

Wasted Words

Volume 1, Number 1, Whole Number 1, comes to you from (and is copyright 1989 by) Tom Perry, PO Box 17998, Parkway Station, Boulder, CO 80308. It contains mailing comments on the November 1988 FAPA mailing (#205). Begun as a post-mailing to FAPA #206 on Friday, the twenty-fourth day of February, 1989.

NOVAYA ZEMLYA (Pearson) The Russian island of Novaya Zemlya is also the mysterious place from which the mad king, Charles Kinbote, of Nabokov's wonderful novel *PALE FIRE* hails. Welcome to FAPA. Your delusion that we are all BNFs is flattering. Since I rarely go to cons either, meeting you here is by far the best way.

HORIZONS (Warner) It will be a brave fap who will point out that *HORIZONS* used to consume a choir of stencils and now seems to be down to half that. Are stencils sold in boxes of 12 now? (Bare ruined quires, where late the sweet birds sang...) Or does SAPS consume the other 12? I know I shouldn't even be taking the risk of asking, lest you compare the quantity of my output to yours. But since this is the President of FAPA talking to the President of SAPS, maybe you'll consider it a privileged hotline communication, and be merciful. \ I can think of ways that we could get 4 surplus-stock mailings, even though only 3 extra copies of each zine are required. Maybe everyone is so frightened of providing one too few that we all throw in at least one extra extra copy, for instance? \ If you carry your own supply of oxygen aboard an airliner, you might improve your chances of survival. Many of the passengers in an accident are killed by the poisonous fumes produced by the contents of the aircraft as it burns. A parachute might help, too, as would counting the number of aisles you sit from the nearest exit, so you can find it in the smoke, dark and confusion. \ You win your bet already in the deterioration of the word "black" -- Jesse Jackson and his friends now favor "African-American." \ Prayer saved Darrell Richardson from a cancer which doctors couldn't stop? How can you know it was prayer that stopped it? \ How is the Supreme Court supposed to apply a 200-year-old document to modern times without the "magical discovery of invisible things" in the Constitution? Federal authority over TV and radio stations, for instance, relies on just such a magical discovery of an invisible implication in the Commerce Clause. \ I understand that a volume of Heinlein's letters will be available next year, under the title *GRUMBLES FROM THE GRAVE*; apparently the closest thing to an autobiography we shall have from him. \ The FAPA constitution requires the SecTreas to keep FAPA's funds separate from his own; I have always wondered how this is possible, unless Lichtman keeps the thousand bucks in a cigar box somewhere. It doesn't seem as if a bank account under his name, as you suggest, would fill the bill.

ADVOCATUS DIABOLI (Rodgers) I sent in my registration fee to Mile Hi Con in August or September, expecting to get a program book that would help decide

what times I would want to go there. I got nothing at all -- though the con cashed my check, so I'm confident they received it. I thought of going down to see if they had a registration package waiting for me, but since I didn't even know what times the registration desk was supposed to be open (my experience with registration desks has not been positive), I decided to just say the hell with it. Sorry we missed our chance for a meeting there; now that you've moved to Kansas City, I don't suppose you'll be going. \ Heinelein also mentions LOGLAN in THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS, I think. \ What makes Mensa so expensive?

ELECTRIC CITY EXPRESS (Eisen) I like the idea that the copyright laws stop at the entrance to FAPA; we probably ought to put that into the constitution. \ You say, "When you turn 20, you have just finished your twentieth year, not begun it; thus when you turn 2000, you will have just finished your 2000th year." Right! That's why the year 2000 will be the start of the third millennium, not the last year of the second. \ I think you have got near the heart of our disagreement about "mirandize": I don't see anything wrong with inventing a new word whereas you seem to feel that no new words should be tried out if there is an existing one or even a clumsy and inaccurate circumlocution like "read him his rights" (it's inaccurate in that they are usually recited, not read; any typical American's exposure to cop shows will perch "Youhavetherighttoremainsilent..." on the tip of the tongue). \ Your attitude toward airline frequent-flyer programs is like saying the prize in the Crackerjack box ought to go to the person who paid for it, not the person who eats the Crackerjack. It would cost big companies more than it would be worth to keep track of the miles, the options, the blackouts, etc. I have seen a company try it and give up very quickly. Besides, how would the airlines know who "really" paid for the ticket? Every ticket I use is charged to my personal credit card; an airline would have to know a great deal about my business to know which I expense, which I charge to a client, and which I bear the cost of myself, not to mention the arcane combinations of these that sometimes occur. In all cases the airline I fly is up to me; I wouldn't do it otherwise. I'm always amazed by people like SF pros who will apparently pick up a prepaid ticket on Dogpatch Airlines if that's what a con committee or someone has selected. The safety, comfort, and convenience involved in the choice of an airline affect the traveler, so the traveler ought to make the choice. Do you think the person who ultimately pays for a ticket should also get the meals, drinks, gum, decks of cards, newspapers and magazines that are handed out "free" to the traveler? If not, why not? They also fall into your category of "bribes" that induce one to use one airline over another, don't they? \ My reading on World War II indicates that conscription in the U.S. extended down into the teenage years as the war went on, and correspondingly up into the middle ages. But I wouldn't call a 19-year-old a child, at least not to his face. \ I suspect if the last chapter of THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST had been written by Joyce rather than Heinelein, there would be books and graduate-level classes about its deep hidden meaning. \ I agree very much about not wanting a truly logical language, and applaud very much your response to Geis.