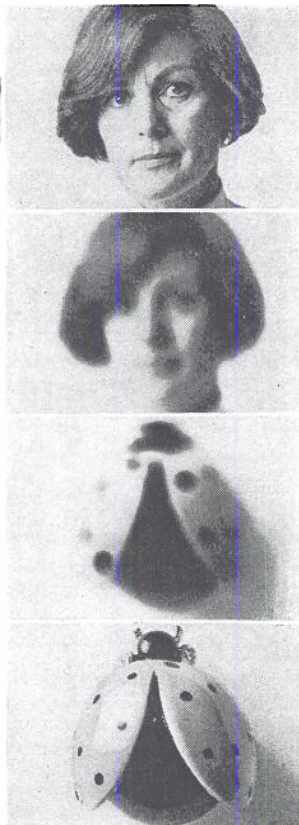
► S/4c David Batterson: Show me a hen laying an egg in the upright position, and I'll show you a standing ovation.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S
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JAMES THURBER:
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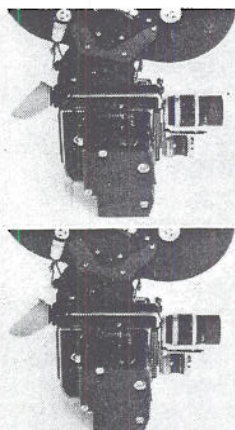
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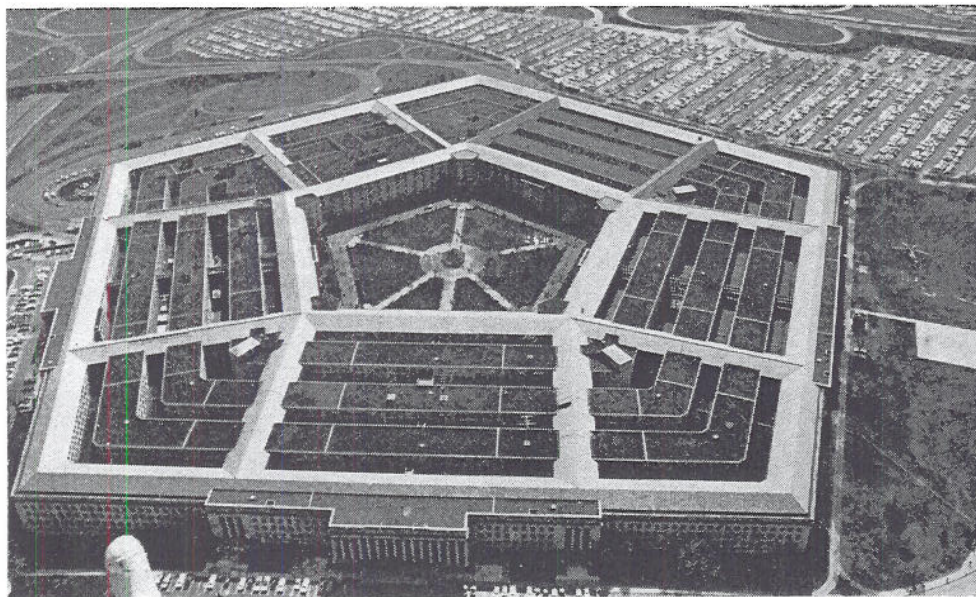
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Marvin Kalb

What Is Power Doing to the Pentagon?

Military influence, strengthened by the Vietnam war, is permeating many new areas of government and society. A Washington correspondent explores some of the implications.



The Pentagon—"It controls more than half of the national budget—almost \$80 billion a year."

—Wide World.

A SHORT time ago, Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, charged that domestic dissent was "the single most important factor in prolonging the war." In a major speech at a well-heeled Detroit club, he conceded that dissenters "have a right" to dissent, but, he warned,

Marvin Kalb, now CBS diplomatic correspondent in Washington, formerly was the network's Moscow correspondent. He also has served as a press attaché in the U.S. Embassy in Moscow.

"they also have a responsibility to recognize and acknowledge what their dissent means."

