

Silver Fish

Politics is like a silver fish bug,
Generally flitting over a stagnant pond,
In which nothing grows, nothing lives,
And all who gaze in wonderment,
Transfixed with the darting insect
Alighting now and then
To accomplish nothing special
Until its dried-up carcass disintegrates
As more winged creatures continue
As though nothing happened to begin with.

Politics exhilarates, when one has won,
When one is listened to,
Or wins a major battle for good—
At least, we think for good.
But wins are transient
In the never-ceasing changeover
From one person to another,
From one regime to yet one more,
Until the *win* is transmogrified
Into the floor, outside the door,
Through which it earnestly came—
To begin with.

Politics is shaped, influenced, drawn anew
Each day, each hour, by press and you.
Press, with admitted double standards,
Much kinder and accepting
Towards the more liberal view;
You—sometimes apathetic,
Sometimes true,
Yet never knowing and seldom caring,
At least enough, you knew.
You should have worked, studied,
Perhaps prayed—perhaps,
But why? What can one person do?

Politics sometimes is one simple vote,
The vote which makes a difference,
Which defeats or passes:
That, upon which life and/or death depends,
Unless oblivious to the end.
Even that lies relatively unimportant
In our sight,
And calm regression,
To the daze of watching silver fish,
Puts us asleep
Or into lethargy once more.

—Orrin G. Hatch