CHAPTER I

Violence in Thought
VIOLENCE IN THOUGHT

Why do human beings become increasingly barbaric and aggressive? This question can be answered in many ways. We can say that the main reason behind aggression is lust for power. Napoleon, Mussolini and Hitler are the best examples. The other reason is psychological breakdown.

In conditions of tension people are more readily aggressive. This is when they have a sense of frustration, humiliation, betrayal or deceit. All this is at the level of the individual and the reasons are mostly personal. But Bond thinks that men become aggressive because society imposes on them certain stringent conditions that create tension in their mind. That tension causes emotional crises into members that result in violence and aggression.

Man's mind is supreme. All experiences are analysed by mind and it is mind that prompts the body to act. Therefore violence is not an instinctive action nor is it a reflex action; on the other hand it is a planned action. Bond's view on violence can be best illustrated in the Indian context. Terrorism in Kashmir and Punjab is planned. So is the case with the communal riots. In fact to perform any act we have to plan it and think logically about it. When some one plants a bomb in a car, he or she must have seriously thought about it. What Bond means to say is that violence has its origin first in mind or thought, and although individual, is sparked off by the social conditions.
In *The Pope's Wedding*, Scopey, is one of a group whose age range is from seventeen to twenty four. He is mocking and joking like all the other in his group. The group has nothing to do and no money. Every one of it is jobless and wanders from subject to subject just to pass his time and get entertainment. Pat and June are the two girls, they are also of the same group with same conditions. Alen is a seventy-five year old man who lives isolated in a small hut, totally cut off from the society. His life style is mysterious, just like a lord living aristocrately in a reserve way.

Scopey is curious to know about Alen. Pat, after marrying with Scopey works in the hut for Alen. Her mother had been serving for Alen throughout her life and now Pat is looking after him. When Scopey goes to Alen talks to him, his curiosity increases but he is unable to know much about him. He usually begins to meet him and sometimes tries to serve him at the place of Pat. After some months he has a row with him due to the questions he wants to be answered and he kills him. In the play Scopey is not only an individual but also a representative of society.

The attitude of Scopey towards Alen is an example of it. Scopey and Alen are not sworn enemies but Scopey murders him. The reason behind this murderous act is only a kind of mental dissatisfaction and frustration, the curiosity to know about Alen's life. The bag-game is not 'the friendly harassment of Pat', for it contains the charge of all the frustrations of the earlier part of the scene. It creates the context
of an aggression which later on results in some of the mob attacking
Alen's hut, not because they hate Alen or Pat, but because both are
convenient objects on which to vent their aimless animosity. In the
cricket discussion he carefully says little. It is only later (Scene five)
that there is the suggestion that he has been training for the match,
but again, this is not evidence of Scopey's drawing apart from the
group. Rather it is the careful action of someone who is only twelfth
man and who would not welcome the group's reaction if it were to
learn that he had been training for a match in which he was unlikely
to play.

Scopey, the protagonist, is seen initially as one of a group, one
of a gang whose age range is from seventeen to twenty four and part
of his curiosity is directed at a seventy five year old man and what
he knows. Bond has explained about scopey's change into Alen's
situation.

"Why is it that people change very often into a sort of dramatic
opposite of themselves? You see someone who is very old, and
they tell you about their youth, and you think well how could
you done all these things and now become this? And... the
idea... was to see how something could go so drastically wrong.
Scopey doesn't understand his situation at all, but I
wanted audience to understand the way it could happen to Scopey,
who I suppose is a typical member of the audience in a sense."

As soon as Bill and Pat have gone off to the pub, all scopey's

actions reflect Alen's. He collects newspapers and returns to the shack, unable to resist the notion that there is still a truth to be discovered. Instead, Pat discovers Alen's body, and a situation which none of them will ever be able to understand, is still less articulate. Scopey does not reply to Pat's question why he has killed Alen and the text shows Scopey dwelling only on how he killed the old man.

"In the first draft of the play Scopey does respond but only with 'I don't know. It can't be helped. I don't know.' Even such a minimal response as this is cut out of the final version to show scopey utterly absorbed by his pre-occupations."

The reason is totally unknown why scopey killed Alen. The response situations give, is that it is a kind of mental excitement due to the frustration in his mind which results in murder.