Television cameras whirred; reporters scribbled and raced for phones; editors hustled and hollered. That evening, General Wheeler—tall, intense, bespectacled, looking more like a stern professor than the No. 1 soldier in the United States—appeared triumphantly on TV news programs; next morning he captured many front pages across the land.

"No question about it," remarked one

Senator with an instinctive distaste for braid, khaki, and salutes, "Wheeler is news. A few years ago, generals didn't make so many speeches. They didn't want to, and [Secretary of Defense Robert S.] McNamara wouldn't let them. Now McNamara has left; Clark Clifford, their ally, has arrived; and the Chiefs have been unleashed."

The Senator exaggerated. The Chiefs have not been unleashed—at least, not yet; they have merely been ungagged and unfurled. Sensing a corporate strength they have never known before, they are talking about more than dissent. They are also briefing Congressmen at the White House, perhaps once or twice a week, on the latest bulletins about the Korean flare-up; they are guaranteeing, in writing, the security of Khesanh ("I don't want any damned Dienbienphu," the President warned); and they are clearly cultivating an impression that victory, and not negotiations, should be the end product of all the bloodletting in Vietnam.

This is a strong argument, advanced by strong men. Wheeler presides over the most powerful board of directors in military history: Gen. John P. McConnell, Chief of Staff of the fastest force of planes and rockets known to man; Gen. Harold K. Johnson, Chief of Staff of a well trained, versatile, and tough Army; Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, Chief of a wide-ranging and awesome fleet, strengthened by an expanding force of Polaris submarines; and Gen. Leonard F. Chapman, Jr., the newly appointed Commandant of the United

States Marine Corps—bigger and better than any amphibious corps in the world.

Ever since the historic August 1967 hearings of Senator John Stennis's Preparedness Subcommittee, which revealed significant differences between the Pentagon's civilian leadership and the JCS over Vietnam policy, the Chiefs have advanced, target by target, to a pinnacle of power and persuasion unprecedented in the recent history of the country—while Mr. McNamara, recently replaced by Mr. Clifford, has retreated to the World Bank.

THERE are many views of this key military-civilian contest but one undeniable fact: the JCS has become a bulky "component," to use a McNamara word, in almost every foreign-policy decision facing the Johnson Administration. When an American intelligence ship is seized by the North Koreans, the JCS must decide whether military retaliation is feasible. (The JCS cautioned against the immediate use of force, claiming it could not guarantee success.) When Russia hardens more of its ICBM sites, the JCS recommends additional steps to safeguard national security. And even when riots erupt in American cities, the JCS has to have a sufficient number of troops in the fifty states to maintain order and prevent insurrection.

These are massive responsibilities. Everywhere the military looms large. It controls more than half of the national budget—almost \$80 billion a year; it has a powerful organization staffed by people who can give and take orders; it dispenses industrial contracts in a fashion that can make or break communities; it commands the largest military machine in the world; it fights a complex and steadily expanding war in Southeast Asia at the same time it guards against the possibility of nuclear war with the Soviet Union; and, across the river in a pentagonal fortress, it plays war games.

It is, in other words, a "military-industrial complex" of truly staggering proportions. Its "total influence—economic, political, even spiritual—is felt in every city, every statehouse, every office of the federal government." These words were spoken by a military man, former President Dwight D. Eisenhower, on January 17, 1961. They are being recalled more frequently these days, following the President's appointment of Clifford, often dubbed "Mr. Military-Industrial Complex"—perhaps unfairly—because of his intimate professional association over the years with the nation's top defense firms. McNamara was a hawk; Clifford is—a high-flying hawk who, as a former naval officer, sympathizes with the military and retains an unshakable loyalty to the President.

