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 mailing. (Thus history is made. Just as casually as that, in 1930, had my brother heaved and Astounding at me with a crack about "some goofy magazine you'd probably like." ... But that's another story and one I've already told and let's get on with this.) Doc brought along the June mailing and Fancyclopedia next get-together.

Why describe my emotions? Each one of you has had the privilege of growing up with FAPA, but I had the inestimable pleasure of discovering it as it is today -- science fiction's first-born (for many years a brilliant, quarrelsome, erratic brat, Fandom, but looking at it with eyes made penetrating by long absence, all I can say is: My God, tendrils!)

FAPA IS A SLAN!

APOLOGUE, Several Weeks Later. So far I've filled up several pages several times. I added my two cents to every discussion going on in FAPA. ... Better judgment prevailed and I decided to withdraw my small change. (All those tuppences mounted up to a tidy sum, with which I have purchased war stamps and a bottle of. Having tossed off this potion -- at one gulp, mind you! -- I staggered back to the typewriter and started once more, almost as brash as ever.) Nevertheless, on some few subjects I shall keep silence until I'm more sure of my ground.

I make my appraisal of FAPA absolutely unbiased by any previous knowledge of the institution, but with the background of a lifetime interest in fantasy and a good many years' acquaintance with fans articulate prior to 1938. This seems to me to offer you a glimpse of yourselves through a pair of fresh -- albeit bleary -- eyes, which may conceivably be of interest. On the other hand, I am bound to commit faux pas and innocently gallons of the water that has gone under FAPA's bridge in the past six years -- which might be boring. Still, my status seems to me to be unique. Returning after a six-year sabbatical, I came to weep and remained to cheer. Random thought: please do not blame Lowndes for anything I say. He has given me a free hand and unlimited pages. For that matter, don't blame me -- not in aeternitate, anyhow. These are just first impressions. After reading the 29th mailing, I revised my estimate of the 28th almost entirely. (ElMurmurings, for instance, flashed up from way down there to a place pretty near the top; I think it was the one poem and no patents that did it. And Horizons fell from top to somewhere near bottom.) Anyhow, until and aroused and enraged membership slaughters me, I shall hold forth through the medium of Agenbite.

AND INTRODUCTION: Avoidance was a fan for years and first saw print (in stf) in the summer of 1933. The first comment on that letter came from one Lowndes, and he and avoidance have been staunch, if intermittent, friends ever since. The Apostate admits in retrospect that while not quite the goshwowboyoboy type, all those published letters were youthfully and tiresomely ebullient. However, as a result of them, avoidance corresponded with a multitude of fans, reaching a peak of 52 within a year. Then avoidance got writer's cramp and narrowed down to half a dozen. One more hint: avoidance's chief gripes were Paul's covers and fan-bit advertising. Frankly, I (whoops -- avoidance) hope not to be smoked out ((If you aren't after all these clues, I'll give you a prize, Apostate. Lowndes.)), but to the first eager beaver who identifies The Apostate, avoidance will send one copy of the e. b. 's favorite book. (If it's obtainable, of course, and costs not over four bucks.) If he has no choice, the @ will send the @'s own favorite book -- which costs

only two bucks. Whoever you may be, The Apostate slyly hopes you are an indeterminate, undecided character.

AND END TO THIS LOATHESOME MODESTY.

I -- get that, I -- think FAPA is unique and uniquely excellent. Although in future Agenbites (provided of course I'm not Deglorized after this initial one) I shall review the mailings item by item ... with this first appearance, I want to give an @'s eye view, sort of a one-man poll of the 28th, 29th, and part of the 30th mailings, which I take to be representative of FAPA output. Incidentally, the arguments against reviewing the mailings overlook the fact that each review generally adds something to the subject under discussion. It's not just a rehash -- it's an expanding, growing proposition. Chauvenet (as was perhaps his subtle intention) gave the tabular review to end all tabular reviews. A gruesome thing ...

I ignore the Cosmic Circle publications, except to say that I read every word of that memorable first mailing -- but wish I hadn't bothered. I bypass Arcadia -- it wasn't ethical, Willie, but it was delectable. And I reject Take-Off as a miserable flop unworthy of dissection.

GLAZED EYE: anidea, Panty-Raiser, A Rouzine, Guteto. Guteto is thoroughly neat and legible -- for those who wish to get out on that kind of a ledge.

TOTAL BLANK: Paradox, Beyond, Toward Tomorrow. After three readings I am still unable at this writing to recall the contents of these publications, and I give up. Life is too short. Nice covers, though -- especially Beyond.

WILTED NASTURTIUM TO: Nucleus, Fantasy Fiction Field Presents, and Janus. La Spence is such a perfect lady that I grow restive when reading his columns; I read only the 1st page of Janus, although I tried -- golly, I tried. The CC deluge saddened me, but Janus would have blinded me. There are limits.

YOU BORE ME, BUD: Light -- can't something be done about Crouch? Shangri-Lun-a'ffaires. Venus-Con (no, I take that back; it's not badly done, and on second reading, a few months and many scandal sheets later, the reverse text makes sense of a sort. And all the amateurish nudes: altho the OPA has not imposed a ceiling, I hear the ante is still only two bucks. A psychiatrist's services cost slightly more. But one way or another, straighten yourselves out kids, won't you?

COVERS AND ART WORK DELIGHTFUL: Sappho and all Slan Shack publications.