Scopey's unknown involvement is shown by the fact that he unknown to Alen was outside Alen's hut the previous night. Alen's acquaintance with Scopey has persuaded him to give Scopey the key to the hut. The two moments of their greatest intimacy (and for Scopey's greatest disappointment) are sparked off by Alen's old army great coat, and by one of the many photographs he has hoarded. The photograph shows a different lifestyle, a lady in a carriage with her dog, and a servant holding the horse's head. The ambiguity which characterizes the following exchanges is set by Alen's saying - 'I know 'er. Know' oo she is ?' When in fact 'she is the photograph, not the lady: I brought she out a that owd scrap shop stood on the corner a Dunmow. She

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were stood out on the pavey in a box." Though Alen breaks the ambiguity quickly - "Why'd I buy that owd junk? She could a been dead seventy, eighty year." Scopey's imagination cannot let it go. He wants to know which shop, Which town, had Alen ever actually seen the lady. And the conclusion leaves Scopey's curiosity unsatisfied at the precise point when he feels he nearly has an answer:

"Ent you ever een that lady when yoo was a boy?
Alen. How?
Scopey. Walkin' ? Shoppin'? Ridin'? 
Alen. When. I were a boy.
Scopey. (After a long pause). Cold now.
Alen. Years turned."3

M. Hay and Ph. Roberts comment:

"When I were a boy might mean 'yes'. It might mean he collected things when a boy. 'Cold now' "can refer both to the old Photograph and scopey's situation and the turning of the year the beauty of this exchange is to combine past and present as an impenetrable conundrum for Scopey and a reflection of a life passed for Alen. The two figures are for that moment united as people who have not made sense of their situation, One young, one very old."4

The scene gathers pace again as Alen shows Scopey the great coat hidden between the blankets, bought when Alen was young. The

2. Ibid. P. 288.
3. Ibid. P. 288
link between them is reinforced by Alen's giving Scopey this spare coat. As Scopey puts the coat on, the visual picture presented to the audience is of two figures setting close together. The coat pockets are sewn up in order to keep the coats' shape and through the scene, Scopey picks away at the thread. After the row and at the scene's end he finds that the 'Pockets are empty.'

The emptiness of the mystery irritates Scopey. He realises that -the newspapers are for standing on, the sewn pockets of the coat are empty and the photograph is not a lady but only a photograph. And in his despair, Scopey falls back on the popular image of Alen as a wartime spy, one of the random accusations of the other villagers. He kills Alen and takes his place -

"The young man kills the old man because there's absolutely no possibility of any communication between them. Not just words, not even feelings. If you cannot convey, feelings then you're really isolated, aren't you? If you're isolated, you become violent, like people in madhouse. And this leads to murder."2

In Saved a baby is stoned to death. The scene is really pathetic. We witness in scene six, the largest in the play, the death of the child. No one can ignore the horror of the child's murder, but it is also that it cannot be ignored what precedes and follows it. The scene opens with Fred fishing and Len sitting on the bank. The atmosphere in the beginning is relaxed and peaceful but it soon is disrupted by Len, who is there to try to find out why Pam wants Fred so much.

"Since Len's characteristic habit is one of unavoidable disruption, it means that the talk alternates between Len apparently taking an interest in the fishing, talking of the rod, the bait and so on and quite unconsciously generating a tone of sexual ambiguity which creates a cleverly orchestrated comic undertone to the dialogue."¹

Len, despite Fred's irritation, eventually battles towards what is in his mind "Why's she go for you? ... No Why's she - ill over it."²

When the answer doesn't satisfy him, he returns to it and tells Fred he could hear the two of them making love. Nothing illustrates Len's bewilderment and loneliness more than this admission. It was originally pointed out more emphatically. Bond notes by the side of that section -

"I might be ashamed of blatant sexuality of this but in genuinely pleading for themselves, (not grovelling) every one gains dignity. This is true of L ..."³

The exchange ends inconclusively as Fred packs up his fishing gear and Mike enters. As he does, the mood changes, becomes lighter, and Len reverts to his status as outsider. Briefly, the enjoyment in picking, shouting and jumping always part of the group's activity, hold the stage as a transition between the discussion of Pam and her arrival with the pram. She like Len, attempts to engage Fred by asking about the fishing and Fred's mood of anticipating a 'bit a fun' gives way to

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¹ M. Hay and Philip Roberts. Bond: A Study of his Plays: p. 47.
irritation at Pam's repeating many of Len's questions. Pam thus moves from stimulated interest casually feigned attempts to persuade Fred home from there into anger and thence into pleading and desperation. She is taking pills like her mother and the baby has been drugged with aspirin as part of her last ditch attempt to win Fred back. Finally Pam hurls the only thing of Fred's she has, the baby, at him, rejects her responsibility again and leaves Fred to assume his. Fred resolves to take the baby back to Pam's house, but waits in case Pam returns. It is this waiting for Pam which sets the situation leading to the murder into motion. The rest of the group drift in, in high spirits for the night out. They inevitably turn their attention eventually to the only object on stage with them.