Some people are alarmed by the new Pentagon team and feel the only man

in uniform they can trust is President Johnson's new son-in-law, Marine Captain Charles Robb. Others are proud and fly their flags higher. But most are perplexed. They do not know if this "military-industrial complex," looked after by the JCS, is simply a new but still controllable fact of life in a highly dangerous world, or if it is a disturbing precursor of an increasingly Spartan America, dominated by military interests and scornful of the Athenian qualities for which America has been known. Their concern is not so much that the JCS is consciously plotting an expansion of its power, looking toward seven days in May and a military takeover; it is, rather, that the JCS will continue to increase its influence at the expense of the civilians merely by behaving normally and professionally, responding to fresh crises with appropriate expenditures of military force. (To defend Khe-sanh, Wheeler has told some Senators, he would use whatever force is necessary, even tactical nuclear weapons.)

"When you want something done," said a general who has also served as an ambassador, "turn to the Pentagon, not to the State Department. The Pentagon acts; the State Department waf-

whoever he may be, the benefit of their professional military judgment—"undiluted by any other considerations." Wheeler takes enormous pride in the JCS, which he has known for more than a decade. He seems, almost unconsciously, to straighten his back whenever he talks about it.

THE JCS organization, Wheeler explains, leaning back in his red leather chair, consists of three main bodies: the Chiefs themselves, the JCS staff, and a number of other agencies which report to the Chiefs through the staff. More than 1,800 people now work for the JCS: 850 officers, 530 enlisted men, and 490 civilians. The JCS area in the Pentagon is, naturally, not on the tourist paths. It is a top secret labyrinth of rooms, charts, maps, mockups, "flimsy, buff and green" position papers, and a great many locks. Everyone and everything converges on the "tank"—a Pentagon nickname for a large rectangular room with golden-colored drapes and carpeting and a massive walnut table surrounded by sixteen red leather arm chairs. They are for the Chairman, the Chiefs and their operations deputies, and visiting State and Defense Department officials.



—UPI.
Joint Chiefs of Staff at the White House—(l to r) Gen. Earle G. Wheeler (Army), chairman; Gen. John P. McConnell (Air Force); Gen. Wallace H. Greene, Jr. (Marine Corps, now retired); Adm. Thomas H. Moorer (Navy).

fles. The further from the Pentagon you get, the bigger it looks."

Who are these men in khaki and blue who have so much power and who want the United States to use it? Wheeler, the rangy sixty-year-old Chairman, who suffered a slight heart attack last fall but returned to his six-day-a-week schedule within a month, does not consider himself or any of his Chiefs as hawks or doves. He strongly believes that the Chiefs simply must give the President and the Defense Secretary,

Although the Chiefs still strike some Pentagon officials as strictly service-oriented bureaucrats and bargainers, selling the advantages of their own services, Wheeler thinks of them as a team, each recognizing the legitimate needs of the others, each cooperating with the others, each submerging his service needs in a coordinated approach to national security. The Chiefs would agree with Wheeler.

Not one of the Chiefs looks like a potential Napoleon. They are all highly trained

professionals who understand, according to Wheeler, "the fundamental military-political relationship" established "in the Constitution, and subsequently amplified by argument, experience, law, and custom." They realize, in general, that the world has become too complex for a strictly military view of any problem, Vietnam included; and there is no evidence that they have ever banded together to change basic policy objectives in Vietnam—or anywhere else, for that matter. Tactics, yes. Objectives, no.

Wheeler says the Chiefs have three functions, and the order in which he cites them is revealing: first, to prevent any military clique from seizing power; second, to funnel competent military advice through to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense; and third, to translate policy into integrated military action, when so ordered.

The first function suggests that Wheeler regards the possibility of adventurism by a "military clique" as real if not immediate. But it is in the exercise of the second function that the JCS has recently leaped into the national limelight—to come, as a reliable source of strength against liberalism at home and Communist aggression abroad; to others, as a regrettable intrusion of military influence into the process of political decision-making.

The JCS now has liaison officers in the White House, the State Department, and the Congress. The JCS works jointly with members of the Senior Interdepartmental Group (SIG), headed by Under-Secretary of State Nicholas deB. Katzenbach. And—most significant—the JCS Chairman now regularly joins the President and his top civilian advisers at the crucial Tuesday luncheons at the White

House, at which major decisions affecting war and peace are made. "This means the JCS is the only sub-Cabinet institution in government," a senior State Department adviser complained, "which has a court of last appeal in the President. After all, Clifford now represents the military; why add Wheeler?"

