CHAPTER V

ALIENATION

The oxymoronic title given by David Riesman to his book *The Lonely Crowd*, most appropriately suggests the modern predicament of alienation, the estrangement, oraloneness of an individual within his own group. Recent studies of this phenomenon assign philosophical, psychological, sociological and political connotations to the term alienation. With modern society undergoing vast and rapid changes and with the crumbling of traditional patterns of relationships, an individual feels adrift, alone, and frustrated. Helen Merrell Lynd makes a profound observation when characterizing the main attributes of the contemporary period of history, which according to her, is called,

...a new period of failure of nerve, an age of conformity, a period of anomie or cultural chaos, of escape from freedom, a new age of treason, an age of longing, a decline of the West. Much is heard of the dilemma of liberalism, the distrust of the democratic process, the revolt of the masses the failure of self-determination, the loss of command over the environment. We who live in this time are described as alienated, estranged, isolated, alone, a lost generation, depersonalized, other-directed, double men.¹

Thus, in the contemporary catastrophic and cataclysmic times, alienation appears to have already been spelled out for the individual. Broadly speaking, alienation denotes estrangement, a separation of somebody from somebody or
something else. In its more restricted meaning in modern psychology and sociology, alienation refers to a feeling or state of separation or dissociation between a personality and some significant part of the world of the experience, that is, from others and from the world or even from one's self.

The two prominent names associated with the term alienation are those of Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud. The term has acquired vital importance in social sciences. According to Marx, the roots of alienation of the working class in a materialistic society lie not in industrialism as such but in the private ownership of the means of production. The worker feels no interest in the work that he does and his creative powers are exploited by the owner of the capital who employs him. The worker, therefore, remains alien from the product of his labour and feels as if he were an enslaved labourer. Marx suggests that man can emancipate himself from the state of alienation by adopting the communistic way. He believed that in that mature form of socialism, all forms of alienation are bound to disappear. In modern psychology the phenomenon of alienation occurs because of the estrangement of the self from the self. Taking emotions to be part of normal experience, the psychologists believe that the individual is internally split into two parts which become alien to each other and yet do not completely destroy the principle of the unity of the self.
Evidently, in Dos Passos the phenomenon of alienation does not figure in the form which can be described as psychological. He does not attempt to reveal "the labyrinthine recesses of the human heart," nor are his characters the self-conscious, and brooding type of the existentialist school. His main concern is with the dehumanizing effects of urbanization and technological developments on the psyche of an individual. An incessant striving for wealth, luxuries and comforts of technological civilization leads the individual to spiritual vacuity. He feels, as does Norman Mailer, that "life in America becomes more economically prosperous and more psychically impoverished each year." The individual captivated by the affluence of the industrialized society is finally mutilated into a machine. Miklos Almasi sharply observes, "as the quantity of machines grows, man becomes more and more adjunct to the equipment, a passive part of the mechanical processes; he is at the mercy of some unwieldy mechanism largely incomprehensible to him." To emancipate man from the malady of aloneness, or alienation, Dos Passos hoped to find palliatives in communism and the New Deal, but finally discovered them equally ineffective, even disastrous.

Alienation being an inevitable phenomenon in modern society, it is but natural that the Dos Passos hero should experience it. The present study takes cognizance of the fact that the triple involvement of the hero, as discussed in the earlier chapters, usually culminates in a corresponding form
of alienation. The hero who conforms to the dehumanized urban and industrial environment, is alienated from his psyche and from the abiding values of life. Materially, he is the victor, spiritually the vanquished; the outcome of a society dehumanized by the mechanical processes of a corrupting material environment as given in the introduction to U.S.A.:

The streets are empty. People have packed into subways, climbed into streetcars and buses; in the stations, they've scampered for suburban trains; they've filtered into lodgings and tenements, gone up in elevators into apartmenthouses. In a showwindow two sallow windowdressers in their shirtsleeves are bringing out a dummy girl in a red evening dress, at a corner welders in masks lean into sheets of blue flame repairing a cartrack, a few drunk bums shamble along, a sad streetwalker fidgets under an arclight. From the river comes the deep rumbling whistle of a steamboat leaving dock. A tug hoots far away.5

This is a picture of emptiness, reflecting the spiritual isolation of the persons who inhabit such streets. The machines of transportation like taxis, buses, trains, elevators etc. and other technical devices mould the "youngman" into a machine and accentuate his alienation from society. What is visible in the streets are the vestiges of industrial civilization -- the store windows, dummies, marked welders, drunken bums, and prostitutes. In the novels of Dos Passos, characters like Dan Fuselli, George Baldwin, J. Ward Moorehouse, Dick Savage, Charley Anderson, Jed Morris, Chuck Crawford and Frank Worthington, and the teamsters bow before the system and destroy the
felicity of their minds. The material power for which they crave, vitiates their moral and spiritual vitality. Thus, they represent the unstable, dazzling, permissive, and enervating aspect of industrialized society.

The second kind of involvement is that of the right-thinking individuals, who with firm conviction stand up for their principles. They make futile attempts for the re-humanization of the decaying society and for alleviating the feeling of estrangement. In their portrayal, Dos Passos is trying to show the ultimate fate that is meted out to the individual in the age of conformity and pragmatism. Pitted against the formidable power of an organized group -- war, capitalism, party politics -- a man of originality having a firm commitment to his own set of values, is doomed. A reviewer of *Midcentury* convincingly brings out how an individual is inevitably doomed while pitched against the invincible forces of the technological society:

There can be no notable human character on this scene, because the colossus of power envisioned by Mr. Dos Passos, against which he directs all his strength and all his inventiveness, is so monstrous and unreachable that its presence would transform even the most brilliant and admirable of mortals into a cipher. The message offered is that this colossus endures, renewing itself in various deceitful but always lethal forms, that man has no chance of simple happiness or of eventual triumph; and that the most anyone can do is to try. (and the most that anyone can hope for is the chance to try) to improve the condition of mankind by flinging himself against the monster.
The social rebel is thus bound to feel alienated from the society or the group on which in his earlier life he had reposed his faith. Characters like John Andrews, Ben Compton, Glenn Spotswood, Millard Carroll, Paul Graves, and Terry Bryant, struggle to shake off the incubus of the system, but in this process they themselves are defeated, ostracized, or killed by the system itself. They feel that life's pleasures are contaminated by self-seeking individuals, or groups or political parties. The social rebel fights desperately against terrific odds. When we look at these characters, we find ourselves, as Lois Hughson points out, "on the verge here of Camus' absurd man, the Sisyphus who pushes the rock up the mountain knowing each time it will fall to the bottom, never failing to push with all his strength, his revolt against his fate equalled by his fidelity to his task." The characters who dedicate themselves to the welfare of humanity and are destroyed in the struggle receive Dos Passos's deepest sympathy. They attain, what Arthur Miller calls, the "tragic victory." The social rebel is physically vanquished, but spiritually, he is a victor.

