Counseled by friends With some understanding To stay in the fight With no real standing, I languish adrift.

My bed filled with bugs, They bite without name No clothing to cover My body in flame I lie listless.

A loosely knit mask Of a long-distance flight Shields my eyes from The glare of nude light I listen.

The voice I once knew So clear and so clean Now awash in a gutter Of vulgarity n' spleen, My heart beats.

The odors, the food, My health now imperiled. The sounds, and the language Cacoph'ny derailed. I disparage.

Good will, bad will So inexorably twined It matters so little Do I dare speak my mind I await.

Fools of Consent

Meaningless challenge Of now wasted worth New levels of same, More vulgar, more dearth My talent squandered

And so, time I bide My rage I deliver A message of wrath In an arrow-filled quiver To what end must I ask

No stature I blather Just a ram in the herd Of sheep poorly led Spoken word upon word I feel.

Action required So long badly needed An assembly so careless Of its past so unheeded. I ponder.

What action to take The answers I gather As the hours transgress Little minds do not matter I resist.

My own folly perhaps, Care I? I do not, What they say, the lost herd As they graze oft' for nought I am leached.

Bitterness felt My anger grows deep Myself dare I pity In society asleep My poison's a cure. Not for me who alert Makes rhyme of hell's matter The crimes of a nation A system to shatter Hypocrisy reigns.

Look not for love In these words oh so pithy For shame one cannot An ethos so empty America reigns.

Exceptional greed Exceptional dearth Deceit, how it rules In a land filled with mirth I cringe.

The power of words An expression of self In a world of might Where right has no wealth We must rise.

Wealth not the crime A game, but well played That benefits all If voluntarily made We create.

The source of corruption Is force poorly founded. In a criminal system Of government unbounded We endure.

Gone is the honor And service applauded Of government controlled By a people well lauded I despair.

Roddy A. Stegemann September 2016 Seattle, Washington