

## POETRY

**War Journal**

Paul Bloom

1-16-91

the bombing appeared far away  
 next morning.  
 i had left the teacher's room  
 for evening practice  
 jay said  
 they started bombing baghdad  
 at ten of seven  
 same time  
 as winter lightning struck new haven sky.

work was quiet, everyone busy,  
 mum,  
 wondered  
 why no screaming bodies in the street?  
 bombed tikrit on the tigris  
 along with baghdad last night  
 hadn't heard of tigris euphrates fertile crescent  
 since grade school,  
 cradle of civilization.  
 some protested  
 most did not look  
 across oceans  
 listened  
 for official tallies  
 of u.s. dead.

## SANGHARAKSHITA ON TAPE

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 REACTIVE,  
 MIND  
 CREATIVE**



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1-20-91

**retreat weekend**

(thanks gary snyder "six years, december")

raced from home at four thirty-five a.m.,  
 left millie wonderfully warm in bed  
 arrived at the dharma room  
 just in time for bows.  
 sitting, chanting, big bell,  
 oatmeal mush at seven thirty,  
 thinking: too tired to sit;  
 all weekend.  
 polish the brass,  
 sit, eat, half hour nap,  
 sit.  
 slowly sink into quiet,  
 tired  
 unsolicited lapses in mantra,  
 did we take those sandwiches?  
 let's put them in the trunk of your green felt dress,  
 om a ro gae a ro ga, etc.  
 tidbits of undiscovered universe revealed,  
 sunny gazebo  
 looking out on mind  
 the clatter of schedules and musts  
 burnt off.  
 checked the radio ten p.m. before sleep.  
 still a pentagon news blackout  
 but no nuclear.

up at four fifteen  
 to ring the bell,  
 same routine.  
 two hour sittings pass in a smoother arc,  
 continue to drop off—  
 should i take the snow shoes? crampons o.k.,  
 sit watching cold sun in the valley  
 from agonies cliff  
 do ro do ro mi yoen jae.  
 lunch.

drive home slowly  
 shower, shampoo before news.  
 quiet inside, hold back shouting t.v.  
 while anxious to hear  
 see the latest—click—  
 all pentagon reports!  
 general this and that doling out low-downs  
 all synthetic,  
 no natural ingredients.  
 high-tech vaudeville;  
 deaths real,  
 if unreported.

1-26-91

two days  
 talking and listening  
 in snatches  
 a chorus of consent  
 and quiet  
 in the workplace.  
 weary  
 so weary of  
 intelligent arguments  
 blind patriotism  
 satanic arabs  
 exuberant self-righteousness  
 remaining quiet  
 in order to hear.

confused by the clamor of words  
 finally dumbfounded  
 this cold january new haven night  
 i rush to buy a book before closing,  
 homeless man panhandling on the street  
 i follow josh's rule  
 whatever change in your pocket

why  
 are our  
 children  
 dying in iraq

just one word,  
 please, nothing intelligent  
 anything real  
 fight in manhattan if necessary?  
 if iraq produced  
 only yak butter?  
 man sleeping on the steps of penn station,  
 small farms foreclosing en masse,  
 pounding misery of empty work,  
 mistaken illusions of a mansion  
 just around the corner—  
 someone else's mansion  
 bought with the sale of munitions, of cars,  
 the sale of nutrition-free snack foods.  
 the manufacture (of weapons) requires  
 the sale (of weapons)  
 the sale, use.  
 please, nothing smart,  
 any bit of truth  
 whose self-interest?  
 nico remembers:  
 suport our troops  
 means fight like hell  
 means don't blame the soldiers  
 support our troops means stop the war  
 support our troops means stop.  
 look.  
 what is this?

stop  
 look  
 past the words  
 why  
 are children  
 dying in iraq?

(sea to shining sea) ☐

Winter/Spring 1991

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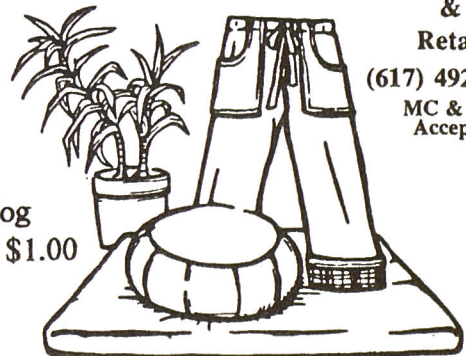
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