NEATNESS AND LEGIBILITY (don't plume yourselves unduly on this one; it could easily mean beautiful but dumb): Sappho, Reader & Collector, all Slan Shack publications, Inspiration, Fan-Dango, Phanny, Fan-Tods, Agenbite, ((Huh? RWL)) Mad Muse, Star-Stung, ElMurmurings, Yhos, FAPA Variety, Guteto -- this could go on for quite a while yet. Console yourself: if your mag isn't here, consider that I just got tired of typing the list. These are not in any sort of order, except that Sappho, which just happens to be 1st, is absolutely tops.

EXCELLENCE OF STYLE AND CONTENT: (These are in order) Fan-Tods, Sappho, (rating on all-around excellence, this publication gets such a heavy score for poetry and artwork that it still reaches second) ... Agenbite (what with the horror out of Wollheim and the furor out at Guna, it does not invite dissection and needs no praise -- sycophancy hell, I just think it's good) ... Fan-Dango (after two iss-

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 us I feared that if the chip grew any larger, the honey would overbal-  
 lance; in the latest, he's just as m-a-a-a-sy, but much more reasona-  
 ble about it.) ... Phanny, Fantasy Amateur, ElMurmurings, Inspiration,  
 So Saari, Fantasy Commentator (with reservations -- look who's accusing  
 others of high-handedness!) ... Yhos (excluding Shortype; many thanks  
 for Alicia, Art). If you're looking for Horizons, Harry, I plan to  
 discuss it at length next issue. Well, glory be, I overlooked Sardon-  
 yx, Reader & Collector, Banchee, Caliban, and who knows how many other?  
 (Very few, but it's a wonderful out for any injured feelings in the  
 crowd.) Caliban and Sardonynx should have gotten quite a high standing  
 too. Just before Fantasy Amateur, I think. /By the way, why is amateur  
 spelled "amatuer" so often? Is it perchance a joke? (Most likely,  
 simple mis-types. RWL)

YOU AROUSE MY IRE, SIR: The Woks. Do you mean to sit there and say that this is your first publication in FAPA, Michel, under your own aegis? After all these years? And you a found-  
 ing father. And you not at your best, et that. (Some of that inco-  
 herence was not striven for -- it just happened. Who was slightly a-  
 head of the parade, riding an empty Scotch bottle?) For shame. ...  
 Yhos: Why all this tampering with the English language? I read a  
 good deal of the text, without benefit of lexicon; knowing shorthand,  
 I found it simple. Much too simple. And excruciatingly ugly. ...  
 Blitherings: More legible than that ungodly Shortype. I read it with-  
 out difficulty, although I'm an "audible", too. I found myself think-  
 ing ques-n equals queshn, and feeling like the tag end of a pub-crawl,  
 with all the slurred syllables and dropped consonants. I don't mind it  
 so much; but I wonder, Chan, if by sticking to your system you are al-  
 ientaing a good many members of FAPA who would thoroughly enjoy the  
 excellent material in your publication if they could only read it. ((I  
 know of one, at least: damned if I'll waste my eyesight on any of this  
 Shortype or Blitherspelling nonsense. RWL)) ... FAPA Fan. First and  
 oldest should also mean close to the best, seems it. Come out from be-  
 hind that mimeo, DAW -- I see you, you eldritch little gloom-gloomer,  
 in spite of all those ink-spots, Camouflage should be used against  
 Japs, not FAPS. ... It is obvious that while Nucleus, Take-Off, and  
 the like merit only a curled lip, I reserve my anger for those publi-  
 cations which fall short of the excellence they should exhibit. Let  
 that be a lesson to you. DAW, Davis, Widner, and JBM -- The Apostate  
 id displeased.

FORRY: Never one to praise when I could jeer, I submit that most of the verse is crude. (Drop that "e" if you like, Doc,  
 when stencilling.) One revolting booklet reeks of Edgar Guest; I name  
 no names, of course, but if the boot fits, Farsaci -- on with the In-  
 quisition. I except Chan Davis' efforts because there are five really  
 terrific lines in what I have read of his stuff; he shows a curious  
 lack of selectivity, a tendency to spread and wobble around the edges  
 of poetic forms he has chosen. Time should remedy that. If he is cap-  
 able of perceiving it himself. ... Verse, it says here, is the most ex-  
 acting form of literature. The better it is, the easier it looks, and  
 the more rigidly it is constructed. (Anybody care to slug it out? I  
 got convictions. I got poetry. And GhuGhu help me when it begins ap-  
 pearing in these pages.) ... The offering of the Pfc with the impos-  
 sible name in Yhos is commendable. Doc Lowndes has printed some beau-  
 tiful stuff in FAPA, and if he wants to toss amorous petals from las  
 rosas muertas de su juventud all over fandom, that's his privilege, ...  
 And finally, Sappho. I go all out for Sappho., but I needn't enlarge

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 upon it, since Watson and Ebey know what they're doing, and what's more, they know they're good. The spirit, the aura of these poems reminds me forcibly of the fragments left by Sappho of Lesbos, than which no more detached, exact etching of beauty has come to my notice. Incidentally, lads, Tag-Line Musings was an unnecessary bit of breast-pounding. The scoffers won't heed it; those who appreciate it won't need it. ... And leave us not overlook Elmer's Rune, which may have been an hilarious parody, but which I prefer to read aloud and enjoy for intrinsic merit. ... My blanket condemnation of the rest of the home-grown verse does not include allegedly humorous efforts.

By the way, I had a lot of fun with The Mad Muse. I opened to the second contents page and goggled slightly at what seemed to be a surrealist poem -

HUNTED  
 MORNING AND NIGHT -  
 THE MAD MUSE  
 (IMPRESSIONISTIC  
 DODO) ...