The third involvement is that of the commentators, who by virtue of the role they play, already appear to be alienated. Jimmy Herf, Fenian McCreary, Roland Lancaster, and Tyler Spotswood, Herbert Spotswood, Blackie Bowman present
fine examples of alienated men of this type. They seem to have resigned themselves to the situation in which they have been placed and make little attempt to liberate themselves from the condition of alienation. The society fails to provide them with any kind of stable and permanent support. As was the case with their involvement, their alienation too, remains linear.

The alienation scenes of all the three categories of characters have been very effectively delineated in Dos Passos's novels. They remain etched in our memory with their poignant pathos and symbolic significance. With an ingenious touch, hinting at the changes in physiognomy and names, Dos Passos further vivifies and intensifies the alienation phenomenon. The social climbers are tacitly alluded to as machines or having machine-like movement. In the last phase of their career they carry a vague feeling of hollowness or spiritual vacuity, a failure at the emotional level which they never try to probe into, or make an effort to correct. Their death, which carries an implicit meaning, occurs in an accident (Charley Anderson) or due to heart failure (J. Ward Moorehouse, Jed Morris). As against these characters, social rebels see the imminence of death, and embrace it with heroic stoicism. Their death carries an element of grandeur in it. They are either killed by the antagonistic forces (Glenn, Terry Bryant), or
at the end through a final disillusion, are alienated from the system in which they had reposed their faith (Ben Compton). The commentators on the other hand, are already estranged from the environment since they refuse from the very beginning to get embroiled into it. They land in some alien country or leave for some unknown place. Furthermore, sometimes Dos Passos giving a new sobriquet to the hero points out the various changes occurring in him, or may refer to one or other specific quality in the total complex of his significant personality. For instance, J. War Moorehouse changes many names, Jed Morris, has the initials J.E.D, John Andrews registers himself in a hotel as John Brown, Glenn Spotswood carries the alias Sandy Crockett in the Party.

II

Victors -- Vanquished

In George Baldwin, Dos Passos dramatizes a character who is a victim of "the delusion of power." George Baldwin's fantastic affluence and profligacy deaden him to any kind of loyalty to a cause or capacity to love a person. In the chapters entitled "Revolving Doors" and "The Burthen of Nineveh," there are clear indications of his sense of aloneness and the toy-like, mechanical life. In the chapter "Revolving
Doors" he is looking in the mirror and observing the signs of physical decay on his face: "His hair that still grew densely down to a point on his forehead was almost white. There was a deep line at each corner of his mouth and across his chin. Under his bright gimlet eyes the skin was sagging and granulated" (p. 332). In an attempt to resuscitate his youthful vitality he uses strychnine pills. In the mean time Nellie Gus McNiel, his one-time beloved, calls at his office to request him to reconsider her husband Gus's proposal to contest the mayoralty election as a candidate of his party. Caring little for Gus's sincerity and Nellie's love, George Baldwin, a "fine talker" argues, "I have pledged myself to oppose certain elements with which Gus has let himself get involved" (p. 333). After this brief and tense encounter between these two old lovers, Nellie leaves him and Baldwin feels perturbed and is overtaken by a sense of loneliness. For a respite, he goes to Nevada, his mistress. There, he finds her carrying on her love with Tony Hunter, a homosexual. The discovery aggravates his sense of aloneness. Exasperated, he tells her, "I'll send you a check for five hundred, because you are a nice girl and I like you. The apartment's paid till the first of the month. Does that suit you? And please never communicate with me in any way" (p. 334). In this separation he finds "good riddance." Yet, on his way back "he wondered who he could go to see. Telling over the names of his friends made him depressed."
He began to feel lonely, deserted. He wanted to be talking to a woman, making her sorry for the barrenness of his life" (p. 335). This sense of aloneness and depression becomes more pronounced in the chapter "The Burthen of Nineveh." George Baldwin and Ellen Herf meet and Baldwin makes a marriage proposal to her since his first wife Cecily has consented to a divorce. She thinks over her past and Baldwin's proposal. She is described as a person who has become listless, frigid, mechanized: "It seemed as if she had set the photograph of her self in her own place, forever frozen into a single gesture," and again as "rigid as a porcelain figure" (p. 375). Curiously when she looks at Baldwin, "His wooden face of a marionette waggled senselessly in front of her" (p. 375). When they are about to part outside the restaurant, "She [Ellen] saw him poised spry against the darkness in a tan felt hat and a light tan overcoat, smiling like some celebrity in the rotogravure section of a Sunday paper" (p. 375). The phrase "rotogravure section" should be meaningful, because it means photographic impressions made by a "rotary press" (machine symbol). When Ellen is seated in the cab, Baldwin admits the hollowness and listlessness of his mechanical life. He tells her, "God if you knew how empty life had been for so many years. I've been like a tin mechanical toy, all hollow inside" (p. 375). Ellen herself a "procelain figure" rejoins, "Let's not talk about mechanical toys" (p. 375).
J. Ward Moorehouses offers another significant example of the hero who has an incorrigible lust for wealth and power and eventually meets with spiritual alienation. Pointing out Moorehouse's opportunism and selfishness, Charles T. Ludington writes, "Hence he is a symbol of what Dos Passos considers an aberration arising from industrialism and of the hollowness that can accompany material wealth." Moorehouse's luxurious living, plush surroundings, and working in a glittering world obliterate the little goodness he shows in the beginning. In the last scenes Moorehouse has become both a physical and a moral wreck. His blonde hair turns white, the large body takes on fat, the cheeks fall into jowls. When he has a heart attack "his face was a rumpled white and he had violet shadows under his eyes" (p. 568), and his voice had grown "weak and shaky." Along with the physical decay there is a change in names, which serves for him as a public mark. He is christened John Ward, grows up as Johnny, introduces himself to the social elite as John, and spends the war years as Major Moorehouse. He is married to Isabella Strang as J. Ward, because John is "awfully plebian" and is known to her as Ward. He adopts J. Ward as his final and definitive name and allows trustees, employees and important clients to call him "J.W.". Finally, the name becomes an institution. Gripped by the fear of death, he proposes to change the capital structure of the firm to "Moorehouse,
Griscolm, and Savage*. Like an institution it embodies mechanical and corrupt qualities. Reggie, an employee of Moorehouse, on hearing that Moorehouse had a heart attack says, "After all J. Ward Moorehouse isn't a man...it's a name...you can't feel sorry when a name gets sick" (p. 571). Moorehouse's spiritual bankruptcy is articulated in his association with persons like Dick Savage, Doc Bingham and Eleanor Stoddard who allow themselves to sink in the pit of immorality. Richard Ellsworth, an opportunist, once an idealist and a poet like Moorehouse himself, degenerates in the last scenes into a homosexual and is afraid of being blackmailed. As his alias Dick Savage suggests, he represents the predatory nature and preys upon the weaker sections of society. Moorehouse's sterile relationship with Eleanor Stoddard is indicative of his sapless, frigid life. To cap it all we are shown the irresponsibility of Moorehouse's firm in its advocacy of Doc Bingham, a roving swindler, who has connived his rise to affluence and respectability in the city as a blustering, patent-medicine manufacturer. After the deal with the Senator for the promotion of Doc Bingham goods, Moorehouse has a heart attack. In the morning when he recovers a little, Dick Savage goes to see him, finds him sitting "propped up with pillows", implying that no strength is left in him to sustain his own person. For the national institution of J. Ward Moorehouse, "one of the sixty most important men in this country" (p. 571), there are overt references to the
machine-like structure of his body. Dick Savage advises a trip to the Mayo clinic and tells, "All you need's a little overhauling, valves ground, carburetor adjusted, that sort of thing" (p. 569). In these lines Moorehouse seems to have been completely mechanized by working like a machine. His aloneness is further highlighted when Dos Passos writes that of all his relatives, only his sister Hazel (survives, who is a teacher in a school in Wilmington. Moorehouse's spiritual failure is symbolized in the heart attack and finally his death.