As the men begin to move the pram about, two centres of action are created on the stage. As Gaskill puts it -

"You get that wonderful, extraordinary perspective of Fred being downstage, just lying there, doing nothing, just half sitting with legs stretched out, and the whole of the other scene is behind him ...."1

The restraint of the scene is organized not only by the amount of time it takes to build up to the assault of the baby, but also has to do with the number of times various members of the gang express worry or concern for the child or alarm at what others are doing to it. Only Barry of all of them never deflects from the escalation and it is Barry who initiates most of the attacks. The escalation begins when

the balloon suddenly bursts and the pram is pushed over Colin. What forces the pace is nothing to do with the baby, but to do with Pete who 'touches' Barry. From then on, energy is released via the pram and only when the violent movements wake the baby does attention focus on what is in the pram. As this begins, Fred and Mike are still downstage discussing their plans for the evening. Still the scene is held on a tight rein, as the group, and particularly Barry, becomes curious about the child. As Pete pulls the baby's hair, Mike drifts upstage to see what is happening and Fred remains down left. Throughout the mounting series of abuses, he remains sullenly where he is, having nothing to do with the baby 'Ain' my worry. Serves'er right'. The sequence reaches its first climax and the first pause with the baby being rubbed in its own excitement. Only then does the group realise what is happening and its attention wanders briefly from the pram to the realisation that Fred has taken no part. As Fred dares ever to see what has been done, the scene then dips carefully after all the raucous yelling to the quiet and frightening action. If they are hurting the baby with the stones, they know and understand what they are going to do. For the first and only time, Fred begins the sequence by throwing a stone. After the deadly quiet, the men are possessed. What Bond calls the 'atavistic fury' ('Author's note in preface to Saved) is released and the baby is killed. Beyond what the others do is Barry's constant stoning till the last, while the others eventually respond to the park-bell and go and he still attacks the child. After a long pause Pam returns to collect the child. For all her refusal to accept responsibility,
she does return and talks to her baby in a curiously childish fashion, in a tone she has not used before. Her tragedy is nowhere more apparent than in her crooning to a child which she doesn't realise is dead. Sympathy for Pam needs to be balanced. Bond says against the fact that -

"what she produces is a purely formalised response, a conventional sign. She can perform those formalities without even, noticing that her child is killed. He doesn't think she has any real feeling for the child."¹

What I want to say is that all those formalities which could be taken as sign of social responsibility are in fact rarely conventional and do not have any real meaning.

The play proves that the mental tension and social dissatisfaction frustrates human being and they act in a very strange and improbable manner. The stoning of the innocent drugged baby sleeping in the pram by group of jobless, frustrated persons shows their violent thoughts. Pam brings her baby to the park just to make Fred feel that he is the father of the baby and he must accept it, but fred never cares for it and meantime the group's attention goes to it and it begins to torture the baby by throwing stones on it. Nobody protests or thinks otherwise Pam, being the mother drugs the baby with aspirin and also does not care for its cries. It shows her cruelty and hard-heartedness due to her personal tensions.

¹ Quoted by M. Hey & Philip Robert. Bond: A Study of his Plays, p. 50.
Thus the play unravels the process both for the individual and for his stratum of society. It mirrors the conflicts and the possibilities.

The play Early Morning describes a Victorian England ruled by a lesbian Queen Victoria whose two sons George and Arthur are Siamese twins. Florence Nightingale is Victoria's lover and George's fiancee. Prince Albert, Victoria's husband plots against his wife. The queen herself plots against her husband and son both just to gain political power. Gladstone is a trades union officer and Disraeli is a convincing conspirator. There are a number of other scenes full of improbabilities that show how violence in thought appears in the actions of men. The scenes are like a trial on a charge of cannibalism, decaying bodies and a ghost; the murder of all but one of the characters by Prince Arthur and their reappearance in a ghostly heaven where there is no pain and where people eat themselves and one another all indicate the degeneration of violent people and the horrifying effect of violence.

In Scene sixteen, Arthur, like Len in scene four, is pronounced guilty, and admitted to Heaven, where people eat each other. It is explained to him, as to a child, how this works. Victoria tells him that -

"Nothing has any consequences here - so there's no pain. Think of it - no pain . . . "

But as in the first scenes of the play, Arthur once again resists assimilation. He refuses to eat and, once again, he becomes the object

of attention. The effect to his induction into Heaven is seen in scene seventeen, as his brother suffers pain from Arthur's refusal to eat. Though separated in Heaven the activity of one affects the other. Arthur's refusal is an attempt to negate his earlier logic which led to the attempted destruction of the species, but as then when his attempts to relieve the suffering of mankind failed so now he sees himself as the stumbling block to the happiness of others -

"Why can't I let them alone in peace!" ¹

He forces himself to eat, so that everyone may exist peacefully in Heaven. He martyrs himself and eats part of his father. At the end of scene seventeen, Arthur prays to the God of this World -

"Eat and be good. Be good and die. Die and be happy ... God let me die. Let me die - and everyone will be happy." ²