L'ENVOI! (punctuation supplied by my attempt at ratiocination.) After which, dawn dawned, and I went on to a couple of the poems, and boggled slightly at what seemed -- oh well. Since I did not read any farther, the following lines are not meant to be a commentary on the poems. (No libel suits, JRG.) They are just the irresponsible outpourings of an incompetent mind faced with an irresistible opportunity. (Unendurable pleasure ...)

L'Envoi

If only one mind is bewildered a trifle,  
 One mind made to doubt that it's thinking,  
 One longing awakened that nothing can stifle\*  
 Then most of these verses are stinking.

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With regard to McSnoyd's Bulletin. ... Larry, I like you and I like your work, but Raymaunderings louse Banshee up no end. The pusillanimity of the brat! The worst part of it is that two or three times, flashes of genuine humor have been evident -- but the rest seems to me childish pedantic and egotistical. And whether Mary Helen is a gag or not, she does not amuse. Not this one, anyhow. ... May I suggest that while adjective-fixing is used by the enemy, it is also echt psychologie in the US. Witness "our Bok, "Jello again," "back the attack" "1000 sheets to the roll," "nudge that lazy liver." (I grant that they are not all adjectives, but they're descriptive catch-words or phrases, and you know what I mean.) Clever propaganda is not exclusively a weapon of the Axis. And it is a bit hot-headed and unfair to stigmatize the opposition with the charge of Axis tactics. It is my feeling that Laney grasped the outstanding attribute of young Washington -- immaturity -- and set about making it stick with commendable thoroughness -- there are enough other failings in Laney's makeup so that you needn't lynch him for his quick wit and astute method. On this point, let us you leave Laney alone.

Back in the first Agenbite (page 9), Loundes headed his comments on the mailing "Department of Sheer Degeneration".

I don't know why he dropped it, but I'm picking it up right now. Brushed off, polished up, and given a shot with my typodermic, it becomes "Department of Speer Degeneration". And the next mailing will see its inauguration.

Until then -- easy on those flame-throwers, gents -- if only because, in the immortal words of Ludwig Bemelmans "FAPA, I love you, I love you, I love you."

The Apostate

PS - Sincere thanks to Lynn Bridges, and why doesn't he call his publication Inspiration?

I go now. @

NOTE TO ANYONE IN PARTICULAR

If this issue of Agenbite should turn out to be more legible than others, perhaps the fact that I'm now cleaning the keys with each stencil, and using backing sheets in the stencils, has some connection.

TRUE-BLUE CONFESSION

Whereat Drygulch  
hefts the books  
at hisself

Something about that sinister tapping at the door made me suspect that the dread FI (Futurian Inquisitors) were upon me, and some would say I've never been more right. O-

mitting the business of prodding and occasional screams when the instruments were applied, the quiz went something like this:

Q: (waving a copy of Agenbite under my nose). Lowndes, is this your work?

RWL: Yes, I did it.

Q: I shall read you a section from page 11 of the first issue. Quote: This should be as good a place as any announce our candidacy for the post of FAPA President in the 1942 election. Follows now our platform. First of all, why do we want to be President of FAPA? Well, it's a nice post without much hard work attached. The President really isn't much of anyone. The Official Editor has a job on his hands; so has the Secretary-Treasurer. But the President just sits around and looks important -- and if he's smart, doesn't make an ass of himself by trying to pass off scatterbrained schemes upon ye membership every now and then.

Sooo, if we're elected, we promise not to pester loyal and long-suffering members with nutty notions about changing things around. We shall adhere to a rigid policy of "leave well enough alone". The Fantasy Amateur Press Association has a good constitution and setup -- one that has worked for five years. Constitution was improved somewhat a year or so back -- excellent. We have virtually a minimum of inactive members, and a setup which will not permit driftwood to clutter up the organization for any length of years; we are not saddled with a large list of "associate members" whose presence are an extra burden in these times when paper costs are constantly rising, to the producing membership.

And we shall resist any screwball attempts to monkey with the works. We (personally) are fixed well enough at present so that we do not have to indulge in constitution-tinkering in order the gratify our flaggin egotistical balances. Unquote.

Those were fine words, Lowndes

-- what have you to say about them now?

RWL (nervously): I meant them in 1942 -- had I been elected then, I would have followed that platform to the letter.

Q: We shall return to this later, suh. Right now, there are certain aspects of your "administration" which require clarifying. With the September mailing, the first to go out to a trusting membership which had elected you, were three proposed articles of legislation upon which the members were requested to vote. We shall deal first with the proposed Article Thirteen. Lowndes, who put you up to that?

RWL: No one; it was my own idea.

Q: You will observe the indicator for any trace of knowing falsification on the victim's part, colleagues. All clear? Very well, then. Now, you: the proposed article contained two separate items, fused together so that members could not select one and reject the other, but must vote "aye" or "nay" on both. What was the idea of that trick?

RWL: It wasn't intended as a trick; I took every effort to make the wording precise enough so that members would know it was an all-or-neither proposition.

Q: Two items, Drygulch. One dealing with the subject of racism, and one dealing with obscene matter. Which of the two was the more important in your mind?

RWL: The first. My original intent was to offer this proposition, in order to find out if FAPA, as a whole, was ready to take an official attitude on the matter, and to make a basis for action in the constitution if they were. The business of obscene matter was an afterthought -- why not kill two birds with one stone? That was the way it looked to me.

Besides, the core of both items was the same -- that is, the same basic objection would be raised to each, when and where such objection was raised. They were both restrictive, necessitating a measure of discipline and restriction on the part of the members. Both impaired or limited freedom of expression. But were the article to have been passed, by a majority vote, it would have been a self-imposed restriction on the part of the members, which is vastly different from a restriction imposed by some arbitrary person beyond and outside the law. Moreover, the machinery would still exist for the members to rescind their action any time a majority decided they wanted to do so.