In fact, few decisions are made these days without Wheeler, or his appointed deputy; nor, realistically, could they be. The JCS has been transformed in recent years into such a sharply honed, skillfully administered, professionally led organization that it has become increasingly indispensable to an administration dabbling in a hundred different projects of a quasi-military nature all over the world.

It was not always so. When the JCS was first set up in early 1942, it was an ad hoc group, called the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff. It consisted of top American planners who later joined their British counterparts to establish the CCS—or the Combined Chiefs of Staff. The CCS helped plot Anglo-American strategy during the war.

In 1947, with the passage of the National Security Act, which Clifford helped draft, the Department of Defense was established, and the JCS became permanent. But at that time it was more of a good idea than a good institution. There was as yet no Chairman, and little sense of purpose. There were only 100 officers. And the Chiefs—General Eisenhower for the Army, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz for the Navy, and Gen. Carl Spaatz for the Air Force—were not prepared to submerge their service loyalties in a united JCS command. Two years later, on August 16, 1949, a Chairman was appointed—General of the Army Omar N. Bradley—and the strength of the Joint

Chiefs was increased from 100 to 210 officers.

But it was not until 1958 that Neil McElroy, then Defense Secretary, set up a new chain of command, which had the effect of allowing the JCS to have direct authority over field commanders. This strengthened the JCS grip over the entire military establishment. To implement the change, the JCS staff was increased from 210 officers to 400, and the Chiefs were instructed that their responsibilities to the JCS were henceforth to take precedence over their service duties.

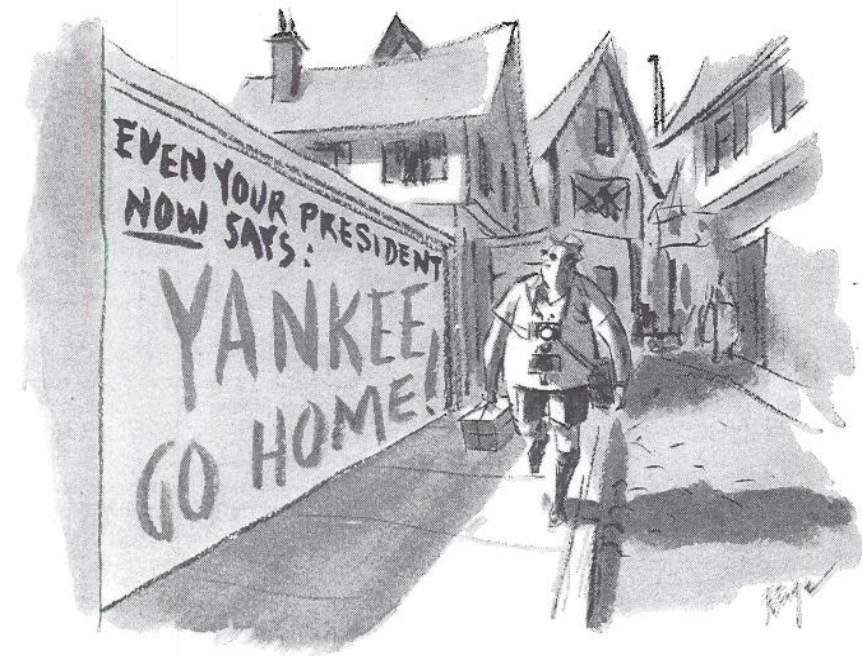
Still, before McNamara burst into the Pentagon's life in early 1961, the JCS was a relatively loose and largely ineffective organization, composed of service chiefs who spent more time bickering among themselves, pork-barrel style, about who got how much of the national budget than cooperating with one another about how to streamline the JCS. In despair, former JCS Chairman Maxwell Taylor sounded his "uncertain trumpet" and departed; but few listened. To become associated with the JCS was to become trapped. "Diddling in the 'tank,'" one Chief now recalls, "was a sure path to nowhere." Promotions and glamor came from commanding armies, running aircraft carriers, or flying sleek new jets.