For the second time Arthur acts in order to solve the dilemma; for the second time, the dilemma is unresolved, for the mob adopts him as its leader. The pattern of events in Heaven repeats the earlier pattern. There is a revolution impending, which Victoria sees and acts to prevent. However, this time, Arthur has begun the logic and accepted the conditions of existence which are to lead him, out of the trap. In two scenes with Florence, he begins to articulate his awareness. He tells her in scene nineteen that he can never remain in this condition -

"There's something I can't kill and they can't kill it for me. Pity

¹ Bond. Early Morning, (Eyre Methuen, 1968) S. xvi. p. 205.
it, must be nice to be dead. Still, if I can't die I must live. I'm resigned to my curse: I accept it. I'll probably even end up being happy."1

What he resigns himself to is what earlier he termed his limitations. From that moment in scene nineteen Arthur embarks on his way out of this context. Though he is tricked by Victoria into a coffin at the end of the play, his mistakes lead him to an apprehension of both himself and of his relationship with his surroundings. He frees himself and, though he cannot articulate the nature of his freedom, he is unable to be damaged by anything else done to him. He resurrects himself from the dead world and climbs out of a deadening historical and social legacy. Arthur, as he rises from the coffin, wears -

"a long white smock or shawl". It is also shown that "his hair and beard are still dirty and uncombed", and that "parts of his old clothes are seen underneath."2

No miracle is shown, but a readiness to proceed differently. What changes is Arthur's premature mourning of scene eleven. It becomes, by scene twenty one, as Arthur frees himself, a definition of his 'early morning'.

In Heaven everyone eats the other; this act of eating people of one's own species is symbolic of violence in thought. Victoria always remains busy in planning against Arthur. All the characters try to hurt one another.

2. Ibid. S. xxi. p. 223.
The pot game of the priests in Narrow Road to the Deep North shows the violent mentality of the people.

They snatch, hit and kick one another comically but every action shown by them is symbolic of violence. Although the director of the play Narrow Road to the Deep North demanded the deletion of the two sentences from Scene vi -

"How many testicles has god?"¹ and an insistence that Shogo's mutilated body should not show his testicles (the stage direction reads) -

"The genitals are intact."²

But Bond refused to cut the play, for, these sentences show a moral and mental violence of the people. They do not leave even God also from their violent thoughts.

Scene four is set in Shogo's Court and it opens comically with the death of the Chief Police Inspector from a spear intended for Shogo himself. Underneath the casual dismissal by Shogo of the Inspector's death, there is created the scene of Shogo's life being under constant threat, but he is never able to catch the assassins. The people in the city are forbidden to look at him when he goes out but one always does - 'its a different face, but the eyes are the same.' What Shogo says echoes Basho's response to the abandoned baby in the Introduction. There the baby lying in his rags stares at Basho -'as if, I was a toy. What funny little eyes.' As Shogo dwells on this, the

². Ibid. S. iv. p. 47.
words peter out briefly; some ideas surface, 'but its' gone out of my head . . .' The links between Shogo and Basho are developed in this scene without either of them realising it. At the same time, Bond is intent on suggesting that Shogo is both a caricatured tyrant and a victim of his situation. He is rarely two-dimensional and his puzzle, later in the same scene when talking to Kiro, reflects a mind attempting to call up details of his earlier life which will make his present circumstances coherent. In his speech at the beginning of the scene, the stage direction makes Shogo walk behind the body of the Police Inspector and stand - 'with his back to the audience.' He muses about 'a circle that never stops getting smaller' and we are presented with an image of his ignoring the corpse (and everyone else) just as Basho ignored the child earlier and as the unnamed survivor who closes the play will do. As Kiro lies dying Shogo does not understand certain things and resorts to cryptic sayings as an alternative -

"I can't be on both sides of a door at once."¹

As he speaks, Basho is brought in and Shogo is faced with the man, who, thirty years before, left him to die. Neither of them realises it. And the audience will not realise it until Kiro does at the end of the play.

Basho concludes -

"Shogo called himself head of the city as if his ancestors - princess, poets, samurai - But he was peasant's son . . . Shogo's

father was an honest working man who knew his child. He saw the snake arms writhing in the cot and said: My dear, our child's a monster. So they left him on this river, praying he would starve.  

Further he says -  

"Basho (off) Now I come to the worst of all - I, Basho, saw that child, I saw it in its rags by the river already lying in its own filth. I looked at it and went on. O God, forgive me! If I had looked in its eyes I would have seen the devil, and I would have put it in the water and held it under with these poet's hands."

Lear is a play showing violence in family caused by the lust of absolute power. Lear building of the wall opposition by his daughters, Bodice and fontanelle, Lear's anger and obstinacy his battle with the Duke of North and The Duke of Cornwall, his defeat and later on the Duke of North and of the Duke of cornwall and the ruling of Guerrilla leader Cordelia all show the lust for power and its misuse resulting in violence. To put in the words of Yeats - "The riders have changed but the lash goes on."

