Book Review

By Saunders Redding

NONE SO BLIND, by Lee Bergman. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., New York 16. 182 pp. $3.00.

Though the thematic center of **None So Blind** is one man's harrowing struggle with his conscience and against the traditions in which he has been reared, the plot involves a whole southern community.

Central to the plot is an incident of the sort **Mr. Redding** that, until lately, occasionally made headlines in the national press.

A young colored man, determined to hold onto some property that is rightfully and legally his, defies the efforts of some members of the white community to dispossess him. Sparked by a local bigshot and bully, violence takes over and the colored man is killed.

* * *

WITHIN THIS framework Lee Bergman delineates all the attitudes, customs, tensions and character-types that are now generally recognized as marking and, unhappily, controlling life in some Southern towns.

When Jed Davis, a colored boy of eighteen, rejects Cliff Pennington's offer of three hundred dollars for a property worth three thousand, the White Citizens Council mobilizes for action.

The Council is made up of men from all strata — habitual loafers, ignorant farmers and small merchants as well as the county sheriff, the local banker, the leading lawyer and the mayor.

These latter three, having nothing to gain and much to lose in any showdown between the predatory will of the irresponsible element and the better conscience of the South, exercise a restraining influence on the Council.

* * *

THE MOST that body is willing to do is prepare and support trumped up charges against Jed Davis, and, though this is risky — for the NAACP has sent agents into the town —it is not enough for Cliff Pennington.

He and his equally degenerate brother kidnap Jed and murder him.

National publicity forces the local authorities to put up a show of indicting and prosecuting the Penningtons, but all the townspeople know the score.

It's all right, the murderers are assured; white men just don't go to prison for murdering a colored boy, especially when the evidence against them is circumstantial.

* * *

BUT THERE has been an eye-witness to the crime.

Peter Hodson is a local school teacher and the son of the town's leading lawyer. He has a reputation for being a "n—r lover."

It was he who, unknown to the town, had called in the NAACP when the trouble started. Now for all the court-room maneuvers of his father who is their lawyer, the Pennington can be proved guilty by Peter's testimony.

But should he testify against white men?

Need he testify?

Will not the law in its natural course serve the ends of justice? So much that is personal is at stake — his job, his career, the love of a girl. And after all Jed was only a —! Only a what?

* * *

Thus rages a protracted, many-sided struggle — between right and wrong, selfishness and idealism, tradition and change — within Peter's heart and mind.

* * *

HIS DECISION to testify to what he saw is made convincing enough to persuade the reader to believe what Mr. Bergman has all along wished the reader to believe, and that is that Peter Hodson represents those "stout-hearted men" who, eventually numbering tens of thousands, will be "the key to a heartening optimism."

None So Blind is melodrama, and as surfacy as most melodrama, and carelessly written at that, but — it holds one's interest. It does more.

It helps one comprehend at least the grosser realities of an American situation that is presently the cynosure of the eyes of the world.

Our Readers Write

If you have a problem, let us help. Make letters short. Address AFRO Magazine Section, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore 1, Md.

PALM SUNDAY

Philadelphia, Pa. — Please clear up something for me. I was born on April 1, 1917, which was Palm Sunday. Since then, my birthday has fallen on Palm Sunday only once, in 1928, when I was eleven.

When will my birthday fall on Palm Sunday again?

LOUISE RICHARDSON

According to our little black book, Palm Sunday does not fall on April 1 again until the year 2007—when you will be the grand age of ninety.

* * *

DICTATOR

Washington, D.C. — What was Hitler's real name, and where was he born?

ADOLPH THOMPSON

His real name was Adolf Schicklgruber, and he was born at Branau, Austria, 1889.

* * *

GOSPEL SINGING

Newark, N.J. — If Miss L. E. Brown who asked for information about gospel singers in last week's Magazine Section will get in touch with me, I might be able to help her.

J. H. ROBINSON
17 Broome St.

* * *

PSALM

Baltimore, Md. — This really happened and is too good to keep. My little boy was being taught the 23rd Psalm at Sunday School. He came home one day and said: "Does Mrs. Murphy live in Heaven?

