

R. MARK LAWRENCE

Welcome to the Club

"Say," the accountant observed as
We stepped into the panelled lift
Of the Columbia Club and rose,
"You aren't wearing a suitcoat, are you?"
"We'll get him one," winked the lawyer toying
With his heavy watch chain and charms.
"Just policy, man," he smiled. "No problem."

With the tailored gray club tweed
Pulled over my shrugging green sweater,
I ordered what they ordered
And worried about which fork to use.

They spoke of securities and shelters
And dissected the new council appointee
Over vichyssoise. I answered bored questions
About my schooling, responded vaguely
About my plans, and, from the latticed, leaded
Windows above the city, watched happy
Ragged children skating in the twilit park
Below.