The play begins with the immediate arrival of Lear to inspect the work in progress on a wall being built by forced Labour to protect his kingdom. The people in the scene live in fear of the King. The workers and soldiers know that he is coming 'and that he always comes

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2. Ibid. P. 78.
looking for trouble'. What then happens grows directly out of the events of the scene. Lear does not come intending to murder a man. His two daughters, Bodice and Fontanelle, do not come proposing to tell their father of their impending marriage to the Dukes of North and of Cornwall. These things are precipitated by Lear himself. He creates the conditions of his own overthrow by deliberately using the accidental death of a worker to force the pace of work on the wall, because 'otherwise my visit's wasted'. He acts with autocratic authority. Consequently, he is outraged when, for the first time, he is publicly contradicted, and by his own daughters. Until the crisis of the proposed court martial of a worker for sabotage, Lear and his party should be seen, as Gaskill suggests - "like the Royal Family today visiting a ship yard, carrying umbrellas." Lear is accompanied, along with his daughters, by politicians rather than aristocrats. Bond describes Warrington as having - "a politician manner. But he's quite empty apart from probably rather liking military routines and being quite a decent fellow. He's not vicious, just wants everything to work well. With Lear he observes the human decencies but in the end tells Lear what he wants to hear."

Gaskill rightly defines him as - "a civil servant ... authoritative, and capable of running the country himself."  

The old Councillor is 'a pink faced lonely white haired, angry baby. He always makes Lear feel (and act) elder because Lear sees him as a parody of himself. Lear is encircled on the one hand by

1. William Gaskill. (Director of Bond's plays) - Listener, 7. p. 9.
2. Bond's Notes on Lear, p. XL
those who tell him what he wishes to hear and on the other, although he does not initially realise it, by two princesses who betray him.

Lear forces the workers to continue on the wall even after the death of a labour. His daughters never care for their father's wishes and desires. They are always busy in planning their marriage and other political conspiracies. After their marriages they plan to murder their husbands and marry Warrington secretly and separately. Both of them want to rule over the three kingdoms of their father's, the Duke of North's and the Duke of Cornwall's. These plans and attitudes of the daughters show their violent thoughts. They want nothing but to gain power, anyhow. This is well expressed in their acts when they are in power. They torture their own father for the sake of power. How power corrupts people is evidenced by change in Cordelia the guerrilla leader who later on becomes the ruler. Before gaining power she was a poor grave digger's innocent wife. She provided shelter to Lear. She was helping to the people in distress but after coming in power her ideas change, and she acts like a monster.

Thus it is the violence in thought which changes a man into a monster.

The Sea is a comedy. But the characters act violently. Although their action appears to be playful there is hidden violence in each and every act. There is comedy in the first scene but it is hardly a real comedy as Jane Howell points out -
"It comes form Evens during the storm. But it seems so improbable. I don't think an audience can laugh at it. It's so difficult for them to know what is going on. So much so that I love it when Hatch comes on and says - 'I know what's going on her.'"  

Until scene four the comedy is mostly on a slow fuse; it is used to point the strength of the situation and to set up questions in the audience's minds. The exception is Mrs. Raffi. Bond gives to this character lines which are polished and trigger memories of Oscar Wilde, particularly when she gives vent to her feelings by way of epigrams -

"Leave her. Never show any interest in the passions of the young, it makes them grow up selfish." 

The language reflects her continued disdain for all those she comes in contact with. What is missing from her words is a sense of human feeling. With the blithe, unquestioning self-assurance that derives from her social position, she queens it over the other characters. Sweeping all before her on an imperious torrent of words, the casual viciousness with which she treats her social inferiors goes hand in hand with her haughty 'Grandedame' manner. It is this one face of her character that Bond holds steadily before us until her last four speeches in the play.

As Hatch talks to the three men about his beliefs, his manner changes. His words have a directness and confidence about them -

2. Ibid. S. ix. p. 76.
"They come from space, Beyond our world. Their World's threatened by disaster. If they think we're a crowd of weak fools they'll all come her. By the million. They'll take our jobs and our homes. Everything."¹

But this is different again from his expression of these self same fears when he confronted Willy during the storm.

In The Sea, Mrs. Raffi practises a form of mental and emotional violence on all those who are inferior to her. Rose says later in the play: 'The town's full of her cripples'. The feeling of superiority makes a man lunatic and that lunacy makes him violent mentally and physically both. Such is the case with Mrs. Raffi also. Her main victim is the draper, Hatch, a tradesman who uneasily straddles the two worlds - that of the working class and that of his genteel middle class customers, to whom he is obliged to display an attentive servility. His fears of an alien invasion of England from outer space may be lunatic and unreal but find very real expression in his attitude towards Willy and Evens. The cutting of all the curtains in Hatch's shop by Mrs. Raffi shows her mental violence that reflects in her action.