Charley Anderson is essentially a noble soul lost to the glamour and gloss of wealth and a proud position in society. He gets many opportunities to improve his status in life but unlike Moorehouse, he lacks the selfishness and pragmatism to manipulate the opportunities for his own ends. Earlier in his life, he had associations with the labour movement, joined the A.F. of L and participated in an I.W.W. strike. After the War Charley has the insatiable desire for more and more money, and he drifts alone in a sea of uncertainty. His alienation begins when he makes a significant shift from the "instinct of workmanship" to the profit motive. He creates around him a glitter of the gold mine which eventually holds him a prisoner. He acts as a spendthrift boss and does not mind calling his secretary to pay off the bills. The more he amasses wealth, the more
he is engulfed in the world crises of "Big Money." He
forgets his own days of penury and poverty and tells his
friend Bill Cermak, Company's plans for handling the labour
problem, "We'r goin' to fire the whole outfit....Hell, if
they don't like it workin' for us, let 'em try to like it
workin' for somebody else...this is a free country. I
wouldn't want to keep a man against his will" (pp. 347-348).
Charley tries to establish his identity in the love of the
calculating girl Doris Humphries. She deludes him, and he
gratifies his sense of vindictiveness in a sexual act with
a hired girl:

The bar was full of men and girls halftight and
bellowing and tittering. Charley felt like wringing
their goddam necks. He drank off four whiskies one
after another and went around to Mrs. Darling's.
Going up in the elevator he began to feel right....

"Hello, dearie." He hardly looked at the girl. "Put
out the light, he said. "Remember your name's Doris.
Go in the bathroom and take your clothes off and
don't forget to put on lipstick, plenty lipstick." He
switched off the light and tore off his clothes.
In the dark it was hard to get the studs out of his
boiled shirt. He grabbed the boiled shirt with both
hands and ripped out the buttonholes. "Now come in
here, goddam you. I love you, you bitch Doris." The
girl was trembling. (pp. 226-227)

After sporadic sexual adventures Anderson finally sticks
to Margo Dowling, a symbol of sensual existence. He spends
lavishly on her. "Mr. A, as she called him, kept offering
to set Margo up in an apartment on Park Avenue but she
always said nothing doing, what did he think she was, a kept
woman? She did let him play the stockmarket a little for her,
and buy her clothes and jewelry and take her to Atlantic City and Long Beach weekends" (p. 367).

It goes without saying that Charley has many accidents in life, physical, financial and emotional. Senator Planet asks, "Charley, I hear you had an accident." With a gnawing feeling of emptiness, he replies, "I've had a series of them" (p. 399). And "the boy wizard of aviation financing," finally dies in an accident. His end comes when he picks up a stray girl, Eileen, to whom he wants to show off his driving skill, drives alongside an express train and sets out to beat it to the next grade crossing. He wins the race, but the car goes out of control. He dies without ever knowing what has happened to him. The car accident signifies the death of the technician in Charley Anderson. His notable achievement in the field of technology was "Askew Merrit starter." Ironically enough, his fatal car accident occurs due to the failure of the "starter." Evidently then, Charley Anderson's alienation stems from the fact that he has sold out his independence and individuality to machine and money. His alienation is manifested in his overt action of excessive drinking which is further tied up with sexual indulgence.

Jed Morris is an artist, a dramatist. His alienation begins when he surrenders his individuality to the Communist Party, which itself is subservient to the powers in Moscow, and sells his art for pecuniary profits and material comfort.
The dust Jacket of Most Likely to Succeed 1966 edition neatly sums up his character:

Bound up in his own hopes, unable to acknowledge his own fraility, Jed is warped by the struggle to adhere to an ideology that changes on a moment’s notice from Moscow. In the end, with both social hopes and domestic peace gone, he is a pitiable spectre a warning against the banality of any totalitarian ideology.12

His sexual flirtations and his lack of sincerity are suggestively delineated in the first few pages of the novel, Most Likely to Succeed. The promiscuous Jed Morris, already introduced in Chosen Country, stands on the lowest rung of moral lassitude. A bohemian in sex matters, Jed proclaims in Chosen Country, "Promiscuity is in my opinion the ideal state" (p. 385), and does not believe in the sexual fidelity to the spouse. He says, "I've explained to June [Jed's wife] that I'm old enough to marry but not old enough for monogamy. June's broad as all outdoors...and besides the kid [Jed's daughter, Mae] takes up so much of her time" (p. 385). He is persistent in his adulterous activities when he reappears in Most Likely to Succeed. Shortly after the First World War on his way back to New York from Morocco, on the liner he is shown making love to a rich divorcee Jane Marlowe. He boasts of his sexual transgressions with girls abroad, "and I kept waking up and finding myself in bed with some woman. There was a Spanish girl in Tlemcen who wore her hair a little like yours. She said she used camomile but she was
only a common prostitute" (p. 6). They introduce themselves to each other like two veteran adulterers. Jed asks her name:

"Jane Marlowe...Never mind my husband's name."
"I'll call you Marlowe, that's a golden name. Jane's too much like June. June's my wife's name."
"An adulterer, eh?"
"Consummate...."

He tells her:

"We live in a silly time. Morality has lost all meaning..." (p. 7). For sexual gratification with Jane Marlowe, he "unclasses" himself, which presages his lack of fidelity to a person or a group or a cause. His lack of warmth for Jane Marlowe is suggested in their last meeting on the liner when he says, "Just a rich bitch, he said almost aloud. He wanted to hate her. They talked about the weather like the chance, shipboard acquaintances. As he turned away, she gave him a quick little uneasy smile, but he could not make his face smile back" (p. 38).