"Which Mrs. Murphy? I asked.

"The one in the Psalm," he replied. "You know how it goes, 'And good Mrs. Murphy shall follow me all the days of my life.' "

AMUSED MOTHER

* * *

TENNIS

Selma, N.C. — When will the tennis championships at Wimbledon England be held this year, and is Althea Gibson going to defend her championship?

BEATRICE HUNT

The championships commence June 23 and continue until July 5, but we can't predict what champion Althea is going to do.

* * *

REAMS

Baltimore, Md. — How many sheets of paper are there in a ream?

ALLEN WITHERS

480 sheets in a ream of writing paper; 516 sheets in one ream of printing paper.

* * *

Wilmington, Del. — How long will the average person's hair grow in three months, time?

JILL UNDERWOOD

About 2½ inches.

* * *

SONG

New York, N.Y. — Can you tell me from which song the line "I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls" comes from? I've been singing it for years, and have never known.

MORRIS FOY

From an aria in the operetta "The Bohemian Girl" by Alfred Bunn.

COLORS

Annapolis, Md. — We are always hearing about "all the colors of the spectrum" when people refer to a colorful item. Can you name for me the colors of the spectrum?

ERNESTINE BYNUM

Happy to. The primary colors of the spectrum are red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet. Sir Isaac Newton named a seventh, indigo, situation between blue and violet.

* * *

SNOW TALK

Philadelphia, Pa. — After that heavy snow of last week, I started wondering just what is the snowiest place in this country, not including Alaska of course.

D. E.

Since the weather bureau doesn't count blizzards in mean annual snowfall; the tops goes to Sault St. Marie, Mich; which has a mean annual snow fall of 102.1 inches; Juneau, Alaska, incidentally has 90.0 inches.

Your Prayers Are Asked

For a very sick woman who needs understanding . . . For a sick daughter whose mind may be healed. . . . For Marie Smith. . . . For Willis who is sick in the mind. . . . For Annie and Lottie. . . . For my daughter Ida that she will feel better from her leg trouble and kidneys. . . . For Oletho Edward. . . . For a Brother Robert that he may gain weight and be healed. . . . For Kenneth and Chris that they may be reunited for the sake of their daughter. . . . For Loretta and Puddin that they may prosper as entertainers in show business. . . . For a mother that she may be completely healed and be able to return home. . . . For the removal of evil influences. . . . For a son's life. . . .

And for all sick and suffering people wherever they may be, that it may please God to heal them, And that Peace may prevail in the world.

Looking For Someone

If you want to locate missing friends or relatives, enclose $1 in an envelope along with a description of the person, where and when he was last heard from. Send it to Missing Persons Editor, AFRO-AMERICAN Magazine, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore 1, Md.

Persons with information concerning these missing people address all correspondence to Missing Persons, c/o AFRO-AMERICAN, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore 1, Md.

Dorothy A. Boyd of Washington, D.C. would like to locate her first and second cousin, Mrs. Julia Robinson Crittenden and daughter, Mary Alma, formerly of Richmond, Virginia. Last known to be in Baltimore or Pennsylvania. They are of holiness faith. Their aunt, Mrs. Henrietta Boyd of Manakin, Virginia is very anxious to see them.

* * *

Mary A. G. Thomas of Baltimore, Maryland is looking for her brother Charles E. Ennis. His last known address was Brooklyn, N.Y. He was aboard the USS Florida in 1914. His brother is ill in the hospital.

Mattie Murphy is looking for Pfc. Charlie Bullock. Last seen October 30, 1957. His home is in Columbus, Ohio. He was released from the 440th Army band sometime in November of 1957 to another company.

* * *

Lucille M. Sweeting is looking for her mother Frances Ferguson. Her last known address was 214 Clinton St., Warren, Ohio. Her husband, James Ferguson, worked for the Wards Baking Company in Cleveland, Ohio. She was born in Columbia, S.C., age 67 or 68.

Miss M. L. Irving of 376 Mayes St., NW, Atlanta, Ga., who was looking for Willie T. Brown (W.T.) can locate him at 252 N. Dallas Court, Baltimore 31, Md.