In this play Bond shows a more characteristically English form of repression - the operations and influence of a rigid class structure, which is carefully worked into the whole fabric of the play.

Bingo deals with the problems of an artist's life. The attitude of society is violent towards him. He writes, he works something very

important for Society. But the response of society is always disappointing and irresponsible. And in this condition man becomes frustrated, therefore, aggressive. It is not necessary for him to work aggressively but his ideas certainly become aggressive. This is violence in thought.

In Lear the protagonist understands the necessity of rejecting his own private mythologies. The Sea as a companion piece to Lear insists upon - "the strength of human beings and their ability to deal with the difficulties of changing the world." 1

Bingo sets out the consequences of the pursuit of those things which assert a cynical and corrupt view of man and society. It shows how a man goes against his own convictions, how a writer loses his integrity, and how a person fails to combine his thought and action.

As the episode ends, Shakespeare is immediately faced with the consequences of what he has done with others, as well as with his family members. The Old Man's son discovers his father making love with the young woman in the orchard. He locks the gate on the girl and she is forced to enter the garden to face Combe, the old man's son in his capacity as a Magistrate. The son, who stands later on as the representative of those who opposed the enclosures, exhibits a prurient disgust at what his father does and takes a self-righteous satisfaction in what the law will now do to the young woman. She is caught between Combe's perfunctory dismissal of her and the son's

vehement gloating. They are aided by Judith's callous question regarding the girl's parents' graves and, unwittingly, by the old man's delight in so thoroughly upsetting his son. Through all this, Shakespeare watches, breaking his silence only to disconcert the son, for whom his dislike is at least as strong as that for Combe himself. As the young woman had lied desperately about her Bristol aunt out of her fright, so the end of the scene sees Shakespeare lying to the Old Woman that 'Nothing's decided.'

As Shakespeare in the final scene waits to die, he is presented again with the issues he has tried to avoid throughout the play. One of the most moving moments comes with the old woman's account of common attitude of her husband's life at the beginning of the scene. Her gentle analysis is set against Shakespeare's absolute withdrawal to carry his family life smoothly, and the quiet dignity is shockingly broken with the assault by Judith and Shakespeare's wife upon the bedroom door. Jane Howell points out that the idea of intermittent and violent noise off stage is comparable to the baby's sobs in scene four of Saved. Shakespeare remains unaffected by it, for he now cannot and will not do anything about it. M. Hay and Philip Roberts remark -

"He is now beyond accountability except to himself, so that his writing comes towards Jonson's definition of 'White worms excreting black ink'. What is important at this point is not that Jonson is correct but that Shakespeare has by his actions made himself into a Jonsonian figure."  

About his another play *The Fool* Bond describes -

"The play shows destruction. The Social and economic system then existing was destroyed ... life is turned into a wound as the old culture is destroyed."¹

Money, which is another form of power, tempts us to behave in an unnatural or undemocratic way.

Just for material gains we think in a different way. Naturally, our plans to gain money power are exploitative. We try to grab the wealth of other people openly or covertly and when the other people know our plans, they at first protest and if the exploitation continues, they become violent. Sometimes we ourselves use violent means for material gain such as waging war against the weaker nations. For this we plan to develop our arms and ammunitions. Thus violence in thought prepares to do more violence and then it comes into action.

Such is the case with Shakespeare in Bingo. From the outset Bond's intention is to show how easily and understandably Shakespeare becomes enmeshed in a world which destroys him:

"The play isn't telling any secrets. It tells what everyone knows about the way our wishes and intentions and consciences and ideas are turned awry-by money. W. S's 'crime' isn't a very bad crime - he doesn't wilfully exploit anyone, or steal wilfully from them, or punish them for criticising him, or claiming back their

own things. It is all only part of his security and prosperity ... The play is about the compromise William Shakeshapeare makes. But what right has he to call on the poor to make compromises ... with his own humanity, his compassion ... the crime relates to William Shakeshapeare. It is brought out by his life, by his pact with society. Not a criticism of William Shakeshapeare, because there is no alternative for him, other than hanging or beheading ...

"Such is the case with Clare in The Fool also. We do not find him a violent brute apparently, but his ideas, intentions and thoughts are all polluted by violence.