Q: But you posed this article without previous discussion of it or notice to the members. It is true that the subjects dealt with in the article were not unknown to the members, but your proposed legislation was completely a surprise. Perhaps, had they known in advance, they would have been willing to adopt a revised version of the proposals.

RWL: That can still be done if the basic ideas of article thirteen are not repugnant to the membership; from the reaction, I think this is the case.

However, revisions, either by way of physically changing the wording, or officially interpreting it as the majority preferred, could always be made. I felt that the important thing was to install the machinery first, the make any needed repairs and alterations afterward. As for the other two, the large vote favoring the proposed amendments to the constitution prove that they were pertinent and proposed in an acceptable manner. So long as proposals, no matter how startling, can only be adopted by an approving majority, there can be no question of any one person trying to impose his or her ideas upon the organization, or steamrolling legislation through against their consent. The very criticism of any proposal on those grounds is an indication that the attacker has no faith in the intelligence of FAPA members, or in FAPA's

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 democratic setup. If a body of people cannot be trusted to reject bad proposals for law, then they cannot be trusted to govern themselves at all, and we may as well dispense with the idea of democracy lock, stock, and barrel.

Q: Then how do you explain your own objection to legislation in the past on these same grounds of suddenness?

RWL: My objection was wrong; I had not thought the matter through.

Q: And you consider your platform of 1942 wrong?

RWL: For the most part. At that time, my interest in FAPA was at a rather low ebb. All I wanted from the Presidency was the title on the FA, and I'd have opposed proposals sheerly because I was too lazy to accept the idea of an expanding organization.

Q: Then how do you feel about the matter now?

RWL: I think that an abundance of ideas and proposals for revising and improving the organization, whether these ideas are sound or not, are a much better sign than a lack of any ideas and proposals. Times and conditions are constantly changing, even in so limited a set-apart section of existence as FAPA. We shall always be facing new problems incidental to the basic functioning of the organization -- just to keep mailings, large ones, coming every three months -- and a static constitution and set of precedents would stifle us. FAPA can not only afford to revise its constitution from top to bottom every few years, but it needs such revision. Essential features will be retained, but the actual method of functioning should change as the situations in FAPA change.

Q: Why this sudden burst of interest in FAPA, Lowndes. You weren't so concerned a year ago.

RWL: They elected me President. Authority means responsibility; my aim is not so much to get things done in my administration as to set balls rolling. Article 13 was rejected. Very well -- but the business has set a number of members to thinking about the subject, members who previously hadn't given it much thought, perhaps. And it further set them to thinking about the subject in relation to FAPA and to fantasy fans. No harm can come of that, unless thinking about a problem is in itself harmful. I know that such an opinion exists in fandom. And incidentally, gentlemen, this is my last word on the subject of article thirteen. I've circulated two special letters on it, and talked about it in Agenbite. There's nothing more for me to say except that I do not regret having taken the step, regardless of how it may affect the rest of my administration or my future status in the organization.

Q: Are you going to spring some more surprises on the members?

RWL: Not any more proposed amendments -- not "spring" them, at least. I'll propose them, if I do, some time prior to having ballots sent out. The members have made it clear enough that they don't like the idea, whether the proposals are sound or not. In all justice, I should have withheld the Loney-Ackerman-Searles proposed amendment for the January mailing, but after all, I'm human. I couldn't resist the temptation to make them squirm a bit -- and the proposal is both clear, sound, and something which should be adopted as soon as possible. But that's the last time I sin in this direction.

Q: You will note, gentlemen, that the victim admits to being human. Very well, citizen: now what about this charge that you used "unethical" methods to retain Degler as a FAPA member?

RWL: I've already explained that and shown the charges to be untrue. And if you don't mind saying so, I'm sick of talking about that thing D- myself.

Q: Unfortunately, we cannot accept this reluctance as an answer. A specific matter is at hand. Did you, Lowndes, or did you not attempt to interfere with a decision of the Vice President.

RWL: I didn't "attempt" to interfere -- I interfered, period. About the time that the Fall Mailing was to go out, I received notice from Norm. Stanley that Ashley had declared the petition to bust that thing had passed, and had requested Norm to notify Degler of the fact. This after Ashley's term of office had expired. Furthermore, lacking any new "reading" of the constitution, the petition had not passed, as I stated in my first Message.

However, Vice President Ashley "interpreted" the constitution in such a manner as to negate the necessity of a majority "aye" vote being requisite to pass an amendment or petition. Upon hearing of this, my first reaction was one of relief -- good, we're rid of it! But consideration brought the following thoughts to my mind:

(a) While a precedent did exist, apparently, it would take careful research to show whether or not the amendment Ashley spoke of in his message had passed as it appeared. 20 votes, out of 48 does not constitute a majority (and it would seem to follow a precedent was being established) provided that all 48 members were eligible to vote. FAPA records have never been kept so carefully and thoroughly so that a check could be accurately made.

(b) The ruling, while possibly acceptable on the above grounds, was distinctly anti-democratic in that it made minority, rather than majority rule FAPA law.

(c) At that time, I did not believe that Ashley's point upon the legality of this "interpretation" would hold water. I wrote him and told him as much.

(d) The Vice President has the power to make rulings on the constitution, when such rulings are requested. In the Vice President's message, wherein this ruling is made, no request is either stated or referred to.