* * *

Mrs. Lillie M. Kirk of Asbury Park, N.J., is looking for her husband, John Kirk, who was last seen in July, 1945 in Cross City, Florida.

* * *

William Whitten of Baltimore, Md. is looking for his mother, Mrs. Mary Frances Whitten who was known to be living in Cincinnati, Ohio.

* * *

Martha Johnson of Northfork, W.Va., would like to know the address of Mrs. Marie Johnson of Washington, D.C. She is trying to locate her father who was last known to be living in Grenchier, S.C.

* * *

Mrs. Delores Robinson of Virginia is looking for her son, Elbert Robinson.

* * *

Mrs. Sallie Coleman, of Baltimore, Maryland is looking for Mr. Abe Washington and his wife, Doll. They were last heard from living between Fairmount and Clargsburg W. Virginia in 1938. Mr. Washington was a coal miner.

Miss Lillian Carson of 224 2nd Street, N.E., Washington, D.C., is looking for her brother, Robert Carson. Light brown-skinned, had gold tooth on left side, height 5' 5" and weighs about 190 pounds.

* * *

Mrs. Ellen Calhoun, 2708 Fisk Rd., Baltimore, Md., is trying to locate a cousin living in Chicago, Ill. His name is Vernon Magrinne. He formerly lived in Greenville, S.C. and later resided in Baltimore. His father, Gip, and a sister, Ruth still live in Greensville.

Legal Advisor

By ROBERT WATTS
Baltimore Attorney

When a man is ordered to pay a fine and he doesn't have the money, I understand that he has to serve time. How much time does he have to serve to pay a fine of $150?

Ans. 45 days. For a fine of $1 to $100 it is 30 days; for a fine of $100 to $500 it is 60 days, and for a fine of $500 or more, it is a maximum.

* * *

MY HUSBAND was injured in 1951 and stayed in the hospital 2½ years. His foot was amputated and a silver plate was put in his hip.

Now the plate has infected the leg and the company refuses to pay for the operation or to put him in the hospital since he would receive his last check in July of 1958. Is this legal?

Ans. From the meager facts you have given it appears that he is entitled to further treatment if it can be shown that his present condition is due to the original injury. My advice is for you see an attorney in Washington who will look into the matter.

* * *

IF A MAN and a woman have lived together for seven years or more and she has worked and helped pay for furniture, can the man take her out of the furniture?

Ans. If the woman is above 21 (or the mentioned time) and has equity and good conscience she would be entitled to part of it. These matters are best worked out by agreement, for the courts are a little antagonistic to this type of relationship under what the laws calls "clean hands doctrine." I, therefore, suggest that you see an attorney for if your name is on the bills, this will help also.

The TV-Radio Scene

If you caught the Victor Borge "Comedy and Music" show last Wednesday, 9-10 CBS-TV, you saw Luther Henderson Jr., musical director conducting the orchestra.

He was recently spotlighted on the cover of your AFRO Magazine Section, and is musical director of NBC's Polly Bergen show, Saturdays 9-10 p.m.

Contrary to reports, the Polly Bergen Show will not be cancelled after this season. It has been renewed for an additional 26 weeks, and will run for a full 52 weeks.

* * *

ONE of the newest video disc-jockeys with a bandstand-type show is Dave (Jocko) Henderson, former Baltimorean who broke with a radio show in Philadelphia, where he recently marked his [illegible] outings. It will be replaced by "The Amateur Hour," the Ted Mack perennial . . . The telecast of the Academy Award presentations March 26 will go an hour and 45 minutes instead of the 90 minutes originally scheduled . . . The Sugar Ray Robinson-Carmen Basilio bout again to be on theatre-tv only. Tab will be $5 per seat in the Philadelphia area . . . Newest dance craze, The Swivel, was introduced by 3,200 youngsters at New York's Savoy ballroom in conjunction with a contest run by WLIB and the PAL. Reports say the dance is more hippy than hip . . . American Bandstand, on ABC-TV daily claims over a million viewers. The show is not seen in Baltimore or Washington.

