

SUMMER 1985

Summertime, and the living is easy
for the increasingly affluent beneficiaries
of five years of corporate tax cuts
who schedule tours of Europe and the Far East
while their children are constructively occupied
at music or computer camps.

Summertime, and the living is far from easy
for the long unemployed homeless
evicted from Baloney Joe's and the Athens Hotel
because funds for them are exhausted,
and for the growing contingents of young people
struggling to get and hold a job at the minimum
(soon to be subminimum?) wage
where, under Federal labor standards,
they may legally labor 15 hours a day
without assured lunch hours or breaks,
unprotected by any union contract.

Summertime, and as nuclear know-how
proliferates around the globe,
billions more are appropriated
for the nation's "defense",
including funds for "humanitarian" assistance
to Nicaraguan terrorists,
and for daily saturation bombing
with napalm and phosphorous
of Salvadoran villagers.

While starvation stalks the African continent,
and severe malnutrition immobilizes
development in Latin America,
the United States continues to store:

41 million pounds of honey,
222 million bushels of corn,
268 million pounds of butter,
337 million bushels of wheat,
721 million pounds of cheese,
1.1 billion pounds of non-fat dry milk
and 2 billion pounds of rice

in a land one-fifth of whose children
now grow up in poverty.

The President says we can't afford
to transport our tons of stored surplus food
to the localities where it can be distributed
to ever growing numbers
of needy citizens.

What are we saving it all for,
in our bulging warehouses —
doomsday?

Great Spirit of the universe,
Creator of earth and sky
and of all the beauty and love
contained therein,
please forgive us
for our thoughtless greed,
and arouse each of us to action
before summer ends and the night falls
for the last time.

MARY JANE BREWSTER



SCANDINAVIAN DAY PARADE

The year the parade couldn't run fast enough
I was there, I saw it conquered.
I don't remember which year it was
(the year the parade couldn't run fast enough)
for any bewildered year a parade celebrates
the year before and the year after
as faithfully as a stone saves a name
from our water-logged town, whose days
have ended like all the parades
that tried to run, that all run together.

It was a bad ship of weather
in black sail, a hill of dark rain.
It took its place at the end of the line,
worth a hundred parades, and rolled the street up.
(the turn of the century was the last thing
that big to come down our main street)
What if the wood that fed us, giant timber,
and the fish that built the canneries walked also?
What if Sea Otters marched also,
the Indian tribes and their lost languages...

The year the parade couldn't run fast enough
it would have taken them all equally —
a squall of rain in three blocks catching
the painted clown who tried to kiss girls,
the big kid they made play tuba
in the metallic band that broke on buildings,
the Mayor who with her umbrella tried to save
(bent rain driving petals from her corsage)
the Grand Marshal, known in a thousand towns,
from the embarrassment of our personal deluge.

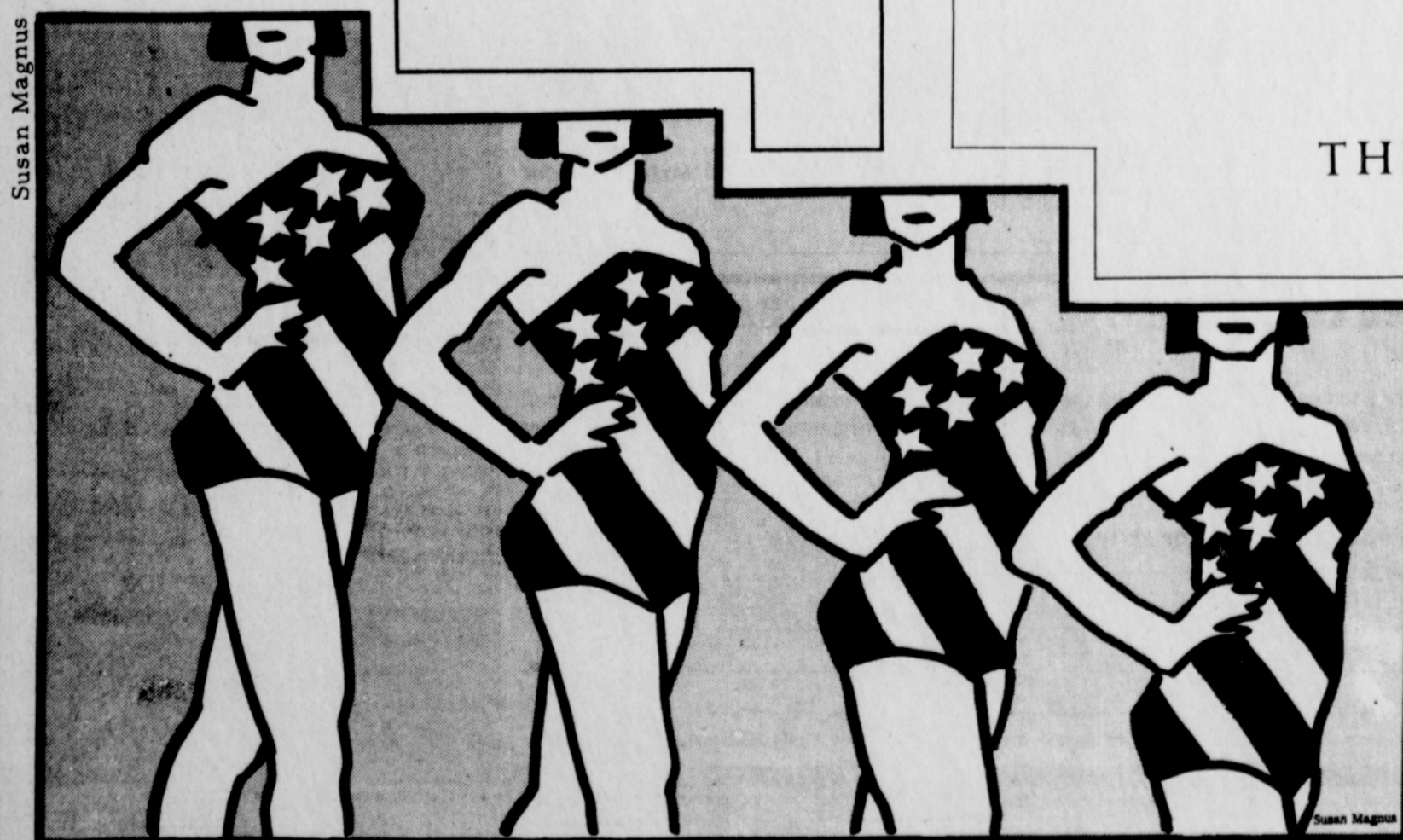
Now the girls in wet garlands must marry
and mud puddles blink in the rain —
a distorted building crumbling in each one.
Years the parade can't run fast enough
it's absurd to ask time for mercy.
For that we must turn to each other yet
in every lashed direction the people storm
to warm homes, and long bocks apart
only a few of us remain in doorways,
mad as captains on the decks of our lives.

WILLIAM CHAMBERLAIN

THE DRIVE-IN OATH

We are drive-in mutants.
We are not like other people.
We are sick.
We are disgusting.
We believe in blood,
In breasts,
And in beasts.
We believe in Kung Fu City.
If life had a Vomit Meter,
We'd be off the scale.
As long as one single drive-in remains
On the planet Earth,
We will party like jungle animals.
We will boogie till we puke.
Heads will roll.
The drive-in will never die.
Amen.

JOE BOB BRIGGS



Susan Magnus

Susan Magnus