Clare is, in fact, not a heroic character as the critical orthodoxy about the play would have us believe it. It is also that he is not given the centrality we would expect of a main character nor is it Bond's intention to draw us into the play in such a way that we view the action through Clare's eyes - "The scenes are designed to show contrasting elements in the social world of the play (Clare, Mary, Darkie, Lord Milton, the Parson) and we are asked to assess the significance of each action without the benefit of a 'Central' character through whom we can route our perceptions and feelings. Finally, what Bond had in mind with the title of the play was not Clare's "lack of understanding" but a kinship with characters like The Fool in King Lear or Ariel in The Tempest - 'the idea of some knowing resilience.'"
Although both Clare and Darkie are disposed of by society—and Mary, too, ends up raddled and destroyed, the final impression we should have of them, and of Clare in particular, should be a positive one—For Bond,

"The Fool connotes not mystical insight but strength... the world of the play is that of strength."¹

He is careful to show that, although Clare and Darkie do not fully understand each other, there is mutual sympathy and a bond between them. This is established in scenes one and two, and then restated in scene four, where Clare visits Darkie and the other men who have been condemned to death for their part in the riots.

Violence in thought shocks the heart of the general in the play We come to the River. The general has tortured men in the battlefields and when he himself is tortured by the other one, he realized its reality. He, then suffers from a mental agony.

Scene four in which the General wanders about the battlefield, where wounded men are still lying, sees the beginning of his awakening to the suffering he has inflicted on others. He encounters a young woman and her mother searching for the body of the young woman's husband; she scratches at one of the corpses, insisting it is him, and the General pulls her away. His feelings remain blunted; he urges her to be logical. 'It can't be her husband', he says. Then for the first time we hear one of his victims speak out directly against him-

"Have you killed so many men, seen so many bodies! You don't know what you look at anymore!"

The Young Woman's situation demonstrates not just the sufferings caused by war but the impossibility of ignoring and escaping the consequences of the kind of society one lives in.

The view that the audience takes of the General both at this point and in the last scene would too readily be one of undue sympathy. It is an easy emotional response to make towards a character who is locked away and apparently going mad. It might even be ventured in his defence that, although he turns a deaf ear to the Second Soldier's request for him to lend his moral support to the government, now faced with civil war. This is not what Bond would have us feel. The sequence with the Second Soldier brings home to us the consequences of his refusal to help the oppressed. The government shows the signs of cracking. Its reaction is to increase terror and repression, but the clear message of the scene is that with the General's support the revolutionaries could have seized power. As it is, Soldier Two takes his own desperate form of political action and assassinates the Governor. Ironically, the General is implicated when it becomes known that the Second Soldier visited him in the mad house. The Emperor orders that the General be blinded. Bond himself explains the situation of the General.

"All of this gives a context to the General's blinding and death which makes it plain that we should not waste too

1. Bond, We come to the River (Eyre Methuen, 1976) S. III. P. 21.
much sympathy on him. His blinding (after many years living with the threat of going blind) is ironic, not tragic. He is guilty not of the crime for which he is punished but the exact opposite having done nothing."

When he learns that the Second Soldier has killed his wife and children and then committed suicide, he feels, rightly, that he is to blame. Instead of learning a lesson about his earlier inaction, he plunges into hysterical despair -

"I was promised blindness and madness and death!

Let me put out my eyes!"

It is the reaction of an old style tragic hero; there is massive self-indulgence in the way that he persists in the contemplation of his own misery and guilt. He becomes the archetype of the ineffectual liberal racked by his insights but incapable of action, holding back while others fight the battles for him. We are bound to feel outrage at the cruelty that the two Assassins inflict on him, but we are not asked to sympathise with the characters.

The violent thoughts come out in the acts of a man accordingly. The General never has thought sympathetically of any one in his life. All the time he has only thought of violence and destruction.

Bond immediately provides a focus for one ambivalent reaction in the figure of Paul, the simple Negro, in A.A. America, who comes

2. Bond. We come to the River (Eyre methuen, 1976) S. iv. P. 29.
on stage singing a spiritual song. The same comic idiom is maintained, temptation for Paul is a leaf of bread with a silver hook inside the snare of the unwary soul, and Sam makes a good job of selling it -

"You hear me stroke my loaf boy? My my that crust make a purty sound. Hmm mmm. You like the second boy? That sound's called secculence."¹

Even when Bond wants to show the naked hatred and prejudice beneath Sam's mask of reasonableness, he does it through the standard device of the comic aside.

"Sam (aside) I'll lynch the bastard. (To Paul) Ain you never seen agency before? Knew all them meaning spirituals was a fake. (Off, Gran laughs). Paul (tears a corner from his vest, not offers it). Here. You stop cry now.

Sam. Can't stop crying you stupid son of a bitch. (Aside) I'll swear at him a little so's he don't git suspicious."²

This hatred, prejudice and furious anger are all a kind of violence in thought.