Thus it appeared to me that the Vice President was not only exceeding his powers, not only making an unwise decision, but also making a decision which would be a blot upon his own judgement as well. I told the Official Editor, therefore, to excise the portion of the VP's message dealing with this "interpretation", and wrote Ashley explaining in full what I had done and why.

However, between the time I wrote Shaw and the time the Fantasy Amateur appeared, it was pointed out to me that, whether I liked it or not, Ashley's decision was strictly legitimate according to the wording of the constitution, and the matter of precedents was irrelevant.

That being the case, I withdrew my attempted or rather committed "interference", even though, according to the constitution, I have the right and the power to take such actions and make them stick until and unless an over-riding petition on the part of the membership is passed. My reason for not making an issue of the matter, once I learned that I was mistaken about the legality business, was that I didn't want to establish the precedent of a President over-ruling a VP's decision. So, I did the next best thing: proposed an amendment changing the wording of the constitution so that majority rule would be mandatory and put it up to the membership for vote. They voted "yes" by a large plurality.

And I might add that no better proof that Ashley's main interest in FAPA is the good of the organization, rather than the advancement of Ashley lies in the fact that he hasn't tried to make political capital out of this action on my part. A lesser man would have done so.

Q: Well, that seems to be about all for now, Lowndes. Perhaps we'll be back later. In the meantime, better get some sleep -- you look a bit peaked. (Sinister chuckle) And -- Happy New Year.

(Exeunt inquisitors with leers and meaningful glances.)

WITH MALICE AFORETHOUGHT

(I still prefer this title, @)

Fantasy Commentator: I disagree with the proposition that any subject which is not in itself such as to endanger FAPA on Post Office grounds is out of place in the mailings. (That includes racism: the will of the members is my will.) The concept of FAPA has evolved in these five years -- from an organization designed mainly to present fantasy and/or science fiction, and contingent subjects, it has grown to mean consideration and discussion upon any and all subjects from the viewpoint of fantasy and/or science fiction fans. Whether or not the fan's viewpoint is sound, or equal to that of the non-fan is irrelevant. It is of interest to other persons steeped in fantasy and/or science fiction backgrounds per se.

There may be no point in arguing with persons whose opinions you do not respect, or with persons you do not respect as individuals, Lagnley. All that is your private affair. But when snobbery reaches the point where you refuse to consider the possibility of learning something from an individual in either category, then snobbery has become stupidity.

There are times, both in speech and writing, where pungent, four-letter Anglo-Saxon words decidedly have their place as the most expressive and communicative epithet possible. To avoid their use, unless it is an issue involving legal consequences, in such cases is childish.

You complain of the air of "high authority" in the Futurian statement on Degler -- when one paragraph later you show FAPA the ultimate in "high authority" yourself! Searles, if you can imagine how the soldiers in the American Revolution felt about Benedict Arnold after his attempted treachery became known, then you know how FAPA feels about you. For once in his career, at least, I think Forrie Ackerman has spoken for all of us, and spoken well.

I've heard the Kallinikov Symphony #1 and enjoy it muchly; it's on my list.

Sardonynx: Democracy has many faces, Russell, and none of them are flawless, for humans are equally flawed. Yet there is one criteria: does the machinery exist in the setup for the people to make their own decisions on how they shall be governed? Does the machinery for revising or rescinding bad legislation and precedent exist? Do the people feel an iota of ownership in their country, in its laws and its economic setup?

Whether or not the machinery is working well is beside the point. The point is: is it there? Can reforms and changes be made within the law? If they can, then we have one face of democracy. If however, there is a law above the law of the land, a court from which there is no appeal, or if it is necessary to go outside the law in order to obtain justice, then there is no democracy, or the measure of democracy is exceedingly thin.

If we draw the line thin enough, then the only possible answer to the question is that no nation is a democracy, for enough in-

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 individual instances of infringements of individual right, denial of the prescribed measure of justice, evasion of official responsibility, veniality of officers, etc., exist in any "democratic" country, humans being what they are.

But we must take the broad view if we hope to understand these matters. And with that broad view we can say: yes, the sense of ownership and control of the laws of the land exists in the United States, in England, and in the USSR. The face of democracy is different in each country; in each case there are virtues and defects that neither of the others have, and virtues and defects that all have. Clear?

I check you full on your reply to Davis.

Banshee: I agree that I was over-enthusiastic when I stated that Les Preludes by Liszt was equal to Wagner at his best. It isn't of course. What I should have been content in saying was that it anticipated much of Wagner, and might be mistaken for Wagner in spots -- though not W. at his height.

The Nucleus: Trudy, my lass -- there's a lot of merit and sense in a good deal of what you say. Would that I could obtain some pleasure from the way you say it!

Fan Tods: I believe that were any publication bearing FAPA credit lines to come to official Post Office disapproval, the entire organization would be subject to investigation and the results, 100 to 1 would be unhappy. Moreover, once the business of fan amateur publications got in the PO eye, the effects could easily blanket the entire field with manifold restrictions if not extinction. That is why Searles irresponsible and unwarranted threat is so pernicious. He obviously hasn't considered that, in the end, his 100% simon-pure Fantasy Commentator might go into the fire as well.

I bang my head in the dust and sift ashes on my hair as I scratch underneath the sackcloth -- of course the old Gernsback Wonders were saddle-stitched!

Horizons: There was a bit of ill-feeling toward Fred Pohl on the part of other FSNY members for a time, but that's all in the past and we're friends again. We'll be glad to see him home safe when it's over yonder.

"Intelligence Gigantic" was Fearn's first published tale in an American stf magazine. Appeared in the June and July 1933 issues of Amazing.

Afraid I was unduly pessimistic in "How Now, Fanatics". A few traces of stf do appear now and then, if 100% accuracy is desired. But the general impression wasn't wrong, I believe.