THE structure of the JCS has not really changed in the past decade, but its responsibilities, style, and spirit have radically changed. It is almost as though the JCS had suddenly developed a winning football team. There were two major reasons for this: McNamara and Vietnam.

When McNamara entered the Pentagon for the first time in January 1961, he was accompanied by young "whiz kids" with limited military experience, and they were accompanied by computers with no military experience. McNamara quickly introduced his "system." It was based on logic and was not intimidated by brass; it relied on a rational judgment of national needs and enemy intentions; and it crudely violated the traditions of Pentagon life.

McNamara began to meet with the Chairman of the JCS several times a day and with the Chiefs themselves at least once a week. At these meetings, McNamara asked questions, dug for information, probed for JCS explanations; and he expected intelligent, thoughtful answers. He demanded that the JCS do their homework as thoroughly as he had done his. "If the Air Force came in and said it wanted a new bomber," a McNamara aide explained, "then the boss wanted to know why. Just wanting one was not enough. Just because the Russians had one was not enough. There had to be a logical reason for a new bomber."

McNamara's point was that it had to



be justified in terms of total national security—a harmonious blending of all weapons systems into a coordinated military machine. At first, the Chiefs bridled at the “system”; later they came grudgingly to respect it. “We have undergone a revolution in management,” one Chief remarked. “Soon we are going to have a good four-horse team, all pulling in the same direction.”

This is largely the result of McNamara’s most revolutionary change at the Pentagon—his budgeting process. In pre-McNamara days, the Pentagon received “x” per cent of the national budget, which was divided among the services after bitter argument. Generally, the size of the budget bore no direct relationship to the policy needs of the nation. McNamara believed, as does Clifford, apparently, that the size of the budget should not be an arbitrary figure, pulled out of a political hat to satisfy Congress and the pollsters. It must be determined by the requirements of national security. Nothing else matters.

Over the years, many differences arose between McNamara and the JCS. The major ones concerned America’s relations with the Soviet Union. McNamara was ready to trust the Russians; the JCS were not. The Chiefs opposed the limited test-ban treaty of 1963, and they have vigorously argued for a vast expansion of America’s force of ICBM’s. McNamara favored the treaty and opposes any ICBM expansion. He welcomed Russia’s growing ICBM strength as a step toward nuclear parity and, therefore, toward nuclear sanity and détente. He believed that the atomic age had somehow imposed a common logic upon the nuclear powers, which would, almost of necessity, dictate a common response to similar stimuli.

“McNamara thinks the Russian Chiefs reason the way we do,” one JCS aide said. “Well, from our point of view, that’s madness.” There is reason to believe Clifford shares the traditional military view of Russia.

Until the summer of 1967, the JCS constantly complained that McNamara won most of the arguments brought to the President’s attention. In 1967, all of this changed. The reason was the inconclusive war in Vietnam. It tended to discourage many officials—but most of all McNamara, who discovered that his former faith in military power, logically applied, had been corroded by the complexities and uncertainties of the Vietnam war. He began to doubt the effectiveness of the bombing of North Vietnam. The Chiefs agonized less. They had learned from experience, not from computers, that if the enemy grows more stubborn, the best tactic is to hit harder. As spring rolled into summer, and as the enemy grew “more stubborn,” the President slowly but surely began to lift many of his former restraints. He



“ . . . Go ahead and start dinner without me!”

seemed to be listening to the JCS more than to McNamara—or so it could have appeared to the proud Defense Secretary, who finds it difficult to admit a mistake or to reverse fields.