FROM page article in Billboard headlines Baltimore's Buddy Deane show as a peaches and cream deal on the race angle. Publication date of the issue is February 17, a few days after the city's board of education withdrew support of the show because of racial segregation.

* * *

THE gospel-singing Clara Ward Singers scheduled for their third stint on DAVE Garroway's "Today" April 3 . . . In case you searched for Ed Sullivan on your TV screen last Sunday, it was dropped after just six weeks. It will be replaced by "Rocket Ship Show" over Newark's WATV-TV weekly. Biggest complaint on the show, according to the trade publications, is that the dancing teenagers aren't very good dancers.

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AFRO
MAGAZINE SECTION
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HERE IS MILDRED

High Cost Of Living

Like Mildred says, everyone talks about high prices, but nobody does anything about it. That's what Mildred says, and I mean she says it.

By Alice Childress

Marge, look at this little-bitty paper sack, see how I'm holdin' it in one hand real easy?

What do you think is in this bag? I'll tell you! Six dollars worth of groceries! A pound of bacon, a jar of coffee, a dozen eggs and a piece of meat! It makes no sense!

I saw Miss Taylor downstairs and I says to her:

'Oh, my, ain't things gettin' high?"

She shook her head, threw up both hands and says . . . "Oh, don't say a word!"

* * *

MARGE, WHY is our favorite expression always . ."don't say a word"?

Sometimes some words need to be said! Everything you can think of is high beyond reach and we not sayin' a word.

I don't know how folks with a lot of children can hold their peace. I wonder what they're feedin' the kids?

The butcher shop looks like a art gallery. All the meat is framed in a little box like it's gonna be hung up on the wall!

I see the kids buyin' candy bars in big, fancy wrappers. When you open the paper there's a little piece of candy slidin' around inside.

I want to know why do they make the wrapper so much bigger than the candy?

* * *

HAVE YOU ever noticed how big a box some crackers come in? Open that big box and the crackers begin half-way down.

Yes, I know they weigh what they say on the box, but why do they want us to think we're gettin' a large old box full?

Mrs. Jones' daughter told me that when you buy canned goods and other things, you must look and read what they put in it.

She says they list what's in it according to how much of a thing they put in.

She means that if you buy a can of corned beef hash and it says . . "potatoes, corned beef, etc." . .that means there is more potatoes in that can than there is beef, and more beef than there is the next thing . .and so on.

Well, I picked up a package of frankfurters and the first thing I read was . . . "water, beef, pork." How do you like that? I started noticin' that almost every can got plenty of water, every package . . plenty of water. I'm wonderin' just how much water I have bought o er the years?

* * *

I WONDER why every pound of sausage I buy seems to fry down littler than the one before?

I wonder why I can take a big loaf of bread and squeeze it down to the size of my hand? I wonder if water has anything to do with it?

"Believe it or not, this is six dollars worth of groceries."

Mrs. Jones' daughter also says they blow up things with air! They know how to puff up cakes and ice-cream and everything!

They know how to make whipped cream that ain't cream! They know how to do all manner of great marvels by takin' the goodness out of a food and sellin' it in a separate box.

Sure, a woman I worked for used to buy cereal with no wheat germ in it, then she'd buy a box of wheat germ to sprinkle on top of the cereal. It is all very mixed-up.

Marge, you are absolutely correct. Sharin' high prices is the closest we come to absolute equality.

The market will not change the price of butter on account of somebody's race.

Everybody who marches up to the counter must come with the right amount of dollars in his hand.

* * *

I WAS readin' in a magazine how we must expect the prices to keep goin' up while employment falls off and wages get lower.

Why must we expect that?

As far as I can see it is happenin', so if it is happenin' why do we talk about expecting it to take place sometime in the future.

* * *

I THINK it's high time the bigwigs put their heads together and figure out how to do something 'bout the price situation, how to get some of the water outta the frankfurters and stuff like that.

. . . I know we're anxious—go up to the moon, girl; we won't need any rockets to get there, all we have to do is ride with the prices and that's where we'll land.

Perfect Crime?