Short-arm inspection in the army refers to the genite-urinary organs.

Sappho: No comment save praise on both form and content. Keep it a' coming, Watson, and damn the torpedoes.

En Garde: Forgotten Fancies should be continued! In regard to question 10, my lad, you should be an editor and learn some of the sorry facts of life as to how some fantasy stories are submitted. And on question one, the answer should be true: except when it appears

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 virtually in every other time-sequence. Try checking up some time!

Tale of the Evans: Yeah. You and the NFFF can draw up a nice code of ethics for fandom. Print it, mimeograph it, or chisel it on stone slabs. Recite it at meetings and pray before it each night. And while your at it, you might try sending a copy to the administrators of the Third Reich. They'll be amused, too. And it will be fully as valid and effective there.

Doesn't anyone ever grow up in fandom?

Elmurmurings: Utterly delightful. Particularly the poem on last page.

Cushlamochree (Mailting, Pot): Look, Walt. It's your business whether or not you approve of those proposed amendments, but I wish you'd make up your mind. In the editorial you say no. On the last page you say: "A hearty YES on all points." That ought to please everybody, but I'd rather know whether you were for 'em or agin 'em.

Fan-Dango: Can't see why you felt that the item on the Outsider's setup had no place in FAPA publications, but am delighted that Futura made you decide to write about it. The thing wasn't a wasted effort, if for this reason alone.

Yhos: Orchids for "Death of Your Dream" and stinkweeds for that (censored) nightmare you so delicately refer to as shorttype. I might have enjoyed the issue had I been willing to read it.

THE 30TH MAILING

Aagh #3 Lovely lovely lovely cover, and the poem was sheer genius. And

how's about taking an extra five minutes next time to make the thing halfway presentable in appearance?

Frankly, I can't see that the sole act of paying for, and arranging for, a publication entitles one to FAPA credit for it. Obviously if you do that, it can't be considered as substantially your work, the way I see it.

Vice President, ho! How's about a ruling on this point? And what do you members think?

Fan-Dango: I'm still waiting for my copy of that proposed constitutional amendment, Laney. If you feel that way about it, it's not only your right but your duty (since you take FAPA seriously) to present it; talking about it will get nowhere.

I absolutely agree, Fran, that FAPA needs more members like you. Not exactly like you, perhaps. One Laney is enough, but certainly like you in re your interest and activity. Better a live organization with bricks flying in all directions than a "nice" tame and utterly dull one.

And I might add, m'lad, that FAPA needs more members like me, too. Not exactly like me, of course. One Lowndes is ample ...

Hmm ... I'm just as glad you voted for Chauvet, chum. Much sooner know you were agin me all the time than see you change your mind, sudden-like. Seriously (those last two sentences weren't) I think you lads sort of lost your heads over the whole business -- but wotthohall; I've done so myself often enough!

Twilight Echoes: Joo, if you know how any one (or two) persons can

run the whole show in as alert and democratically-imbued organization as FAPA, you might tell all. Don and I, we aren't interested, but a guide for would-be dictators might come in handy for some future officer -- as well as putting the members on guard.

Zizzle-Pop: According the Cabal and CASmith, vide "The Seven Geases", a geas is a spell which amounts to placing an immutable compulsion on the victim. Just how it's done, I dunno (dammit!) but it works something terrific.

Fantasy Amateur  
#29, 30

to thyself the post of Official Critic. And let not thy pen write the noxious phrase "no comment" after any publication, for verily it is an odious thing and worketh sadness amongst those who are doing as best they can for FAPA, but no other member noticeeth them. And behold, Wollheim did as the President decreed, and took up his pen, writing words of wisdom in comment upon each and every publication, excepting those wherein he wrote "No Comment".

Well, done, Larry. And, lo and behold, the President spoke unto D. A. Wollheim, saying: Arise and take un-

tatorial-minded Prexy likes to see.  
at all. (Censored.)

That's what a high-handed and dictatorial-minded Prexy likes to see. Obedience.  
Y'see what I mean, Russell. No geas

green tea by felix

my little witch, you have laughed  
once too often,  
this aching heart seeks no reprieve  
now:  
no, i just wish satisfaction, satisfaction.  
not always did i lie paralyzed in  
your arms,  
your lovelust drew not so heavy on  
my mind  
that it, too, lost control.

my grasp was not so weak it could  
not realize  
my dreams were but your toys;  
not always could you seduce me beyond reason;  
at times, even i could laugh at my  
own folly.

and now it is faded and lost,  
the glitter of dreams has turned  
to brown dust like leaves of autumn.  
I should like you to know that there  
times  
when your laugh lost its perfection,  
and i could discern your twin-barbed  
mirth.

my little witch, you have done  
what two  
billions of people could not;  
you have twisted and smashed my  
bloodrawn  
heart, and wrung from it the  
dying gasp --  
leaving it, as you do, to wither  
in  
a winter's sun.

what was my dream, a tiny grain  
in your hourglass?  
how did i react to your stabs and  
goudings?  
satisfactorilly, i hope.  
i'm sure i have not proven un-  
interesting;  
my clownish canters drew some  
sound of pleasure from  
your carmine lips -- i trust.

and thus my farewell  
does not ring sad. fate is in-  
evitable,  
and i seek not to escape its  
clutches.  
my little witch, shed not your  
crocidile tears.  
over my grave.