McNamara, for example, wanted to stop the bombing north of the twentieth parallel in North Vietnam; the JCS wanted to bomb Hanoi, Haiphong, and the buffer zone close to the Chinese border. The President sided with the JCS. McNamara considered the idea of a bombing pause in the summer of 1967; the JCS wanted more intensive bombing, and no pause—not so long as the demilitarized zone remained a haven for the Communists. The President sided with the JCS. McNamara argued strenuously against the decision to build an anti-ballistic missile system; the JCS favored it. The President sided, in part, with the Chiefs, and McNamara was asked to deliver the speech announcing a \$5-billion ABM system.

IN 1966, McNamara had won similar arguments. He lost many of them in 1967. McNamara began to feel expendable, and maybe the President agreed. After all, McNamara was bone-tired; he had become a problem on the Hill; he was losing heart in the struggle; he maintained close ties with New York Senator Robert Kennedy; and Presidential elections were less than a year away.

In short, McNamara was not the victim of a JCS cabal; he was a victim of the war and the growing power of the JCS to deal with the war. He was only a man; the JCS was an institution—“as solid, as efficient, as necessary as any in government,” according to Gen. Wallace Greene, Jr., the recently retired Marine Corps Commandant. The JCS was too

tough to beat, too unwieldy to control.

When the *Pueblo* was seized and the Communists launched their startling offensive throughout South Vietnam, the JCS was catapulted into national prominence. It seemed as though the Chiefs spent more time at the White House than at the Pentagon. General Wheeler—not a civilian Presidential adviser—was dispatched to Saigon for a critical evaluation of new troop needs; several hours after his return, he briefed at a White House breakfast. Repeatedly, at recent news conferences, the President has referred to the Chiefs, to Wheeler, to Gen. William C. Westmoreland, the American commander in Vietnam. They had become his reference points and his principal support. He was in a big war, and he needed to rely on his military people.

To many, this was natural. But to many others—especially those who felt General Westmoreland had badly estimated enemy strategy, and that overall military intelligence had proved to be terribly inadequate in the crunch—this reliance on the military brass was viewed as a disaster. One lonely dove fluttering around in the Vice President’s office lamented: “The United States has already dropped more bombs on little North Vietnam than we dropped on Germany during the big war, and they still manage to get into our Embassy.” A visiting Harvard consultant, a “dawk” in gray flannel pants, conversant with ancient history, is fond of quoting Polybius’s bit of wisdom: “A good general not only sees the way to victory; he also knows when victory is impossible.” He added: “There is not a single good general involved in the running of this war.” Senate doves, such as Eugene J. McCarthy,

Robert Kennedy, and J. William Fulbright, strongly suspect that McNamara's withdrawal, Clifford's replacement, and the JCS advance mean that on the key questions of bombing policy and diplomatic flexibility the hawks have won, the restraints are off, the sky is the limit—or, as columnist Mary McGrory put it, "all-out escalation is about to begin."

The JCS argument for bigger and better weapons of war—what one Chief calls the "big carrots and the big potatoes"—has become immensely persuasive in every branch of the American Government. Some Congressmen may have their doubts about the need for huge hardware harvests, but few would be bold enough to vote against the military budget in an election year—or ever. Many State Department officials feel somewhat uncomfortable operating in the lengthening shadow of the JCS, but few would risk their careers by inviting a showdown on major policy issues between Foggy Bottom and the Pentagon. And the White House eagerly shores up its battered consensus within government by catering to the expanding sense of self-importance of the JCS, finally free of McNamara's "restraints."

The fact is the JCS is thriving in a troubled environment of war and moral confusion. It stands firm—and, equally important, looks indomitable—while other governmental institutions seem to waver. It gives orders and jobs while others, such as the Office of Economic Opportunity and the Agency for International Development, are forced to cut staffs and projects. The military establishment grows while the civilian establishment suffers from the defection of pro-Kennedy intellectuals who flee to academic sanctuaries and then bemoan the fate of government under LBJ.