Jed's alienation from the more substantial values of life, due to the Communist Party, calls for a more specific analysis. After a magnificent entry into New York, Jed is appointed a director of The Craftsman's Theatre run under the patronage of Adolph Baum, a millionaire living on Fifth Avenue, at the "princely salary" of twenty five dollars a week. Amidst the tinsel glory of prestige, Jed suffers the pangs of spiritual vacuity. Once he visits his father who is living in a hotel, and in the course of
their conversation his father, an old man, goes to sleep. In the figure of his sleeping father Jed can see the portents of his own aloneness: "Thoughts of the loneliness and womanlessness of old age rushed through Jed's head, thoughts that made him feel ashamed, sinful somehow, like the sons of Noah who looked on their father's nakedness" (p. 59). His involvement in the Communist movement and his blindness to human values throw him into a morass of hypertension and domestic misery. His final alienation is caused by the Party itself which clutches him in its callous grip and estranges him from the life around. One morning, Jed awakes and sees V.F. Calvert's car near his house. Gripped by a strange fear, "Something sent a chill down his spine...His heart started to beat fast. No it couldn't be. What the hell could V.F. Calvert be doing out there that early" (p. 305). Jed goes outside to see what they want and Calvert and Faust push him in the car without saying anything. Jed thinks they are taking him "for a ride." Instead, they tell him on his insistence that he must choose between Marlowe and the Party, with a rather overt warning, "The discarded instrument is thrown out on the trash pile. Nobody hears much about him anymore" (p. 309). On the basis of the report of the control commission, Jane Marlowe is alleged to be a spy in the Communist Party. Jed Morris is warned that if he chooses Marlowe, the Party will
destroy him in one way or the other. Sam sitting in the rear seat speaks into Jed's ear. "In your case expulsion wouldn't mean too much I suppose...but I think you know enough about how this town works to know that your contract will not be renewed. You haven't seen George Pastor getting many jobs lately, now have you? We are not as strong as we're going to be but we are strong enough to give quitters their comeuppance. Just exactly what are you planning to do for a living?" (p. 307). Jed chooses the Party and after a great emotional upheaval he sends Sam Faust to tell Marlowe that her services are henceforth dispensed with and then succumbs to a heart attack."He couldn't get his breath, "This might be a heart attack!" His voice was a gasp. 'Take me some place where I can lie down.' He closed his eyes. His ears hummed." (p. 310).

It is interesting to recollect that the novel opens with Jed trespassing into a higher class and making love to Jane Marlowe, and it ends with his turning her out of his house, while he had almost decided to settle down with her in a happy married life and to take care of his daughter, Mae. Situated between the abiding force of love on one side and the fear of the Party on the other, he stoops before the Party. Thus, he alienates himself from the enduring values of love, art and the sustaining aspects of a domestic life.
In the foregoing pages I have examined that Dos Passos, apparently, is not happy with the protagonists who rely too heavily on material success and social status. He seems to be enamoured of his social rebels. In their martyrdom he strikes a note of affirmation, the hope for a better future. The defeat of the war protagonists is dramatized in the form of the protest of an outraged sensibility against a world that is too callous and too chaotic to be understood. Martin Howe finally leaves for Spain and John Andrews is arrested on the charge of desertion. The aesthetic sensibility of the young idealists is shattered by the brutalities and banalities of war. Arnold Goldman, tracing the origin of the epic qualities in U.S.A., comments on One Man's Initiation-1917:

One Man's Initiation contains a strikingly depersonalized narrative voice. The depersonalization appears to grow with the effects of the shock of war upon the principals. Characters become passive in the face of a reality for which their culture has given them neither preparation nor resources to meet. Their personalities are squeezed out, leaving the field to enormity to external events themselves.13

Both Martin Howe and John Andrews try to revive and resuscitate those early, naive notions of an ideal world by seeking refuge in social reform. In One Man's Initiation-1917 Dos Passos alludes to four alternatives which could restore peace in the world and rehumanize mankind. Martin Howe's
four French radical friends Norman, Merrier, Lully and Andre Dubois propound the four views. Norman, supports the Church; Merrier is for Anarchism; Lully, is for socialism; and Andre Dubois, is for direct action revolution. By the end of the novel all the four friends are reported to have died on the war front. Their death symbolically implies the death of the Church, Socialism, Anarchism and Direct action, the avenues which possibly could bring change in the world. Martin Howe, as he has already declared, leaves for Spain which in those days held a specific significance for frustrated youth. Pointing out the importance of Spain in a youth's life, J.H. Wrenn writes that Martin Howe in One Man's Initiation has expressed his intention in 1918 to go to Spain after the war because "The aloof, uncrowded promontory of the peninsula had already become for Dos Passos the place to retire to for a clearer view of the world whenever the turmoil and pressure of events threatened to obscure his vision."¹⁴

Chapter X of One Man's Initiation strikes a note of hope and affirmation for a better world. It is a brief chapter where an old man sits in the dugout, resetting laces in the shoes which have been removed from the dead and wounded. Martin buys a pair. Metaphorically, he has put himself in the shoes of the brave soldiers who sacrificed their lives to save civilization. Treading their footsteps, he might be able to find a meaningful solution.
John Andrews's coveted wish lies in the composition and completion of music on "Arbeit Und Rhythmus," "The Queen of Sheba" and "The Body and Soul of John Brown." The rhythm has struck the chords of his heart when he is washing windows and sweeping leaves in the streets of the barracks and when he is recuperating on the hospital bed, or when finally, he deserts the army. The aesthete has been foiled by the monster war. The music motif throughout the novel is symbolic of Andrews's effort to survive in a hostile world. He has been shifting from one composition to the other to find some meaning in life. The composition "The Queen of Sheba" represents in a way the freedom of the artist into oriental glory away from the tyranny of the war:

Then he began to think of the music he had intended to write about the Queen of Sheba before he had stripped his life off in the bare room where they had measured him and made a soldier of him. Standing in the dark in the desert of his despair, he would hear the sound of a caravan in the distance, tinkle of bridles, rasping of horns, braying of donkeys and the throaty voices of men singing the songs of desolate roads. He would look up, and before him he would see, astride their foaming wild assess, the three green horsemen motionless, pointing at him with their long forefingers. Then the music would burst in a sudden hot whirlwind about him, full of flutes and kettledrums and braying horns and whining bagpipes, and torches would flare red and yellow, making a tent of light about him, on the edges of which would crowd the sumpter mules and the brown mule drivers, and the gaudily caparisoned camels, and the elephants glistening with jewelled harness. Naked slaves would bend their gleaming backs before him as they laid out a carpet at his feet; and, through the flare of torchlight, the Queen of Sheba would advance towards him, covered with emeralds and dull-gold
ornaments, with a monkey hopping behind holding up the end of her long train. She would put her hand with its slim fantastic nails on his shoulders; and, looking into her eyes, he would suddenly feel within reach all the fiery imaginings of his desire. (pp. 217-218)

Instead of the enchanting pageant of the Queen of Sheba, his life in the army had been "marching like a procession of ghosts before his eyes" (p. 218). The romantic vision of the oriental loveliness of the Queen of Sheba is later abandoned in favour of the "The Body and soul of John Brown."

