

## God Bless Hysteria

by George I. Anderson

I have a job.  
I go to work every day  
to earn a paycheck to pay bills,  
buy groceries and put gas in my car  
and keep it running. All the while  
those unemployed are off somewhere  
down the street, fighting  
a civil war just to see who's right  
and who's wrong, the left or the right,  
the rich or the poor, the oppressors  
or the oppressed.

One day a man I never met before  
puts a rifle in my hand, wanting me  
to join his cause. He tells me  
the same tired old tale, a sales pitch  
that always works on the feeble-minded,  
about how they came for the Jews,  
the Christians, then the whoever else  
and finally to himself when  
No one was there to speak for him.

I give him the rifle back  
and tell him that fellow should've  
spoken for himself. As I walked away  
I could hear him calling after me  
"unpatriotic," "un-American"  
and the low-blower, "communist."

He was later killed in battle,  
a bullet gone straight through his  
hate-filled heart. He gets  
a hero's funeral, and martyrdom.

And I get stuck with the bill.

by George I. Anderson