

## **The Minnesota 8 and the Letter-Writers**

by *John Berryman*

Here's one who wants them hanged. A poor sick mind,  
signing itself & saying where it's from:  
St. Louis Park: Out of the woodwork vermin come.  
To crises rise our worst, and (some) our best  
to dare illegal deeds in an unpopular cause  
defying prison because they feel they ought, because  
the sanity & honour seem endangered,  
or seem convulsed, of their own country, and  
a flaccid people can't be got to understand  
its state without some violence undertaken,  
by somebody without a thing to gain,  
to shock it into resisting – one program pain  
of treatment back to health of the body politic:  
to stop napalming pint-sized yellow men  
& their slant-eyed children, and ground arms & come home again  
O the Signers broke the law, and deserved hanging,  
by the weird light of the sage of St. Louis Park,  
who probably admires them. These bear their rare mark.

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John Berryman was the University of Minnesota Regents' professor of humanities, author of "The Dream Saga," winner of the Pulitzer Prize, Bollingen Award and National Book Award. Published in "Letters to the Editor," *Minneapolis Tribune*, Tuesday July 21, 1970.