"Who's John Brown"? [Genevieve, Andrews's beloved, asks]
"He was a madman who wanted to free people."
[replied Andrews] (pp. 460-461)

John Andrews is disenchanted and disillusioned. His alienation is epitomized in the last scene when he has retreated from Paris to the Touraine village. The military police finally arrest him there and he goes quietly. The novel ends with the pages of his composition being blown off the worktable by a breeze from the open window, "On John Andrews's writing table the brisk wind rustled among the broad sheets of paper. First one sheet, then another, blew off the table until the floor was littered with them" (p. 471). Dos Passos seems to be implying that the loss of Andrews's symphony is the major tragedy of the War. J.W. Aldridge felt a chastening effect when he and his friends read the last lines of the novel. "I remember," he writes, "we read the closing lines of his story with a mixture of
grave reverence and a sense of excited, almost eager, loss and sadness." Articulating the note of affirmation in the last lines of the novel, David Sanders comments, "The focus is upon the death of the artist (or aesthete) rather than upon the extinction of the individual." Stanley Cooperman finds in John Andrews's final resignation and surrender to the military police, a Christ-like image:

Haloed by the drifting pages of his music, scorning the milk and honey of that very school assignment he had groveled to secure, returning to the wilderness of the prison stockade, comforted only by his sense of righteousness, Andrews become what he had always desired; the central protagonist in a modest crucifixion.

Andrews has been arrested, the musician in him is strangled but the blown-up pages of "The Body and Soul of John Brown," may scatter and propagate his thoughts. There is a note of affirmation for a world of imperfectibility in the possibility of a social revolution as conceived by John Brown. Substantiating the viability of a social revolution as envisioned by John Brown, Dos Passos writes in the "Introduction" to Three Soldiers:

Any spring is a time of overturn, but then Lenin was alive, the Seattle general strike had seemed the beginning of the flood instead of the beginning of the ebb....in every direction the countries of the world stretched out starving and angry, ready for anything turbulent and new....It wasn't that today was any finer than it is now, it's perhaps that tomorrow seemed vaster.

Andrews expresses the same hope when Chrisfield asks him:
"...there's anything in that revolution business? Ah hadn't never thought they could buck the system that away."

"They did in Russia."

"Then we'd be free, civilians, like we all was before the draft. But that ain't possible, Andy; that ain't possible, Andy."

"We'll see," said Andrews, as he opened the door to the bar. (p. 440)

Notwithstanding this note of affirmation, J.W. Aldridge attempts to give a reason for the hero's inevitable defeat and disenchantment. "Illusions must always be destroyed, protest must always prove ineffectual, the natural condition of modern man, particularly aesthetic man, under the present social and economic system must always be defeat."19

Both Ben Compton and Glenn Spotswood are the victims of the Communist Party. They are moulded almost in the same frame of social rebels. Dos Passos concludes Ben Compton's story in *The Big Money* with Ben's ostracism from the Socialist Party to which he had dedicated his whole life. Broken-hearted, Ben tries to find solace in his association with Mary French. He acquaints her with the latest developments in the Party and with his aloneless, "A party of yesmen...that'll be great....But, Mary, I had to see you...I feel so lonely suddenly...you know, cut off from everything....You know if we hadn't been fools we'd have had that baby that time...we'd still love each other....Mary, you were very lovely to me when I first got out of jail" (p. 599). He asks her to help him get into relief work where "the discipline
isn't so strict" (p. 599). She diminishes the last ray of hope in him when she says, "I don't think they want any disrupting influences in the I.L.D." (p. 599). These days she is under the influence of Don Stevens, the pragmatic communist. In a moment of exasperation Mary calls him a "disrupter" and a "stoolpigeon." 

"Ben Compton's face broke into pieces suddenly the way a child's face does when it is just going to bawl. He sat there stareing at her senselessly scraping the spoon round and round in the empty coffee mug" (p. 600). At this point when Ben is extricated from the Party and from the love of Mary French, his feeling of alienation is represented in his revolving the spoon in the empty coffee mug. It implies the fruitless and meaningless effort of an individual in the vast expanse of a spiritually barren world.

Glenn Spotswood, Ben Compton's prototype, from his experiences in the Mexican pecan shellers' strike and Slade County miners' strike, sees through the tactics, Party publicity, opportunism and the conspiratorial attitude of the communists. He joins the Party with an almost religious piety. He makes a vain attempt to redeem the corrupt system of communism, which eventually devours him. In the miners' troubles in Slade County, Glenn organizes and conducts strikes in the teeth of overwhelming opposition from the mine owners and the dampening effects of the communist saboteurs. But the
communists have the upper hand. He turns an independent radical after he discovers a complete lack of sincerity in the communist leadership. He boldly refuses to bow before the selfish motives and the corrupt practices of the communists. After Pearl Napier's death, Glenn, guilt-ridden, defies Party discipline, calls off his speaking tour and demands an auditing of the accounts of the workers' defense fund. He is expelled from the Party for this and his former associates dare not speak to him. He goes to Detroit to work for Ford, but is sacked for promoting unionism in the washrooms. Less Minot offers him a good job as a union organizer provided he quits his anti-communist activities. In a final effort to do something for the workers' cause, Glenn volunteers for service in the Spanish Civil War. As he lands in Spain, Glenn feels the thrill of the shared purpose with the Spanish Loyalists and volunteers from other countries. But when he meets Frankie Perez, whom he has known in Texas pecan shellers' strike, he suspects a foul play. Frankie, who is bitterly opposed to the communists, tells him, "Here several different kinds of war. We fight Franco but also we fight Moscow...if you go to the Brigada you must not let them fight us. They want to destroy our collectives. They want to institute dictatorship of secret police just like Franco. We have to fight both sides to protect our revolution" (p. 323). Glenn also meets Jed Farrington, the Texas lawyer, who was a friend of Frankie.
in the old days. He is now under the communist control as an officer in the International Brigade. Glenn tries to keep himself away from this fratricidal politics. "I came here to try to help...I'll do any kind of work you people say, except tell other guys to go get their blocks knocked off" (p. 327). Jed Farrington confirms Frankie Perez's apprehension when he tells Glenn that as soon as they defeat Franco, they will have to remove men like Frankie Perez who are "uncontrollables." The communists in Spain work under directions from Stalin, and Glenn becomes a victim of Stalinist machinations. The war was fought actually not against fascist tyranny but for Soviet imperialism. The zealous communists brand Glenn as politically unreliable. He is first put into a mechanic's job and then imprisoned on the charge of espionage. In a secret meeting the high communist leaders allege, "We are informed that you represent the Trotsky counter revolutionary organization in America and were one of the channels of communication engaged in actively preparing the Barcelona uprising" (p. 333). They press him hard to confess the allegation, and inflict tortures but he does not surrender before them. In the meantime it is learnt that the Franco forces have attacked. Glenn's communist jailors release him and send him on a titanic assignment, "Well, there are some of our boys with two machineguns in a pillbox to the left of the hill 14. They got to have water. You got to take it to 'em. They are
the only thing that's keeping the wops out of this dump. Tell 'em to stick for another half hour, see, they got to cover us while we get some junk out of here" (p. 338).