The calm of the first scene and a half is shot through with underlying tensions and frustrations. Paul remains outside all this. His one sequence of dialogue is with Fred, a young white man. Fred is eager to set up a business, with Paul as his right hand man. When Paul objects that blacks are in no position to accept offers like that,

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¹ Bond, A. A. America (Eyre Methuen, 1976) S. ii. p. 21.
² Ibid, S. iii. p. 69.
Fred maintains that things change. For the first time, we hear Paul stating his views -

"They don't change that easy. Not for anyone. You git fixed on the past like you pumped it into. Your arms. It's terrible habit t' shake. One day your people are gonna lynch each other in the gutter over a drop dime."¹

Encapsuled in Paul's statement is the main theme of racial prejudice in the play.

In *A. A. America*, Bond satirises oppression and racial prejudice but shows little of the specific conditions which give birth to them or how they might be countered. The final stages of the play simply offer a symbolic statement to the effect that they can successfully be overcome. In this play the seriousness and cruelty of Sam comes over. In his notes on *Grandma Faust* Bond spelled out the charge against him -

"Faustus sold his soul to gain knowledge . . . You sold other men's souls to protect your ignorance. The American needs the Negro to be mentally and racially inferiors so as to whitewash his own immorality."²

Change is far from easy, but a society which lacks moral understanding is always likely to tear itself apart. Paul's strength and certainty show through the lines, as does his contempt. We see the figure who has been standing on the side lines in a new light - it is as if he is watching and waiting for the time to come when he can

¹ Bond, A. A. America (Eyre Methuen, 1976. Part II, The Swing) S. iii. p. 73.
² Bond's Note's on Grandma Faust, January, 1976.
make his move. But he is still a potential victim. The vandalising of Skinner's store, the attack on Skinner himself and the assault on Greta (If it ever happened), all committed by unknown assailants, bring out the self righteous vigilants in Skinner. The attack on Greta, which remains unproved, is rapidly converted into a 'rape' and Paul is the natural target for suspicion.

Paul's dislike and scorn for the white Americans show a kind of violence in thought. Uncle Sam and Gran and the two ladies, the customers of Paul's soul all enjoy, to think of the festival 'Nigger Foot Pie' day, as they have invented this festival to torture Paul mentally.

In the play The Bundle, Bond wants the audience to understand the tension between the Ferryman's humanity and the dictates of his economic situation, but in order to avoid sentimentalizing the character he shows this struggle without stating it explicitly -

"... I had to find a way of suggesting the human values of the ferryman and that's why I used the sounds, the bell and the curlew, which are almost like feelings. I suppose." ¹

The first curlew call occurs after the Ferryman's steps advising the child on how to cope with the world. The call represents his feeling and natural desire to help the child. He worries a little for the child and assures himself for its safety -

"There'd be no harm in making sure you're properly wrapped." ²

¹ Bond. THEATRE PAPERS. P. 19.
What he says is a compromise. He wants to do much more than that. Basho wants to take care of the child but he fails to do so. He wraps the child properly and leaves it. Again he goes back to the child and looks at it, but still refuses to give vent to his feelings, rationalising his decision by saying that many other people will be more than ready to help.

For a second time, he starts to move away across the river. His sentences are all short and pithy.

"We have no children. Heaven was kind. It knew we couldn't feed them."¹

"Bond deliberately takes an emotive situation and then lays bare the issues it contains. Although the Ferryman is engaged in an agonising struggle and this must be reflected in the performance, the nature of that struggle can only be expressed by the actor conveying the ideas, as opposed to playing the speech and the situation for its emotional potential."²

The selling of the boy Wang for ten years is a compulsion for the Ferryman and his wife due to poverty because they have no money to pay for the rent of boat but people of the landlord who are purchasing the child as the payment of the boat for 10 years, they are violent. If they have sympathy or humanity they will not do it. They have to save him without taking money. But they brought Wang, the ferryman's son as slave for ten years in lieu of money. Later, Wang's

change into a rebel is also a reaction of the violence inflicted on him by the Society.

In the play *The Worlds* all revolt against the factory owners. Sometimes the workers do it only to get pleasure in violence. They commit violence by burning furniture, overturning cars and smashing windows. The reason is only their enjoyment in violence. They can put their demands peacefully but they never do so. If they do not succeed in their efforts, they do not care; they get mental satisfaction and pleasure, through their violent actions.

Thus violence may be of different kinds but the beginning of all is the same. At first a particular idea comes to our mind and then we execute it through our actions.

External forces may compel a man to be violent but this violence is natural and ephemeral. Bond in his plays is concerned with the kind of violence which is prolonged and which has its origin in the social imbalance. It is the social set up that makes distinction between the people in the power and people without it. People who are in power do not want to lose their position and so they plan in many ways to subjugate the people under their control. It is this planning which Bond considers to be violence of thought. The oppressed, too, plan violence to dethrone the rulers. This seesaw battle continues, as we see in *Lear*. Only when we are blinded physically, we are able to perceive reality with our third eye. The reality is the abandonment of lust of power.