Significantly, it is not only the exiled intellectuals who are anguished by the growing influence of the military in government; even military men share this feeling of uneasiness. Some of them—such as Gen. Andrew J. Goodpaster, a former director of the JCS staff, General Taylor, Wheeler, and even former President Eisenhower—have privately and publicly expressed their concern about how military power will be used in the future, what its Constitutional limits are, and who—exactly who—will control it. It is almost as though they are in awe of their potential power in American life; almost as though they are hoping against hope that the civilians will take heed and act, but wondering whether the traditional system of checks and balances will be strong enough to assure continued civilian control over the ever expanding influence of the military in American society and government.

Answers to Wit Twister, page 8:
slave, laves, salve, vales.

THE ARTIST AS A MIDDLE-AGED MAN

By SYLVIA ANGUS

TO BE an adult and an artist today in America is to be food for vultures. Art, like so much else in our society, seems to have become a prerogative of youth. Its patterns are the hopped-up patterns of the young, and those who cannot adopt them fall by the wayside in battered heaps. Adults who ply their artistic trades struggle wildly to do it in the latest idiom—to turn on, to produce sights and sounds which are psychedelic, avant-garde, underground, souped up. They have bitten the apple of youth and feel that they must make it on the "now" level or they are dated—i.e., *dead*. It is now dangerously "out" to follow one's own meanings if these do not include the bizarre, the kaleidoscopically shifting, the technically original. Adult artists—all artists, in fact—exist in an Alice in Wonderland world where they have to run like Rynun just to keep their places.

Several things have happened to make these the best of all times for artists, and the worst of times. Artists have been inundated by new media and new techniques; they have been freed of all the restraints of traditional forms and of audience resistance; they have been led by the pied piper, Marshall McLuhan, to believe that the medium is the message. The message of McLuhan is, on the surface, peculiarly fitting for an age in which the tempo of invention and discovery is so swift.

To believe that the medium is the message, however, is to escape the fundamental problem of art: the discovery of message. McLuhan's phrase—whether message or massage—is hypnotic. It sounds so apt, and, after all, who can deny that what any art says is to a considerable degree controlled by its medium? One does not attempt to say in stone what one says in paint, or in music. That is self-evident. To go beyond this, though—to suggest that the medium not only influences the content, but actually *is* the content—pulls the complementaries of form and content out of shape and produces artistic chaos.

Sylvia Angus is assistant professor of English at State University College, Potsdam, New York, and co-editor, with her husband Douglas, of *Contemporary American Short Stories* and *Great Modern European Short Stories*, both published by Fawcett.

McLuhan has been widely misread and maligned, no doubt, but willy-nilly he has brought into everyone's consciousness the disastrous notion that method or medium is more significant than content—that, indeed, content is merely a by-product of medium. It is not surprising that artists in our frenetic age should have latched onto this idea as though it were a life preserver. Few enough these days can come up with significant meanings or comprehensions of their world. How original and avant-garde to put by all that scrounging for ideas and emotions and just to start experimenting with techniques, with surfaces! Perhaps if we pour enough plastic, shape enough paper in new ways, we will find that we are saying something after all! Perhaps if we just look at surfaces, like Robbe-Grillet, we may eventually penetrate to the other side of truth.

IT is not an unworthy aim, nor is it hard to sympathize with. Art has been around so long that sometimes it seems impossible to say anything more in it. Our times, moreover, are grotesquely out of joint, and it often seems that all thoughts are futile clichés, all emotions played-out fireworks. The miracle, however, is that art, like life, seems able endlessly to renew itself. The discovery of new media—new techniques—can sometimes open up a whole new way of seeing or feeling. The exploration, therefore, of new forms, new media, is in itself a healthy and life-giving artistic activity. What is unhealthy is to suggest that media are an end in themselves. A medium or a technique can be enormously important, but it is important because it is a tool which can be used to communicate the endless variety of man's thoughts and emotions. The medium is the *tool*, it is *not* the message.

For every artist, the great work of his life is the discovery of his message—today, just as it has always been. Now, as always, he will experiment with the media and techniques which interest him, but let him not think that he can produce vital art purely by technical virtuosity. I believe it was Edward Steichen who said that great cameras do not make great photographers; that nobody has yet fully explored the possibilities of the old box Brownie.

Mastery of technique is a very partial