Glenn's death is highly symbolic. He sets out under a shower of bullets across to No man's Land, carrying two buckets of water in either hand. The Fascists' bullets pierce first one bucket, then the other, and then the body of Glenn Spotswood himself:

He was halfway up the hill before they brought him down. For a second he had no pain. He thought he'd stubbed his toe on a stone. Too bad the water was all spilled in so much blood. Must get out of this, he said to himself, and started to drag himself along the ground. Then suddenly something split and he went spinning into blackness. He was dead. (p. 340)

Water is the elixir of life especially for soldiers fighting on the war fronts. When the hazardous assignment is given to him, Glenn the idealist, agrees to go into the jaws of death. The Fascists spill the elixir of life and Glenn's dead body rolls down the hill.

Pointing out the heroic sacrifice of his son, amidst the disruptive activities of the communists, Herbert Spotswood in The Grand Design tells his old friend Charley, "this reign of terror, this crazy anti-Semitism, is already spreading through Europe like a plague. Glenn understood it and he gave his life to stop the spread of that plague" (p. 83).

Overwhelmed with emotion, he continues in the same strain,
"He was no communist. He died a soldier in the cause of decency, of Christian civilization....The least I can do is to give what few years I may have left to carrying on the good work. The American people have got to be awakened" (p. 83). Glenn dies a martyr for humanity and for civilization. Interviewing Herbert Spotswood, Greta Greenberg, a columnist, tells him that Glenn had "died a hero," and in her opinion, "Glenn Spotswood stood beside John Reed as a class war martyr" (p. 318).

Terry Bryant belongs to the same tribe of rebels as Ben Compton and Glenn Spotswood. He embodies Dos Passos's apocalyptic vision of an ideal man. As already discussed in the chapter 'Involvement II,' Terry has been making efforts to deliver the working class from injustice, exploitation and tyranny. The antagonistic forces proved too strong for him. Disillusioned but not defeated, he becomes a cab driver as a form of self expression, "Driving a hack a man's on his own" (p. 345), he tells his wife. He associates himself with Willoughby Jenks, a Korean War Veteran who fights against the taxi monopoly on a war level with his own Swift Service Cab Company. Jenks declares, "His fight for competition was a fight to preserve the free enterprise way, the American Way" (p. 438). In the light of the inhuman and unscrupulous activities of the rival Red top taxi cab group, headed by Frank Stelleto, and more so, looking to his
own family responsibilities, Terry Bryant's courage is temporarily shaken. But in Jenks he finds a bulwark to his drooping spirits when he tells Terry, "It's on account of your kids and my kids we've got to fight this thing" (p. 442).

Like Glenn, Terry too dies as a martyr. Before he is finally killed, there is a severe blizzard around the town. Under the supervision of the traffic engineer, the Swift service Cab Company serves the stranded persons through the snow "as contentedly as a St. Bernard dog" (p. 447). The storm subsides, the Red top cabs start operating and the thugs of the company fatally attack Terry. Wounded, he lies in the hospital. Jenks and Bryants come to see him:

They found Terry lying unconscious on a rolling cot in the ante-room to the accident ward. The hair had been shaved off the top of his head which had the frail look of a bare skull under the bandages. His face was calm. He lay flat on his back with closed eyes. The frightening thing was the heavy irregular snorting noise he made when he breathed. (p. 456)

Terry's arduous work in the snow, his closed eyes, calm face, shaven skull suggest the picture of a monk. And Will Jenks appropriately comments on Terry's character, "Terry Bryant had died for freedom, like the Americans who stood up against the redcoats on Bunker Hill or who held out in Bataan against the Japanese, his death wouldn't seem so senseless and unnecessary (p. 458). And the local paper
writes, "Here was a man who had chosen death rather than lose his liberty" (p. 458). Blanche H. Gelfant attempts to give a reason for the final alienation of the idealists like Ben Compton, Glenn Spotswood, Terry Bryant and others:

Dos Passos writes always with a sense of the past and its formative democratic ideals. Testing the realities of the present against these ideals of the past, he describes the only honourable course to be that of alienation, cutting one's self off from a society that has betrayed its dream.20

Millard Carroll and Paul Graves get disillusioned with the working of the government representatives and its machinery. The inadequacy of government plans and their meaninglessness that the two protagonists of The Grand Design envisage, is of the nature conceived by Robert Blauner:

*Meaninglessness alienation reflects a split between the part and the whole. A person experiences alienation of this type when his individual acts seem to have no relation to a broader life-program. Meaninglessness also occurs when individual roles are not seen as fitting into the total system of goals of the organization but have become severed from any organic connection with the whole.*21

Millard Carroll's alienation stems from the nonfulfilment of the ideals he holds supreme in his life but are thwarted by the vested interests of the persons at the helm of government affairs. He feels that the supremacy of the administration is being encroached upon to an unbearable extent by politicians like Judge Oppenheim, and the sinister figure of the President which is perpetually present in the background. The ideal role of the government which is to
harmonize and synthesize the various issues under the Four Freedoms of the New Deal, seem to have been abandoned. Millard Carroll, a patriot and an idealist, finds the New Deal losing the halo that had once surrounded it. Under such cumbersome administrative routine, he feels suffocated and gets alienated and is compelled to tender his resignation. He rings up Paul Graves and tells him, "Well Paul, Walker's stood me up again. You never can get to him when you need to see him. I'm fed up and I'm through. I'm writing out my resignation right this minute" (pp. 374-375). And his resignation was readily accepted "to take effect at once...like firing a janitor" (p. 381). When "Dr. Win the War" takes the place of "Dr. New Deal" he does not sacrifice his ideals, like Walker Watson. Paul Graves tells Walker Watson, "Millard wants to fight a New Deal war...install the Four Freedoms as we go along, you said it yourself...a bottle of milk for every headhunters away from headhunting, make decent citizens of them before they brutalize us" (p. 378). The last appearance of Millard Carroll is in his "victory garden" working with his hoe. "He'd have lost his mind I declare if it hadn't been for that victory garden" (p. 380), Millard's wife informs Paul Graves. Talking to Paul Graves, Millard bends over his hoe and brings to the mind the picture of Edwin Markham's poem "Man with the Hoe." Like Markham's downtrodden farmer, Millard's alienation signifies both a protest and
a prophecy. Markham's farmer undergoes exploitation and toil and has been reduced to a half-starved skeleton, hardly recognizable as a man. A similar change has appeared in Millard, as pointed out by Paul Graves to his wife, "He's is like a man who has had all the blood drained out of him. I never expected to see Millard so sunk..." (p. 382).