TRIGGER-TALK AT GREEN GUNA or Buck Wollheim Rides Tonight

Chapter Five: Killin' Leads to Gunsmoke

Planted

Solitaire Johnny	Deputy Robbins	Down-East Azimov
Skull Baumgardt	Applejack Kyle	T-T-Thompson
Short-Grass Gillespie	Spineless Sam	Long-Ears Martin
Sheep-Dip Cohen	Dogface Damon	Twe-Bit Hahn
Honest Dan Burford	Seven-Year Willie	Cornhole Colcord
One-Beer Kornbluth	Jimmy-the-Bull	Dagger Rogers

(Dagger Rogers has just sold Killer Kubilius on joining a sinister outfit known as "The Circle", when he is drygulched.)

"TIME TUH RIDE", said Kubilius to no one in particular, or that smokepole-crazy son, Drygulch Doc won't leave nobody fer me tuh plug." He ambled lazily outside and vaulted into his saddle, courtesy of a nearby beanpole.

The first thing to do was to find out how many rider "The Circle" had. Dagger Rogers had boasted of a hundred to a hundred-fifty, but Kubilius figured a ten percent show would be all right, if that many existed. In the meantime, he'd follow Rustler Wilsey's trail to the pass, where the Comet Crew was bottled up.

Clouds had covered the moon, and the wind in the cottonwoods was a mournful thing. This sure was a night for boogers if any was. Kubilius jogged along easily, his eyes sharp on the trail ahead, and watchful of each side. It was a night cut out for bushwhackers.

Something was up ahead; he couldn't make it out, but a shape was there. It was standing in the middle of the trail and it seemed to waver as he approached. Kubilius' horse snorted and started to tail-spin and sunfish; for a moment the Killer fought the frightened creature, then he was sailing through the air like a kite, and plowing up a sizeable furrow of mud with his nose.

"Fudge!" said Kubilius. (Happy, Langley?) He sat up to stare at the shape of a man counting on his fingers. "Four -- five -- six -- seven --" The shape stopped. "But what comes after seven?"

Kubilius' gun cleared leather and spat flame. "Thought I'd drilled yuh before, Solitaire," he grunted, "but this time's fer sure, by grab." Then the Killer's eyes bulged because no figure was standing in the road before him, and he could see where the forty-five slug had smashed in a signpost reading: "Plant Yoreself Proper in a Coffin by Evans."

"What's the shootin' for?" came a voice, and Kubilius saw himself surrounded by hooded figures, bearing rifles, each wearing a crimson circle on his chest.

"Must uh been dreamin'" growled Kubilius. "You fellers belong tuh Dagger Rogers' bunch?"

"Sure," drawled one, whose nightshirt, Kubilius noted, bore seven circles, one within the next. "You had a vision, stranger?"

"Sure have," replied the Killer. "Was just on the way to take care of some hombres in the pass who don't seem tuh have cosmic minds, no matter how yuh look at them."

The head figure took off his mask, revealing the features of a serious-looking youngster. "That's dang right fine. Reckon yore one of us all right. I'm Brains Washington, Father Claude's segundo. We was about to take a pasear tuh thuh Green Guna, but seein' as how there's pressin' work right tuh hand, we'll accompany yuh tuh the pass. It shore is time we took care o' thuh Comet Crew."

NEVEREST EVANS looked up from his work as a solitary rider came into his shop. "Who ever yuh are, I'm busy. Got a passle o' coffins tuh make. Things is buzzin' at thuh Green Guna tonight."

"What d'yuh charge fer one o' them there coffins, Neverest?"

"All depends," said Neverest. "New for the common variety, such as when a dozen or so hombres stop lead of an evenin', I just knock tuhgether a good enough box and thuh town pays me. But fer private trade, my pride is sorta fancy -- but yuh got a right purty job."

"Member thuh time when Drygulch Doc started knockin' 'em off-- he come in here an' ordered one o' my best coffins. That was when he was a'feudin' with Thuper Mithke. Only Mithke pulled outa town and Drygulch never got gunsights on him. Reckon that's what soured Doc on humanity, 'cause Mithke was shootin' his mouth off about what an all-fired deadly gunboss he was. Then thuh polecat turns. Doc, he was so all-fired mad he bumped off six hombres, one right after thuh next, that day, an' then he took tuh drygulchin' in real eannest."

Evans shook his head. "Too bad in a way, I suppose. But I cant complain about one o' my best sources of income, can I?"

"Well, I'll be taken one uh yore fancy jobs," said the stranger. "Got a special job tuh do, and I want thuh victim laid out ne'a t when he's ready ferplantin'."

"Who is it?" asked Evans.

"Yuh won't tell no one?"

Evans shook his head. "Aint never busted a confydence so fer; I sure aint agoin' tuh start now."

The stranger grinned. "No need tuh keep it a secret, I reckon -- I'm gunnin' fer Brains Washington, because he's thuh head man of "The Circle" now -- somebody plugged Father Claude and his cosmic mind is sort of leakin'. Aim tuh clean up that bunch proper."

Neverest wiped his glasses, then remembered he wasn't wearing any tonight. "Don't recollect havin' seen yuh around here afore."

"Yuh'll know me next time we meet, oldster, They call me Kid Destiny." He tossed Evans a roll of bills and strode out.

"THEY'RE TRAPPED all right," whispered Brains Washington as the hooded, sheet-covered figures crept behind boulders looking down into the pass. "There's Juff arguin' with someome."

"Toss yuh t'see which of us picks him off," said Kubilius. He took a coin out of his pocket, flipped it then returned it to his vest pocket and triggered down into the pass. "Yuh lost, Brains," he said dryly.

"Yuh missed, Killer," replied Washington. "Juff's still kickin'."

"Flumb strange," muttered Kubilius. "Shore I hit him dead center in the heart." He drew a bead on the writhing figure on the ground and fired again.

