By Richard White

Peter Seeger appeared Friday night at Symphony Hall in a concert unusually devoted to the pacifist movement. Seeger normally wears prepaid music scripts, but this time he played songs that were written by his friends and admirers.

"Talking Baisone" is the story of a southern (USA) city that is invaded by the enemy. It was sung during World War II and has been performed in many versions since then.

"Talking Baisone" is not a pacifist song. It is a story of a city's fall, and it is sung in a way that is both lyrical and angry. It is a song of resistance, not of surrender.

By Steven Shlidove

It is fortunate that Boston is a city where musical events of high quality can be had at little or no cost, as well as at high cost. A noteworthy example of the former case was the concert given Thursday night at Jordan Hall by the New England Conservatory's Music of the Orchestra. This fine concert, under the direction of Frederick Furse, played to a half-full house despite the fact that no tickets were required.

The first half of the concert consisted of Beethoven's Concerto No. 5, "The Consecration of the House," Op. 124, Francesco Bormini's "Berceuse Ensilagé," Op. 42, and Arnold Schoenberg's "Five Pieces for Orchestra," Op. 16. The first two works were played very competently with solid brass support, but a slightly nasal string coloration. The Beethoven, a sublime evocation of mood, was given an especially effective interpretation by the conductor. The chaotic Schoenberg work was not as successful, and the considerable demands for ensemble work which it requires seemed to be beyond the capabilities of the orchestra. The intimate rhythmic structure and difficult individual parts put this work in a class apart from the others on the program, which went more conventional.

After intermission, there was a single work, the Dvorak Symphony No. 5 in F, Op. 76 (Old No. 5). Unfortunately, this beautiful and melodic piece is little known and seldom played, being lost in the shadow of the three Dvorak symphonies. In this symphony, the orchestra truly came into its own and offered playing of a completely professional caliber. The string tone was light, well balanced, and for the first time in the course of the evening the woodwind section played as an important part in the performance, which they carried off expertly. The brasses were generally fine, although there was the expected incidence of French horn flattish. The most significant contribution in this performance, though, was Mr. Prunier's excellent interpretation. The melodic line was always clearly delineated and emotion was never presented as something guttural.

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By his own admission at least one of the songs he sang was seditious, "Kisses Sweeter Than Wine." This was seditious in the sense that in the world today a person dies every 4 seconds of starvation. Such songs that advocate reproduction have to be watched closely in the future.

THE CONCERT... Conservatory shows

Concert... Weak 'Benito Cereno' opens season at TCB

by Richard White

The theater Company of Boston opened its season with Benito Cereno. Although it is set in 1800, the play, adapted from a story by Melville, is a comic commentary on contemporary political and social problems. This production, unfortunately, also requires some poetic license.

Lowell's dramatic poem has its faults, but rather than correcting them, the director David Wheeler and Frank Cassidy have emphasized them. In spite of the excellent job done by the principle actors, the amateurish attempts of the fledgling New African Company to produce the production's impact, although set in 1800, the play, adapted from a story by Melville, is a comic commentary on contemporary political and social problems. This production, unfortunately, also requires some poetic license.

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Although Seeger used his concert to promote peace, he also sang songs that advocated reproduction. By his own admission, at least one of the songs he sang was seditious, "Kisses Sweeter Than Wine." This was seditious in the sense that in the world today a person dies every 4 seconds of starvation. Such songs that advocate reproduction have to be watched closely in the future.

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