After Millard has resigned, Paul takes no interest in his office routine. He has instructed his secretary to prune the less important work and leaves the office at the first available excuse. He goes to see Walker Watson and remains with him scarcely for seven minutes and feels as if he had been there all afternoon. Ennui and aloneness overpower him and he tells his wife of his resolution to join the navy, "I guess we're the crowds along the sidewalk. It would be a relief in the navy...just lay back and take orders" (p. 382).

The two idealists Millard and Paul feel alienated under the general change in the political climate and the assumption of power by the political elites. Commenting on the endings of the three novels, of the District of Columbia, R.G. Davis, puts stress on the inevitable alienation of the Dos Passos idealists:

The endings of the three novels in District of Columbia show isolated individuals being bowled over by different kinds of political combinations. Their resistance to the abuse of power is principled one, of the good old American sort, but deeply imbued with Dos Passos' sense of alienation. They are a remnant fighting those who have taken over, seized control.
Millard Carroll and Paul Graves find themselves betrayed by the improper implementation of the New Deal ideals. They refuse to stoop before bureaucratic inertia, red-tapism and favouritism, so pervasive in political elites.

**SPECTATORS**

Jimmy Herf's involvement is in the brawling, materialistic metropolitan setting. This setting gradually becomes an insurmountable obstacle in Jimmy's freedom and ultimately produces in him a strong sense of alienation. The suffocating effect of New York on Jimmy Herf is described in the section "Skyscraper."

> With every deep breath Herf breathed in rumble and grind a painted phrases until he began to swell, felt himself stumbling big and vague, staggering like a pillar of smoke above the April streets, looking into the windows of machineshops, buttonfactories tenementhouses, felt of the grime of bedlinen and the smooth whir of lathes, wrote cusswords on type writers between the stenographer's fingers, mixed up the pricetags in departmentstores. Inside he frizzled like sodawater into sweet April syrups, strawberry, sarsaparilla, chocolate, cherry, vanilla dripping foam through the mild gasolineblue air. He dropped sickeningly fortyfour stories, crashed. (pp. 352-353)

It is from this sickening, mechanized-urban environment that Jimmy is alienated. Jimmy's state of alienation is further explained by his friend Martin. He tells his other friends, "No, You are saying to yourselves what a bore he Jimmy is, what use is he to society? He has no money, he has no pretty wife, no good conversation, no tips on
the stockmarket. He's a useless fardel on society...the artist is a fardel" (p. 361). Jimmy always stands aloof and never tries to plunge into the turmoil and flux of society. Toward the end of the novel, he walks along the river, broken and alone, alienating himself from New York:

Jimmy walks fast to get out of the smell. He is hungry; his shoes are beginning to raise blisters on his big toes. At a cross-road where the warning light still winks and winks, is a gasoline station, opposite it the Lightning Bug lunchwagon. Carefully he spends his last quarter on breakfast. That leaves him three cents for good luck, or bad for that matter. A huge furniture truck, shiny and yellow, has drawn up outside.

"Say will you give me a lift?" he asks the redhaired man at the wheel.

"How fur ye goin?"

"I dunno... Pretty far." (p. 404)

This is Jimmy's last gesture of alienation from the industrialized - urban environment. The passage carries a symbolic significance. There is an accent on the winking light, gasoline station, Jimmy spending the last coin and the truck loaded with furniture. The Winking light of the traffic signal, signifies the loss of individual liberty under the artificial tinsel, evanescent glitter and glamour of the metropolis, the gasoline station stands for the mobility of the automobiles and the industrial production. Silhouetted against this background is Jimmy, an utterly penniless fellow who boards a truck carrying furniture. Furniture signifies rehabilitation and thus, Jimmy's estrangement from the metropolis strikes a tentative note of affirmation too.
Tyler Spotswood's alienation begins when he sees the pernicious picture of Chuck Crawford, in whom he has envisioned an ideal government. His fanatic adherence to Chuck Crawford and his wife, Sue Anne, is a quest for self-knowledge with which he could establish his identity in the chaotic world around. Disillusioned with Chuck's political entanglements, he makes a last effort in his search for stability by declaring his love for Sue Anne. His ambivalent feelings of aloneness and affirmation are reflected in his ruminations, when on Sue Anne's invitation he goes to see her in a hotel:

They had their own lives to live. Sure, he knew he'd been a soak ever since he got out of the army, but he was through with that now. He was a sick man, but he'd go to the Mayo Clinic and fixed up. He'd go back to business. He was barely forty. There were all kinds of opportunities ahead of him. He wasn't a dead bunny yet. Plenty of men started their careers after forty. Look at the experience he'd had....But I have turned over an entire new leaf...Sue Anne there's nothing in the world I want except to make you happy.... (p. 169)

On meeting her when he declares his love for her:

She looked at him sharply and shook her head. 'Of all the silly ways of eatin' lunch...Tyler, you're a sweet old thing, but I think you're crazy.'

He started to talk very fast without any expression in his voice: 'maybe I am...Of course I am...I'm absolutely crazy about you, Sue Ann, and I can't go on like this....' She interrupted as if she were talking to one of her little boys. 'Tyler, don't be silly...You always said you were like Barnacle Bill the Sailor...love 'em and leave 'em...a girl in every port.'

'I thought I was, but I'm not...the only girl I care about in the world is right here at this table.' (p. 172)
Yet at the end of the novel, as we examined in the chapter Involvement III, Tyler refuses to disclose Chuck's perfidies and turn State's evidence on Chuck. The final decision might have been because of the posthumous letter he receives from Glenn. But he tells his friend, Jerry Evans, that reform must begin with himself, Number one. After this he reappears in a few scenes of The Grand Design. He is invariably drunk and his father Herbert Spotswood realizes that "He got a raw deal, a very raw deal" (p. 172). Tyler decays into a decrepit drunkard, adrift, alone. Seeing Tyler sitting inside a restaurant, Herbert Spotswood points out the physical decay appearing in Tyler, "The face had a sodden ageing look, but it couldn't be anybody else but Tyler. The black hair was turning grey" (p. 180). He has become a physical wreck and is virtually drowning himself in the drums of wine. While he and his secretary, Mrs. Jean Darwin are busy making preparations for a party, Tyler visits his father. Herbert reluctantly offers him a seat and remembers "the handsome blackhaired boy with the lively blue eyes. Now Tyler's eyes bulged out of his head and the blue was washed out as if it had run into white" (p. 241). Tyler borrows some money from him and miserably drunk, soon returns to his father. "Tyler made swimming motions with his arms. He was trying to speak, but his slobbered lips only made a bubbling sound. Before anybody could reach him, he pitched
forward flat on his face on the carpet" (p. 247). It is merely to save the nation that Tyler does not disclose Chuck Crawford's malpractices, but he evidently ruins himself. He frees his soul from the extraneous imposition of Chuck and destroys his life.