(Continued from Page 1)

climb out on the fire escape —six floors over Seventh Ave. with February's wild wintry blasts whipping like mad.

Then the policeman broke the window pane with his night stick, raised the window then the shade. The light was burning in this, the living room.

* * *

IN FRONT of us, across a small hall was the bathroom and there, bound hand and foot and with a rope around her neck in the tub was Mrs. Reed, Thelma's mother.

Her body was bloated three times its natural size. The stench was unbearable.

We moved swiftly. At the end of the little hall was a bedroom. There, with her feet resting on the floor, was Thelma's aunt — tied up in similar fashion, a knotted rope around her neck too — with the flesh cut in deeply.

"The girl's here somewhere," I shouted, moving back into the living room.

On the right, an open door caught our attention. The policeman rushed behind me, holding aloft, his flash light.

Penetrating the gloomy death chamber, the light made a perfect spotlight for a tableau unequalled on any stage.

There was Thelma. Stretched on the bed, fully clothed, her arms were tied to the bedposts and her feet stretched apart and tied in similar fashion.

A pool of rotting blood on the floor beside the bed spread crazily. The girl's throat was slashed from ear to ear, deep, ragged slash.

Her eyes were wide open in stark terror — her pretty mouth was distorted in agonizing pain — showing her pretty even teeth. Wildly, her hair covered the sodden pillow, Medusa-like, clothed with blood. No words can describe the horror, nor can imagination recreate the stench.

* * *

HOLDING handkerchiefs to our noses, we moved through the living room to the hall then to the door to the stair landing to admit the other police and Thelma's boy friend.

That was shortly after 10 P.M.

By now, police cars were screaming up Seventh Avenue, sirens open bringing up carloads of detectives and the big brass from downtown. The little apartment soon was filled with milling detectives.

They had discovered the murder weapon, a rusty straight edged razor on the floor by the pool of blood. They had also picked up scraps of photographs, torn and scattered all over the floor.

They found cigaret butts all over the place — where the killer smoked nervously awaiting his prey.

But by the time the ambulance arrived, they had also discovered Thelman's three-month-old niece, covered with Thelma's coat, lying in a big leather armchair in the living room. The ambulance doctor leaned over just as the starving baby breathed its last!

Then the drama really began.

* * *

OUTSIDE, a mob had gathered, curious to know what was happening.

Conducting the investigation at the house, Captain Hyams of the Detective Squad was assisted by Inspector Mulrooney —later Commissioner of the Department.

The house underwent a thorough search while I filled in details for the police —being the one person who had led them into this shambles.

Sitting at a table under the lone electric light, Captain Hyams was waiting developments while hearing my story.

A detective came up, waited respectfully, then shoved a pasted up photo in front of the Captain. He grunted.

"Bring him in. Who is he?" Curious, I asked: "Let me see the picture Captain, perhaps I can identify him."

He shoved the picture to me. I recognized the fellow immediately. He was a good friend of mine. He liked to do imitations. This one was a snap shot of him imitating Lon Chaney as the "Hunchback of Notre Dame." That did it. The cops knew he was the man.

FROM THERE, we went to

(Continued on Page 4)

Jest For Laffs

COED OPPORTUNITY

College Senior: See, that big fellow playing fullback? I think he'll be our best man next year.

Coed: "Oh, darling, this is so sudden.

* * *

ALL IN THE ACCENT

Northern Girl: Men are all alike.

Southern Girl: Men are all ah like, too.

* * *

THE LITTLE VIXENS

"My darling," he whispered to her as they reclined under the magnolia tree in the moonlight, "let me feast my eyes upon your lovely face and I'll buy you a sable muff. Let me hold your hand and I'll buy you a red fox scarf. Let me kiss you and I'll buy you a mink cape. Let me—"

"Stop," the girl cried. "That's fur enough!"

* * *

Some people are like blotters; they soak it all up but get it all backwards.

* * *

If all the cars in the world were placed end to end some dope would pull out and try to pass them.

* * *

Some novels you just can't put down; others you don't dare to if there are children in the house.

". . . and when did you first discover you were better than everybody else in the world?"