"Must be off yore feed, Killer," drawled Washington. "That time yuh only took off his little finger."

"Fudge!" said Kubilius.

They ducked behind boulders because the Comet Crew was now returning fire and bullets were whining all about them. Juff was trying desperately to crawl to shelter, but a round of bullets from The Circle perforated him like a postage stamp. Man Mountain Marconette dropped his rifle and a half-silly expression crossed his face as he tried to look up at the top of his head, which was missing; Amigo Warner leaned against the wind for support but the wind died down and the hole in his chest left him no strength; Rambler Rothman found he couldn't look at the situation objectively with a bullet where his eye should have been; a .45 slug caught Carefree Kuslan in the thigh and knocked him against a projecting rock, breaking his neck; Bull Baltadonis, Ace Agnew, and Madman Madle stood back to back, pumping lead at the bushwhackers, and died with their boots on.

"Can't be many left now," said Washington, pausing for a reload, and ducking as a slug whined past his eyebrows.

"Someone's still a'shootin'," replied Kubilius.

Washington took out his binoculars. "It's Gamblin' Gertie, by grab. I'll be danged. D'yuh mind shootin' a woman, Killer?"

Kubilius lit a reefer. "It's a pleasure," he drawled. He lifted his sixgun, drew a bead and fired carefully. "Gamblin' Gertie's falln fer thuh last time." He blew down the barrel of his gun. "Quiet, aint it?"

"Downright peaceful," said Washington. He looked up at the stars. "Somethin' about this country that gets a hombre. Too bad we had tuh plug that wench. Danged ifn I don't feel romantical tonight."

"Hey Brains," sang out one of the others. "Killin's dang dry work -- let's mosey over tuh thuh Green Guna fer a snort or two."

"Reckon so," said Washington. "Aint nothin more tuh be done here -- unless Kubilius missed again." His hand went toward his holster as the drum of hoofbeats came to their ears.

"WASHINGTON", came a voice from the darkness. "Get ready to go fer yer gun; I'm comin' after yuh."

"Who's callin' me?"

"Destiny."

"Destony," hollered Kubilius. "What's thuh matter, Kid? Yuh got thuh sorrows?"

"Nope. I just taken up fer Rambler Rothman an' thuh others."

Washington spoke to the bunch. "This is a private war between me and Kid Destiny. You wolves aint tuh butt in, unless there's cold-deck dealings. Understand?"

"Sure," said the others.

Destiny alit from his horse, strode forward. "Fill yore hand, Mr. Washington."

Brains Washington drew his sixgun, his eyes suddenly despairing as he saw that his bullet had plowed into the ground. He tried to lift his gun for a second shot, but he couldn't breathe, and the ground was rising up to meet him.

He laughed and spat blood. "Yuh got me, Destiny, but I reckon it could uh been worse.

"I could uh been smoked down without warnin' by Drygulch Doc."

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NEWSFLASH Latest outrage by Lowndes consists of comment in his FAPA Publication, Agenbite of Inwit, upon an item submitted by WTLaney for the same mailing. Turn the Scoundrel Out!

THIS IS GOING to be difficult for Brother Laney to believe, perhaps, but it's the truth nonetheless. In writing this, and other statements of opinion and/or policy, I'm speaking for myself as an individual, and not as public relations officer for the Futurian Society. Similarly, when DAW, Michel, Shaw, etc., come forth with opinions, these days, they are speaking for no one but themselves -- unless such statements are signed jointly, as in the case of the (obsc.) declaration, wherein we all concurred at the time.

(This is being typed on Shaw's machine, and I dread the results.)

I'm writing this at the last minute, Fran, in order to comply with what strikes me as being a perfectly reasonable request in your leaflet, and offering what I can in the way of light upon alleged feuding between the FSNY and the LASFS. Or more correctly, a feud in the process of building.

As General Secretary of the FSNY, I can state authoritatively that no either pro and anti LASFS (or pro or anti any specific member or members thereof) exists. (Grrr! Insert the word "policy".)

As sheerly Lowndes, I have nothing against you, Laney, or any other LASFS member, or the LASFS as a whole, regardless of your stand upon me, or my actions, either as an individual, or a FAPA officer. It goes without saying that I'd like to see you and the other LASFS members with me on FAPA matters, but the idea of hating you because you are not is foreign to me. As individuals, I do not know any of you; as FPA members I consider you no more or less, in regards to your rights, than any other members. I think FAN-DANGO is one of the better FAPA publications and I look forward to each new issue.

Personally, I regret the inconvenience caused you by the mailing of the last FAN-DANGO without the music-poll cards. Here is one occasion when Lowndes should have acted like a dictator and checked over material going out, decreeing that FAN-DANGO be held until the cards arrive. But, outside of a few suggestions when we get together -- and FAPA subjects come up -- I let the OE work out things as he sees fit.

However, you can blame me for the "Illegal" (sorry, misp.) mailing. I okayed the proposition and suggested that an FA, to contain the reports for which members were waiting, be included, and that it be termed a special mailing. Another act illustrating my policy of either strict or relaxed constitutionality depending upon situation at hand. The "special" mailing helped to fill an overlong gap between regular mailings due to the changing of the mailing dates by law. If any member feels that he or she has been deprived or abused by receiving one more mailing than his year's dues legally said he was entitled to, let the stones fly.

In the absence of geases, all I can do is suggest to the OE that he take steps to ameliorate the injustice his error has done you in whatever manner he can, since the deed cannot be undone.

And in conclusion, may I say that Shaw's

typewriter S T E E N K S!