Herbert Spotswood throughout the District of Columbia remains alienated from his family and society. He is rejected by his sons and society for his pacifistic beliefs. To his family he appears fussy, self-righteous, self-pitying, physically repulsive, and financially hard up. In The Grand Design, he becomes a professional commentator.

Both Fenian McCreay in The 42nd Parallel and Roland Lancaster in The Great Days get estranged in a foreign country. Whereas Mac opts to stay in Mexico for better prospects, Ro Lancaster is constrained to remain in Cuba due to the lack of funds. Mac comes to Mexico with a view to joining the revolution. On his way to Mexico City, the Americans in Mexico tell him that Zapata is "the bloodthirstiest villain of the lot...They roasted a feller was foreman of a sugar mill down in Morelos on a slow fire and raped his wife and daughters right before his eyes" (p. 347). Yet, Mac is determined to join the fighting forces of revolution. In Mexico City Mac meets Concha, who speaks English, and he goes to live with her. Mac has a latent desire for a comfortable life, too, as Frederick Feied points out, "He vacillates
between the obligation he feels to carry on for the revolution and his desire for comfort and companionship. 

At the same time, he thinks of joining the revolutionaries under Zapata. He buys a bookstore which specializes in radical literature and feels good "to be his own boss for the first time in his life" (p. 359). But when Zapata's troops approach Mexico City, Mac sells his bookstore and like other Americans, decides to leave Mexico with Concha, and her mother and brother. At Vera Cruz he finds he has only money enough to buy one steerage passage to the States. "He'd begun to suspect that he was making a damnfool of himself and decided to go without Concha" (p. 366). He, however, learns that Carranza has been murdered in the mountains by his own staff officers, and "the principles of Madero and Juarez were to be re-established and that a new era was to dawn" (p. 367). At the last moment there is a change in his decision, and he elects to stay in Mexico, "Next morning Mac woke up early with a slight headache. He slipped out of the house alone and walked out along the breakwater...He went to the Ward Line office and took his ticket back" (p. 367). He embashes his ticket and is alienated from his native land, Mac remains in Mexico, expecting reform. Thus, by and large, he retains his individuality.

Blackie Bowman is alienation incarnate. A tubercular with an injured skull, Blackie speaks from a veteran's hospital. He feels it is "A tough fate for a man who's led an active
life to be stuck to a bed like a fly on a flypaper, and no better chance of getting off either" (p. 56). Throughout his life he had been a rebel, fighting against injustice and the tyranny of the capitalists and waiting for the "Promised Land." Having realized the ultimate reality of life, like a stoic, he believes "Death's a gift like life" (p. 56). In the hospital there is an atmosphere of agonizing loneliness and blankness. He is alienated from all the activities of life and his chief pastime is looking at the "gray blankets and a few cracks on the ceiling and the white enameled grosspiece at the foot of my bed and legs and feet and stupid old faces sticking out of hospital cots down the ward" (p. 64).

Lying dying, he reminisces his old days, his life as a sailor, a wobbly, unhappy married man and finally his early childhood. The nurse objects to his excessive exertion in writing and talking but he asserts, "Everything I've done all my life has been against the rules. It's against the rules for me to be alive at all" (p. 271). While recollecting his childhood, gradually Blackie sinks into eternal silence.

Ho Lancaster, once a celebrated journalist makes his first appearance in The Great Days as an ageing old widower, wishing to marry Elsa, who is thirty years younger to him. His alienation begins with the suicide of Roger Thurloe. In him he could project his dream of fulfilment as a journalist. His aloneness is further intensified with the death of his wife, Grace who enlivened him with her love and care. As a
journalist, he is a failure, and has written a book *Blue Print for the Future*, which nobody reads. He has come to this sad realization, "What's the use of writing things nobody reads?" (p. 296). The ageing journalist is left with three thousand dollars and with this he goes to Cuba with Elsa, hoping to recapture a sense of belonging. But she spurns his love, repulses him sexually and outdrinks him. He becomes a drunken impotent and helplessly watches his mistress's perverse fancies. In Havana he is robbed off his three thousand dollars and is left only with his return air tickets. His sense of failure and aloneness is presented in his interior monologue on the morning of the second day in Cuba.

"Disaster. It's not being broke. I've been broke before. It's not failing to make good with a woman, that's happened before. It happens to everybody sooner or latter. Casanova thought nothing of it. If at first you don't succeed try try again. But in every love between man and woman there is a moment when a door in the heart opens. When your heart might have opened I didn't have the manhood to push in. Now it is too late. You caught cold you said out on the streets. I know what you meant.

"It's not to make you sorry for me Elsa, it's just that you ought to understand. To understand is to forgive you know. It is more than a man can bear alone. (p. 274)

Out of utter dejection he attempts suicide:

He imagines himself a condemned man leaning out through the bars of a cell is one of the old gray fortresses across the harbor, looking out for the last time at the blue of the sky and the white of the son and the delicious ochre of the tiles nestling against the proud volutes that cap the buttressed walls of the old cathedral and at the endless shimmer of the sea. (p. 306)
At last he encashes the return air tickets, puts Elsa on a bus in Milwaukee and when she shows her concern for him, he replies in a mild tone, "I'm past worrying about, Elsa," he answers gently, "and for me the worst is over. Life just by itself has its meaning." He forces a gin. "I might have turned out a VIP like Mortimer" (p. 311). When the bus leaves, he mingles into the non-descript crowd at the bus station. His celebrity fades into commonness and anonymity. He becomes lonely in the crowd.

The alienation phenomenon makes the final stage of the hero's career, simultaneously bringing the wheel of the heroic pattern to a full circle. More often than not, alienation arises as a result of the disparity between the expectations of the individual and the conditions in which he has to find fulfilment. The characters who commit suicide are not included in the list of alienated persons of the types discussed. The death of Wenny, Bud Korpenning, Roger Thurloe in the act of suicide obfuscates the possibilities of the phenomenon of alienation as such. The process of alienation in the novels of Dos Passos is a condemnation of those who succumb to the material pursuits and a vindication of the social rebels who struggle for the assertion of abiding values of life.
REFERENCES


5 The 42nd Parallel, p. xi.


7 Lois Hughson "In Search of the True America: Dos Passos' Debt to Whitman in U.S.A." Modern Fiction Studies, XIX, Number 2 (Summer 1973), p. 192.

8 Arthur Miller lucidly explains the phrase:
To begin at the bottom, a man's death is and aught to be an essentially terrifying thing and ought to make nobody happy. But in a great variety of ways even death, the ultimate negative, can be, and appear to be, an assertion of bravery, and can serve to separate the death of man from the death of animals; and I think it is this distinction which underlies any conception of a victory in death.


19 J.W. Aldridge, op. cit., p. 66.


21 Robert Blauner, op. cit., p. 32.

22 Dos Passos' love for agriculture and Jeffersonian agrarianism is well known. It is no wonder then that Dos Passos is alluding to Edwin Markham's poem which appeared in 1898 and it was "the tocsin of a generation"
